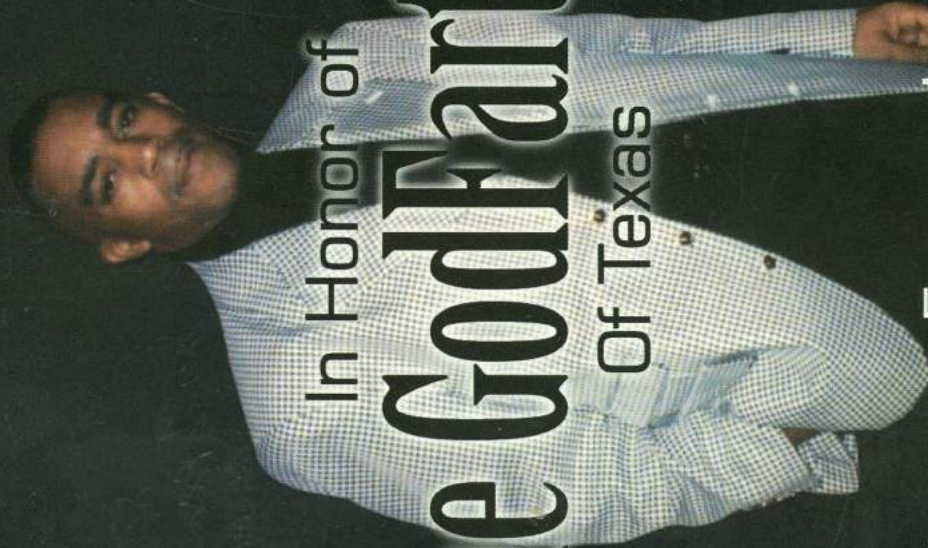




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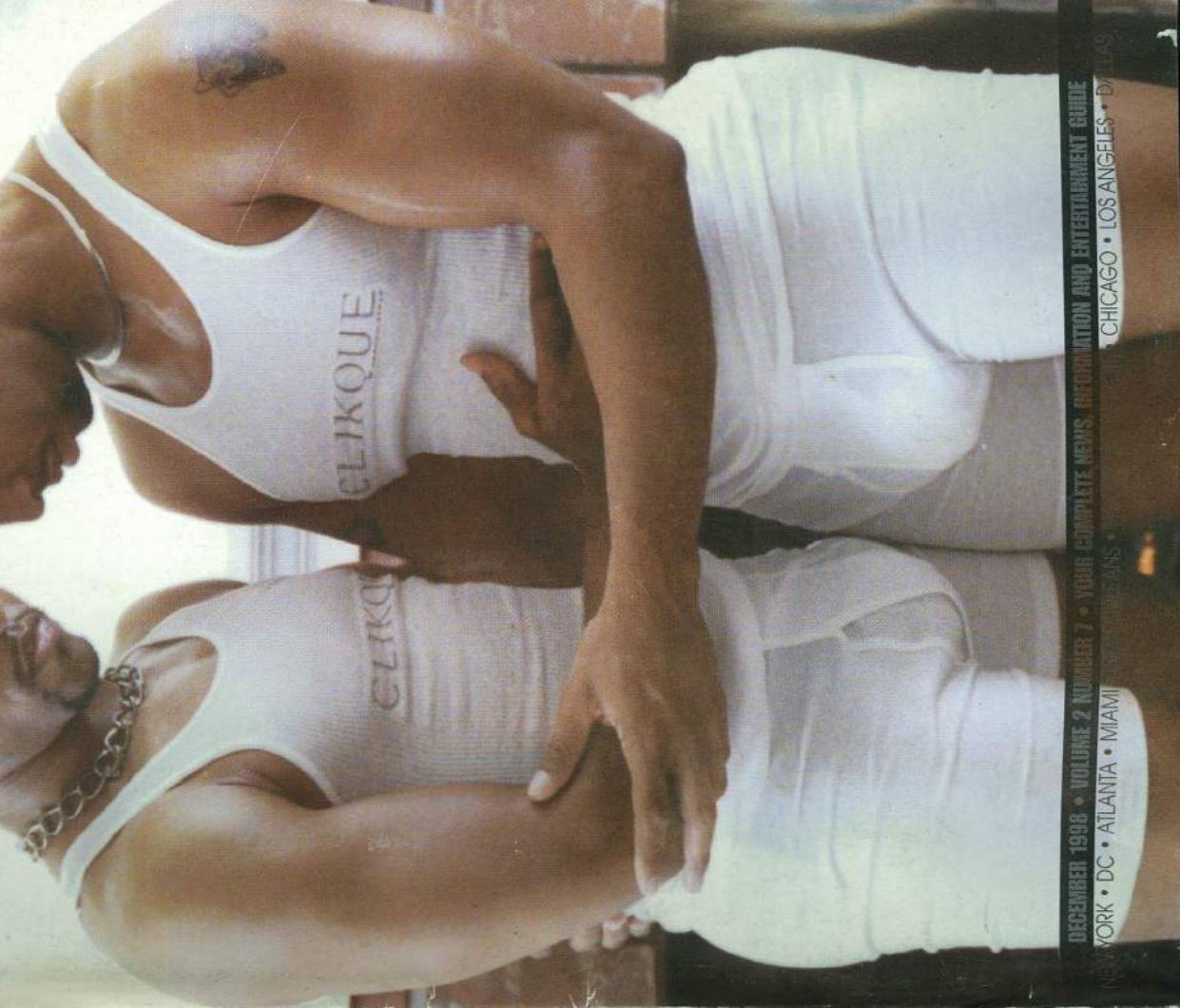
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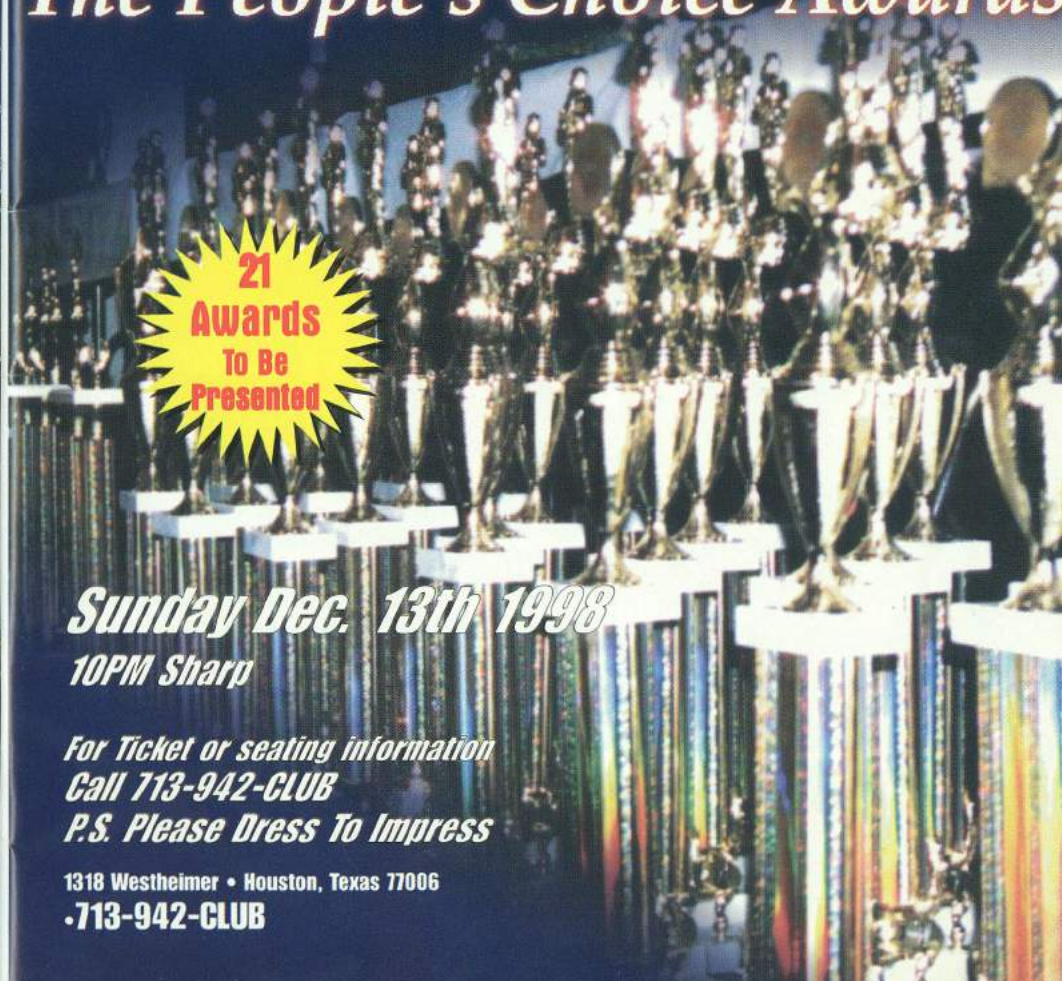
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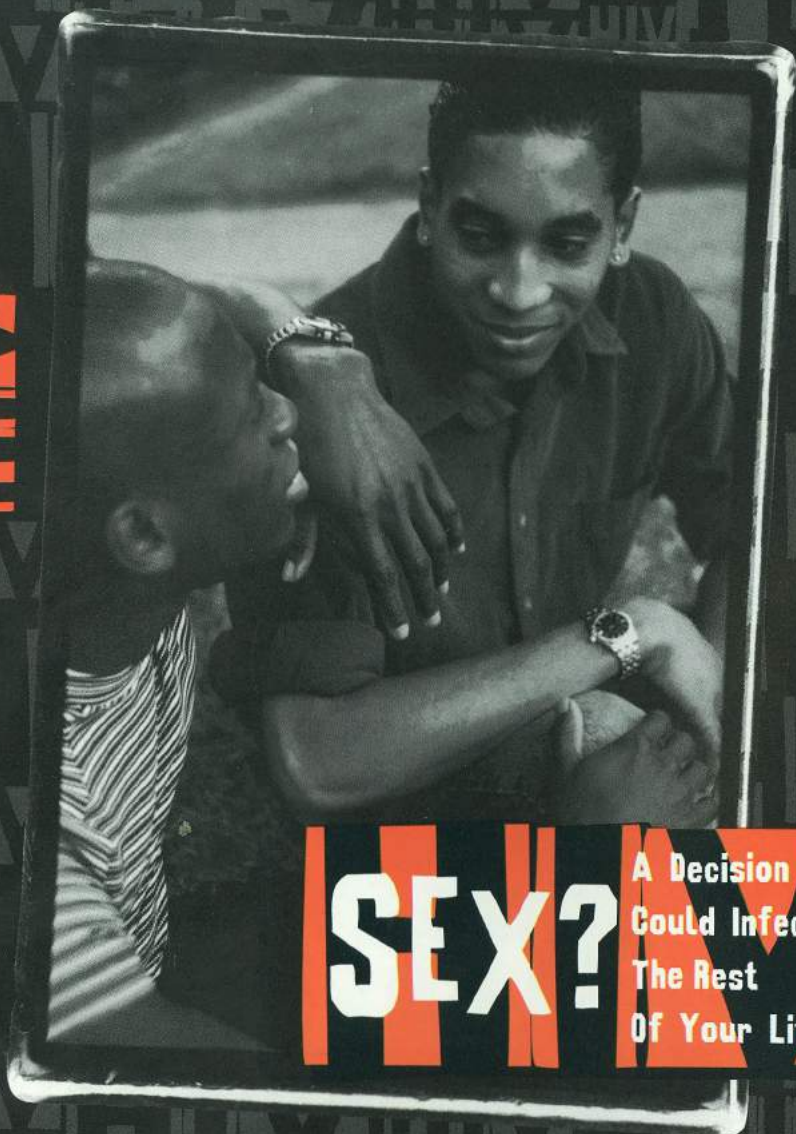
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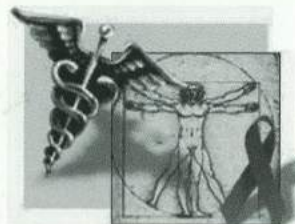


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HIV/AIDS HEADLINERS

Cancer drug may flush out hidden AIDS virus



Researchers believe they may have found a way to use a natural immune system chemical to wipe out the "safe havens" where the virus that causes AIDS can hide.

The chemical, interleukin-2, is an immune boosting drug normally used to treat some cancers. But researchers say preliminary tests have shown it may be a new weapon against AIDS.

Patients took interleukin-2 along with a so-called "drug cocktail" — a mixture of highly active anti-retroviral therapy (HAART) drugs.

The cocktail approach has been effective in knocking down HIV to very low levels. But when the patients go off HAART, the virus rebounds in their system.

In 1982, Mark Deal was infected with HIV. But today, after undergoing the new experimental interleukin-2 treatment, doctors can't find a trace of the virus in his blood. Even a lymph node biopsy proved negative for HIV.

'Another step forward' But Dr. Anthony Fauci says Deal is not cured and the virus may still be lurking in his body, ready to re-emerge. Fauci is the head of the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), which conducted the study. "What this is, I believe, is another step forward towards suppressing the virus and getting to the point where we may be able to control it," Fauci said. Fourteen other patients in the study had similar results to Deal — no sign of the virus.

Scientists have found HIV to be a wily adversary because the virus attacks immune cells, making it

hard to reach. All the drugs now on the market attack HIV while it is in an active, replicating phase.

Some infected immune cells go into a "resting" phase that can last for years and make the tainted cells immune to HAART drugs. Interleukin-2 is a cytokine or signaling chemical used by the immune system. It flushes out the "resting" T-cells, making them vulnerable to the anti-viral drug cocktails.

Powerful side effects

The drug cocktails are similar to chemotherapy for cancer patients. While remarkably effective, they're also highly toxic and can cause horrible side effects.

Patients are often nauseous and exhausted, and their cholesterol levels can soar. So the next step for researchers is to take the test patients off the drugs to see how they do.

The researchers said that interleukin-2 does not completely solve the problem of HIV reservoirs. The virus is also believed to hide in the brain and in other immune cells known as macrophages, as well as elsewhere in the body.

The NIAID announced its finding of the new study Sunday at a meeting of the Infectious Disease Society of America in Denver.

HEALTH & HIV/AIDS ASSISTANCE

CALIFORNIA

African-American Men's Health Project, 74 New Montgomery St. #600, San Francisco 94105, 415-597-9137.

African-American AIDS, Support Services and Survival Institute, 351 - 15th St., Oakland 94612-3303, 510-433-9377, 510-835-4206 (fax).

AIDS Project of the East Bay, 651 - 20th St., Oakland 94612, 510-834-8181.

AIDS Prevention Team, 1219 S. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles 90019, 213-964-7820, 213-964-7830 (fax).

Black Community AIDS Research and Education Project, 405 Hilgard Ave., Box 951563, Los Angeles 90095-1563, 310-825-9858.

Brothers Network, 973 Market St. #650, San Francisco 94103, 415-356-8140, 415-356-8156 (fax).

HIV Survival Group for People of Color, IKUNU Program, 220 N. Euclid Ave. #130, San Diego 92114, 619-527-2477.

Minority AIDS Project, 5149 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles 90016, 213-936-4949, 213-936-4973 (fax).

National Task Force on AIDS Prevention, 973 Market St. #600, San Francisco 94103, 415-356-8100, 415-356-8103 (fax), 415-

356-8138 (fax), ntfap@aol.com

People of Color AIDS Survival Effort, 3177 Ocean View Blvd., San Diego 92113, 619-231-9300.

Positive Connection, 5149 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles 90016, 213-936-4949, 213-936-4973 (fax).

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HIV Support Group for African/American Men and Women, Whitman-Walker Clinic, 1407 S St., N.W., Washington 20007, 202-797-3591.

Intergroup Minority Project: AIDS Consortium and Trust (IMPACT), 300 I St., N.E. #301, Washington 20002, 202-5-IMPACT.

National Minority AIDS Council, 1931 - 13th St., N.W., Washington 20009, 202-483-6622, 202-483-1135 (fax), nmac2@aol.com

Us Helping Us: People into Living, 819 L St., S.E., Washington 20003-3650, 202-842-1337, 202-547-1258 (fax).

GEORGIA

AID Atlanta — Depper Love Workshop, 1438 W. Peachtree St., Atlanta, Ga. 404-872-0600 x271

AIDS Education and Services for Minorities, 1432 Donnelly Ave., S.W., Atlanta 30310, 404-753-2900, 404-752-9610 (fax).

AIDS Survival Project, 828 West Peachtree St., Atlanta, Ga. 404-874-7926, asp@mindspring.com

Brothers Back-2-Back, Box 7721, Atlanta 30357-0721.

ILLINOIS

Brothers Projects, 6540 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago 60637, 773-667-8313.

Minority Outreach Intervention Project, 1255 S. Wabash #2S, Chicago 60605, 312-986-0661, 312-986-0928 (fax).

Men of Color Against AIDS, 95 Berkeley St., 3rd Fl., Boston 02116, 617-423-6622, 617-423-4278 (fax).

Multicultural AIDS Coalition, 801 Tremont St., #B, Boston 02119-1065, 617-442-1622, 716-442-6622 (fax), multia@aol.com

MICHIGAN

Project Survival, 1150 Griswold, Detroit 48226, 313-961-2027, 313-961-0780 (fax).

NEW YORK

Caribbean Women's Health Assoc., 244 Utica Ave., Brooklyn 11213, 718-826-2942.

Haitian Coalition on AIDS, 50 Court St. #605, Brooklyn 11201, 718-855-7275.

Majority Action Committee, ACT-

UP, Box 7932, New York 10150.

Men of Color AIDS Prevention, Office of Gay and Lesbian Health Issues, Dept. of Health, 125 Worth St. #1100, Box 67, New York 10013, 212-788-4310, 212-788-9661 (fax).

Minority Task Force on AIDS, 475 Riverside Dr. #1374, New York 10115, 212-870-2691, 212-870-2607 (fax).

People of Color in Crisis, 462 Bergen St., Brooklyn 11217, 718-230-0770, 718-230-7582 (fax).

VOCAL, c/o Office of Gay and Lesbian Health Issues, Dept. of Health, 125 Worth St. #601, Box 67, New York 10013, 212-566-4995.

PENNSYLVANIA

Blacks Educating Blacks about Sexual Health Issues (BEBASHI), 1233 Locust St. #401, Philadelphia 19107-5414, 215-546-4140.

TEXAS

Renaissance II, Brother 2 Brother Project, 2606 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. #203, Dallas 75215-6397, 214-421-4343, 214-421-2140 (fax).

VIRGINIA

Community HIV/AIDS Prevention Services, 1224 Princess St., Alexandria 22314, 703-549-4232, 703-768-9665 (fax).

Well, well, well. How time flies. It was only ten months that I began publishing Klikque Magazine (in this color, glossy format).

Along with the assistance of Lewis Nicholson and Nestor Zapata, Klikque Magazine verged on the scene with a new and exciting approach of offering print media for the Black Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual and Transgendered (BGLBT) community.

Although there were a few other similar publications being offered, there wasn't and still isn't one quite like Klikque... We are truly unique.

Back then, we had a page count of 32. Now we are at 64. Not to insinuate that "bigger is better", but rather to illustrate that we have grown and that we will continue to grow over the next few months.

Flipping through these pages, you will notice that our format and flow has been enhanced a little. We have added a few new, interesting sections, and provided a lot more articles and news worthy issues to read about. All of this is in an attempt to educate, entertain and inform you, our valued readers and subscribers. Moreover, this effort is also in an attempt to retain and gain readership of this fine publication, which is truly second to none in the nation.

On a different note, at Klikque, we have a primary focus, and that focus is to serve our entire community. As a result, some of you have criticize our flow and format. We feel that it is our responsibility to highlight every segment within our community. Would we have been any different from those that discriminates against other races or our gay lifestyles, had we not included female impersonator or transgendered individuals in our magazine. Further, Would we have been any different from those that discriminates against lesbians and bi-sexuals, had we not included them as well.

Who knows why we do the things we do, say the things we say, or act the way in which we do. There are many heterosexuals that insist that our behavior is a learned behavior and that we can change our lifestyles if we really wanted to. Do you believe that. If you disagree with that assessment, we challenge you to be more tolerant of others. It is our belief, that unless a persons action affects you physically, you should learn to respect each others values and our differences. This is a segment taught in Steven Cuvey's, Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People. So the next time you fix you mouth to say something negative about another person within our community, call us and we will be glad to lend you Steven Cuvey's book.



CLIKQUE MAGAZINE

PUBLISHER / CO-EDITOR
Dwight Powell

CO-EDITOR
Lewis Nicholson
*(Not to be held accountable for any errors
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**BUSINESS/COVER
COORDINATOR**
Nestor Zapata

ART DIRECTOR /GRAPHIC ARTIST
Dwight Powell

SPECIAL EVENTS CO-ORDINATORS
Randé Rochelle / Niesha Dupree

SENIOR STAFF WRITER
Andrew McCarthy / Scott Bogan

STAFF WRITERS
Todd Edwards / Lynwood Jenkins
Craig Washington / Anthony Rucker

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Damone M. Burchette, Frederick French,
Tim Gardner, Kevin Sutton,
Khalid Dawuud Idawu, Doc Hoskins Jr.

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Renwick Farmer

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Lewis Nicholson, Dwight Powell
Nestor Zapata

OFFICE ADDRESS
931 Monroe Drive, Suite 102-279,
Atlanta, GA, 30308

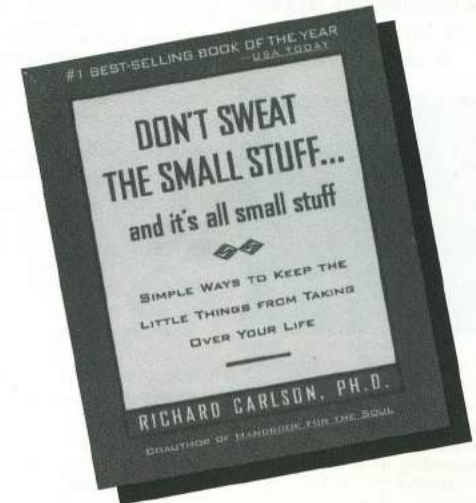
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Borrowed Message From The Publisher The Following is chapter one of:



DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

Often we allow ourselves to get all worked up about things that, upon closer examination, aren't really that big a deal. We focus on little problems and concerns and blow them way out of proportion. A stranger, for example, might cut in front of us in traffic. Rather than let it go, and go on with our day, we convince ourselves that we are justified in our anger. We play out an imaginary confrontation in our mind. Many of us might even tell someone else about the incident later on rather than simply let it go.

Why not instead simply allow the driver to have his accident somewhere else? Try to have compassion for the person and remember how painful it is to be in such an enormous hurry. This way, we can maintain our own sense of well-being and avoid taking other people's problems personally.

There are many similar, "It small stuff" examples that occur every day in our lives. Whether we had to wait in line, listen to unfair criticism, or do the lion's share of the work, it pays

enormous dividends if we learn not to worry about little things. So many people spend their life energy "sweating the small stuff" that they completely lose touch with the magic and beauty of life. When You commit to working toward this goal you will find that you will have far more energy to be kinder and gentler.

This Book Can Be Found At A Bookstore Near You

HEADLINEERS

HIV/AIDS

U.N.: Number of AIDS cases up by nearly 6 million



The estimated number of people with the AIDS virus is expected to increase by nearly 6 million in 1998, with the majority of the new cases in Africa, according to a U.N. report released Tuesday.

"This epidemic is not losing its steam worldwide," said Sally Cowal of the United Nations.

Some 33 million people worldwide are infected with HIV, according to the report by the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS and the World Health Organization. Two-thirds of all new cases are developing in sub-Saharan Africa, where there are 5,500 funerals every day for people who have died of AIDS. In Mutare, Zimbabwe, an estimated two out of every five pregnant woman are HIV positive.

There will be an estimated 2 million deaths from AIDS in 1998 in sub-Saharan Africa, four times the total for the rest of the world, the report said.

A "prevention failure"

"In Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, current estimates show that between 20 percent and 25 percent of people aged 15-49 are living with HIV or AIDS," the report said. The report said 5.2 million people ages 15 to 49 worldwide had been infected with HIV this year.

Ten percent of the new cases were reported in South Africa, according to the report. More than 10 percent of the adults are believed to be infected in the Central African Republic, the Ivory Coast, Djibouti and Kenya, the report said.

"Every one of these new HIV

infections represents a prevention failure -- our collective failure," said Dr. Peter Piot, executive director of the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS.

Clare Short, Britain's International Development Secretary, said condoms need to be widely available in poorer countries.

"It needs to become as easy to get hold of a condom in a poor country as Coca-Cola," Short said at a news conference in London, where the U.N. report was officially launched.

Bill Roedy, president of MTV Networks International, said the music channel would promote condom use in an upcoming series of programs.

'Condoms are cool'

"Quite simply, condoms are cool, and using them is cooler. We want to make it trendy, hip and cool to use condoms," Roedy said.

In North America and Western Europe, combination drug therapies have reduced drug deaths. But the rate of new infections has remained unchanged in recent years, the report said.

The report emphasized that the numbers were all provisional and could not be compared directly with estimates in previous reports.

However, most of the world cannot afford to spend the nearly \$20,000 a year per person for the HIV drugs that are keeping many AIDS victims in the United States and Europe alive.

Prevention programs are expensive. The United Nations used the report to push for the development of a vaccine and for more well-targeted prevention programs, like a program under way in Thailand. But programs are expensive, and many of the hardest-hit nations already are in debt. The United Nations is urging that the debts be forgiven. Several nations plan to forgive debts for the countries devastated by Hurricane Mitch.

"I think it's certainly an emergency equivalent to the emergency of a natural disaster such as a hurricane," Cowal said.

But the United Nations fears that, due to the success of the drug

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HEADLINEERS

HIV/AIDS

"cocktails" in treating AIDS, people in the United States and Europe have grown complacent about AIDS and won't do enough to help stop the epidemic in poorer countries.

New Viagra label warns of severe side effects for some



FDA says drug still safe for most

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — New warnings about the possible health risks of Viagra have been added to the drug's label after 69 men were reported to have died after taking it, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said Tuesday.

While stressing that it still believes Viagra is safe, the FDA said the new warnings make clear that patients who have a history of heart attack or severely low blood pressure, or other kinds of heart

disease, should be carefully examined before getting a prescription for the drug.

The FDA said Viagra's maker, Pfizer, was changing the label to take account of reports of deaths and severe side effects in some of the millions of men who have taken the blockbuster impotence drug since it went on the market in April.

"The revised labeling addresses post-marketing reports of heart attacks, sudden cardiac deaths, and hypertension," the FDA said in a statement. It also noted that patients who have heart disease are at risk from sexual activity anyway and have to be especially careful if they use Viagra.

It also warns of the risk of priapism — a prolonged and painful erection. "This is a serious condition that requires immediate medical attention. The labeling advises patients to seek prompt medical attention if their erection lasts longer than four hours."

The FDA noted that many men were left out of the original safety trials for Viagra, including men who had suffered heart attacks, stroke or dangerous arrhythmia within six months, men with dangerously high or low blood pressure, men with heart failure or unstable angina (chest pains), or retinitis pigmentosa, an eye disorder.

"The new labeling notes that if Viagra is prescribed for these patients, it should be done with caution," it said.

Pfizer already warns that people taking nitrate-based drugs for their heart disease must not use Viagra, as the drug interaction can kill them.

FDA not unduly worried

"Revised in consultation with FDA, the new labeling is intended to help make sure that consumers and doctors are fully informed about the benefits and risks of using Viagra, know that consideration must be given to the cardiovascular status of patients prior to prescribing Viagra, and know how to safely use the drug," the FDA said.

The FDA said it was not unduly worried about the reports that have flooded in about Viagra.

"Reports involving Viagra constitute only a small fraction of the more than 6 million prescriptions written for this drug. FDA continues to believe Viagra is safe and effective if used according to the updated labeling," it said.

Letters published in the New England Journal of Medicine last month warned of a possibly fatal lung complication and described problems one 71-year-old man had with his pacemaker after taking Viagra.

In August, the FDA said it was studying reports that at least 69 people had died while taking Viagra, known generically as sildenafil.

The drug is only approved for prescription to men, but some doctors say they are also giving it to women. It works by increasing blood flow to the sexual organs.

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Monthly Commentary By Craig Washington

"Smokin' Room"

One chilly Wednesday evening last January, I found myself in a cozy candlelit room with over a dozen men. Comforted by the warmth of our communion and an overactive heater, we divided into groups of 3 or 4 and talked about what we liked and disliked about other gay (or "same-gender-loving", if you prefer) men. As we hit the "dislike" list, one gentleman offered, "I don't like sissies. You know those flamboyant queens." Alas, his words travelled farther than he might have expected. The remark pricked the ears of one young brother who then added to *his* group's list: "Gay men who don't like queens." Shortly afterward, the younger man headed for the door. He loudly announced to no one in particular, "I'm gonna walk outside for a smoke." "No," he corrected himself, "I'm going to sashay. You know how us queens like to sashay!" It was a moment of truth.

On another Wednesday evening last October, a well known black drag performer from Baltimore was attacked by a large group of youths, shot six times and left for dead. Fortunately, Leonard "Lynn" Vines survived the assault. Vine was going to pick up a key from his cousin's apartment when the thugs spotted him and said they "didn't allow no drag queen faggot bitches" into their neighborhood. One punched him then another shot him in his chest, back, and shoulder. He was released to his mother's care on November 3 and is now in a wheelchair. It will take awhile before he can return to his job with a housekeeping agency.

Some of you are gagging if you haven't already heard. Others may well be asking how did this happen and who is really to blame. What should we think about Miss Leonard? Should we assume that he might not have been attacked had he either butched it up or wore more fabulous drag? Perhaps he should have known better than to take his flamboyant self to "their" neighborhood. After all, don't we bring this on our selves when we wear "our sexual orientation on our sleeve"? Oh, excuse me, I said "we" when Leonard Vines is after all a drag queen. And it's those effeminate ones that make it difficult for the rest of us to be accepted. If it weren't for them, then we who conform to mainstream gender expression would not be reviled no matter

how deviant our sex lives may be. Even though many of us "take it," it's alright as long as we "take it like a man." Why even Bishop Eddie Long would have to marry us if we scrubbed away the sissyness and snatched the sash out of our shay.

Don't get me wrong people. I am often turned on by a man in Timberlands or Oxford wingtips. I used to even think it was a compliment when straight folks mistook me for hetero. Wisdom and experience has brought me to a different place. I am not anti-but, I just think sometimes we worship "Raheim" and "straight-appearing men" without looking at why. How much have we bought into a cult of masculinity that doesn't really work for "straight" men? Where do we draw the line of acceptable gayness and how dare, I mean, do we define a subculture of "superdeviants" out of the "deviant" lot of us? We don't need to "niggerfy" somebody in order to feel normal or good or powerful or beautiful or any of things that we, all of us, already are. Let us pray (or however else you send positive energy) for Leonard Vines and his family. Let us seek within our hearts the true lessons this incident holds for us.

Peace, CW

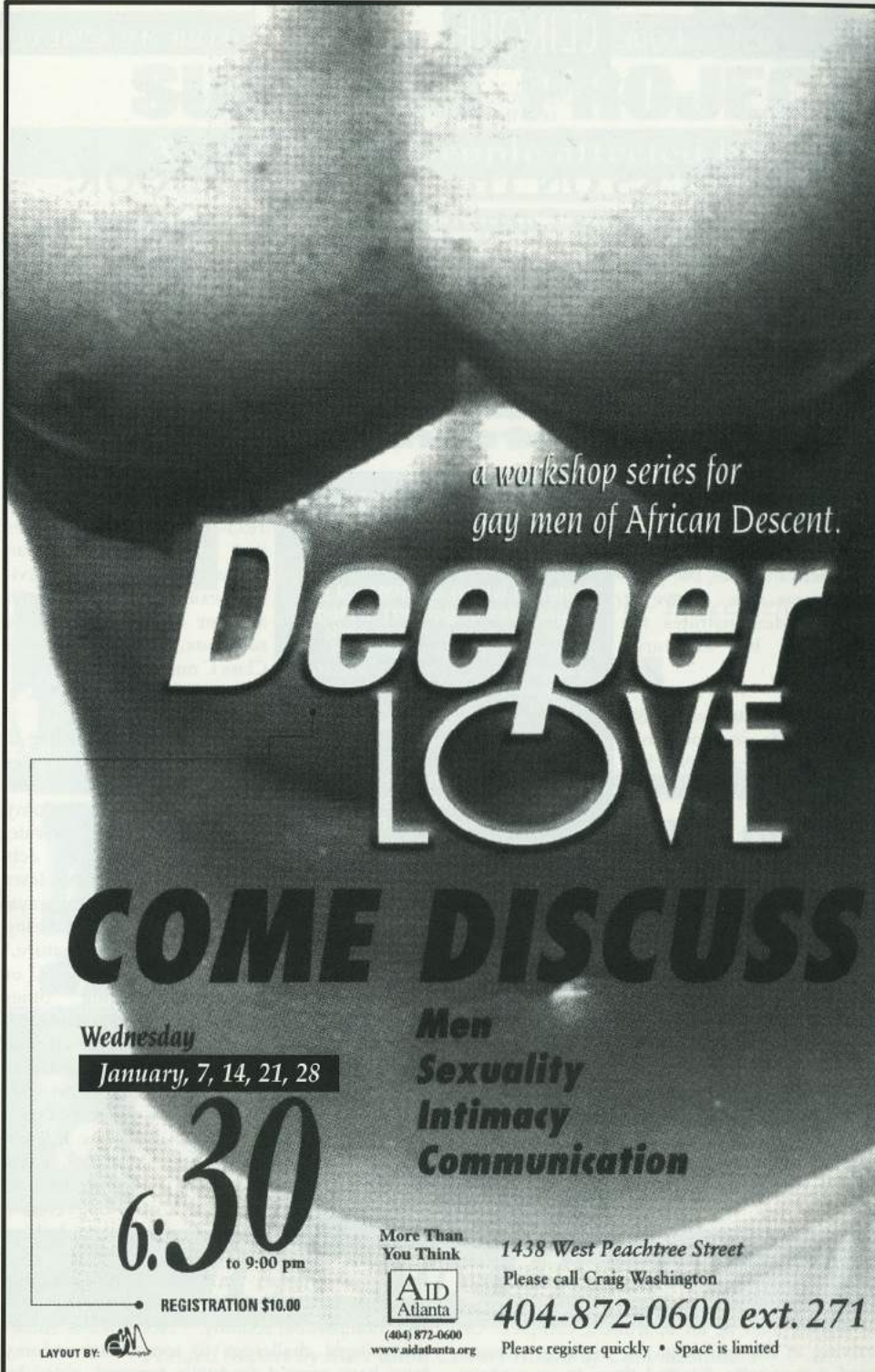
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THE INTERNATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact Sydney Levy, IGLHRC, — 1-415-253-8680

NO LOCKS ON THE BEDROOM DOOR: *Sodomy Laws Carry a Skeleton Key in Texas*

In a startling move, police in Houston, Texas have jailed two adult men for engaging in consensual "homosexual conduct" in a bedroom. The policemen were called to the residence as a result of a supposedly burglar attempt. Although the men performed the acts in a private apartment belonging to one of them, sheriff's deputies apparently witnessed the conduct and arrested them. The men face charges under the state's 119-year-old sodomy law.

Such laws exist in almost half the American states, but prosecutions are rare. However, this case demonstrates the laws can be arbitrarily enforced.

"This is just unbelievable that in 1998, this sort of arrest could happen," said Mitchell Katine, attorney for one of the men.

The case may well be a landmark test of the right to privacy in American law. A decade ago, the United States Supreme Court held that even consensual homosexual acts committed by adults behind closed doors can be subject to criminal prosecution. This case may give courts an opportunity to revisit the question, determining whether gays and lesbians have any rights to privacy—or to equal protection—under the law.

The two accused men were seized on September 17 by two Harris County sheriff's deputies responding to a false report of an armed man at an apartment complex. On arriving at the building, the deputies encountered a man who directed them to an upstairs

apartment unit. The man later admitted the story of an intruder was untrue, and has been convicted of making a false report to an officer. However, in the unit, deputies apparently discovered two men engaged in a sexual act. The men were held in jail for several hours before being released on bail. They faced an arraignment November 20. Their names have not been released. See Page For an Update

DO YOU KNOW THE LAW THAT GOVERNS YOUR STATE?

States in which all anal/oral sex (regardless of gender) is illegal

Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah & Virginia

States that criminalize anal/oral sex only between partner of the same gender.

Arkansas, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, Texas

States that have no statute regarding sodomy:

Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming

States that have anti-discrimination laws based on sexual orientation:

California, Colorado (only covers public employment), Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Wisconsin

Chapter 21, Sec. 21.01 of the Texas Penal Code provides that "A person commits an offense if he engages in deviate sexual intercourse with another individual of the same sex." The offense is a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$500.

As of early 1998, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, 22 American states still retained so-called "sodomy laws" which penalize private, consensual sexual acts between adults. These laws are phrased in different ways, variously criminalizing "crimes against nature," "unnatural acts," "sodomy," or "buggery," among other terms. Many do not specifically mention the genders of the participants. Texas' law is one of six which target only same-sex acts. (The other such laws are in Arkansas, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, and Oklahoma). In 1987, the U. S. Supreme Court delivered a devastating blow to lesbian and gay rights by finding such

laws constitutional. In *Bowers v. Hardwick*, the court ruled that the right to privacy does not protect "homosexual sodomy." Nonetheless, subsequent legal challenges to some state sodomy laws have moved gradually forward, aided by

Continued On Page 47

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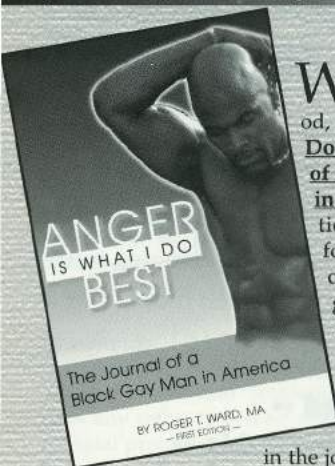
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The South's Source for Information on Our Lives

CLIKQUE ON BOOKS



Written over a four year period, **Anger Is What I Do Best: The Journal of a Black Gay Man in America**, is a fictional narrative focusing on the life of an adult Black gay male named Zachary Booth who lives and works in present-day Houston, Texas. Presented

in the journal format, this narrative describes both honestly and first-hand the paradoxical life Booth has had to lead as a mature and educated Black gay male trying to find personal happiness and acceptance in the racist and homophobic atmosphere of modern-day Houston, Texas. This narrative is also about alcohol and substance abuse recovery. Stark, heart-breaking, paradoxical, humorous,

intelligent, and seemingly pathetic in places, this journal reveals the often-cited feelings of isolation and loneliness associated with being Black, gay, and having to live a dual life among family, co-workers, and the world at large.

"There is sorrow, pain, and yes anger here. But it is not anger of the typical sort. It is anger that is widespread, diverse, and inclusive. It reaches out to touch all segment of society; however, it still remains singular and hurting."

Harold McClain - University Professor

"This book is a work of tremendous courage and honesty, looking squarely at the multiplicity of issues which contribute to the making of the black gay male identity. I applaud the unflinching light shown on the harsh, bittersweet realities of one segment of life in contemporary society. And yet, in a very real sense, the issues explored are relevant to us all."

The Rev. Phillip A. Jackson - Incarnation Episcopal Church, Houston, Texas.

Georgia Strikes Down Sodomy Law

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, November 23, 1998

ATLANTA — By a vote of 6-1, the Georgia Supreme Court today struck down the state's 182-year old sodomy law. The court ruled that the law violated the right to privacy guaranteed by the state's constitution.

"We cannot think of any other activity that reasonable persons would rank as more private and more deserving of protection from governmental interference than consensual, private, adult sexual activity," said Chief Justice Robert Benham in his majority opinion.

The court also said that while many people may disapprove of sodomy, mere disapproval, even if based on morality, is not enough to overcome the right to privacy.

The American Civil Liberties Union, which had filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case, hailed the decision as a victory for lesbians and gay men everywhere.

"This wonderful decision brings us one step closer to the day when the government will no longer have the right to police anyone's bedrooms anywhere in the United States," said Debbie Seagraves, Executive Director of the ACLU of Georgia.

In reaching its decision, the court relied on three cases from Kentucky, Tennessee and Montana saying that sodomy laws which applied only to lesbians and gay men were unconstitutional. The ACLU also filed friend-of-the-court briefs in those cases.

Although today's decision involved heterosexual sodomy, the court invalidated the law for everyone, ruling that laws which "criminalize the performance of private, non-commercial acts of sexual intimacy" between consenting adults violate the right to privacy under the state constitution.

"It says something that the courts couldn't see their way to striking down the law in cases involving gay men, but could do so in what began as a rape case," said Matt Coles, Director of the ACLU's Lesbian and Gay Rights Project.

CLIKQUE ON ISSUES

"But no matter what case brought about the decision," Coles added, "this law will never again be used to justify firing a qualified lesbian or a gay man, or to separate parents from their children. And that is a very good thing."

The law invalidated by the court today is the same law that the U.S. Supreme Court upheld in a famous 1986 case, *Bowers v. Hardwick*, saying it did not violate the federal right to privacy. Just two years ago, the law was upheld in *Christensen v. State* by the same Georgia Supreme Court that invalidated it today. Both cases were brought by the ACLU.

The *Hardwick* and *Christensen* cases both involved gay men. Michael *Hardwick* was arrested in his own bedroom and Chris *Christensen* was arrested on his way to a motel room with another man.

Former Georgia Attorney General Michael Bowers also relied on the sodomy law as a justification for firing a lesbian employee who had a private commitment ceremony with her partner. That decision was later upheld by the federal courts in *Shahar v. Bowers*.

Today's decision involved a man who had been charged with forcing his wife's 17-year-old niece to engage in sodomy. He admitted to having sex with his niece, but claimed she had agreed, an argument the jury apparently accepted when it convicted him of the lesser offense of consensual sodomy.

Sodomy laws are still on the books in 14 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The laws, like Georgia's, apply to both same-sex and heterosexual partners. Five states have laws which apply only to lesbians and gay men.

In October, the ACLU won a decision striking down a Maryland law prohibiting oral sex for same-sex couples. The ACLU is also challenging Puerto Rico's law, and is challenging the application of a Mississippi law in a custody case. Laws in Arkansas and Texas are being challenged by Lambda Legal Defense Fund.

12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE PLANS ANNOUNCED BLACK LESBIAN AND GAY LEADERS TO MEET FEB. 11-14

The 12th Annual National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Conference and Institutes are set to convene next year in Atlanta, Georgia from February 11 to February 14, officials announced today.

"Lesbian and gay Black leaders from across the country will meet to discuss the role our community will play in the new millennium," said Willa Taylor, chair of the NBLGLF board of directors. "I'm particularly excited about the Policy and Empowerment Institute. Not only will participants gain valuable skills and learn more about the new initiatives the Forum is launching, but through small group work, people will end the day with a workable action plan for their home communities."

The Policy and Empowerment Institute is designed to build organizational capacity and promote community growth. The Literature Institute gathers writers, literature scholars and readers for an exploration of the Black lesbian and gay tradition. The Health and Wellness Institute concentrates on promoting sound health practices and updates on research and treatment. The final two days of the conference consist of workshops providing education, skills building and personal development.

Early registration deadline is December 15, 1998. Guaranteed registration deadline is January 21, 1999. Cut-off date for hotel reservations in the Westin Atlanta North at Perimeter Mall is January 21, 1999.

For further information, please contact Conference Coordinator Kenyatta Dorey Graves at 202-483-6786, by email at ForumConf@aol.com

The National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum is the only national organization dedicated to empowering the nation's 2.5 million black lesbians and gays. Founded in 1988, the Forum has thousands of members nationwide.



California Vote Set

The legal definition of marriage in California will be determined in 2000 under a measure that qualified on Tuesday for placement on the state ballot. California Secretary of State Bill Jones said the "Definition of Marriage" initiative, written by Republican state Sen. Pete Knight, had won a spot on the March 7, 2000, state primary ballot. On November 3, voters in Hawaii approved a ballot question allowing the state legislature to limit marriage to heterosexual couples. In Alaska, voters approved a ballot question that defined marriage as existing only between one man and one woman.

Georgia: Southern Baptists Ban Gay-Friendly Churches

Georgia's Southern Baptists said their vote to exclude congregations that endorse homosexuality was aimed at same-sex marriages and not gays as individuals. The vote came Tuesday as more than 2,400 representatives from churches around the state attended the Georgia Baptist Convention meeting in Columbus. There are more than 1 million Southern Baptists in Georgia, second only to Texas. A very small number of Baptist churches in Georgia endorse homosexuality, said the Rev. J. Robert White, executive director of the convention. The Rev. J. Gerald Harris, who was named the convention's new president, said Southern Baptists welcome homosexual individuals, but can't allow churches to advocate their behavior. "The unanimous verdict of scripture is that practicing homosexuality is a sin," said Harris, of Eastside Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia. "Love ... must not compromise the church's allegiance to scripture." The homosexuality provision says

that churches should not knowingly take any action to affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior. It was passed overwhelmingly with more than two-thirds of the vote. Several representatives spoke against the measure. "To speak on this very issue is perilous," said Bill Self of John's Creek Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. "I want to ask one simple question. This year, the homosexuals. Who's next, churches that receive African-Americans? Churches that allow women in the ministry?"



Anti-Gay Campaign By Some Church Groups Earlier This Year.

Carolina Baptist Church to Allow Same-sex Blessings

WINSTON-SALEM, North Carolina (Reuters) — A North Carolina Baptist church has decided to let its ministers bless same-sex couples, but not marry them, risking expulsion from the Baptist State Convention, church officials said Monday.

At a denominational meeting last week, Mac Brunson, president of the 1.2 million member state convention, was quoted as saying, "We can't condone sin," such as homosexuality.

The Wake Forest Baptist Church is the third Baptist church in the state to take a stand in favor of inclusion of homosexuals in church life.

The other two, Pullen Memorial Baptist in Raleigh, and Binkley Memorial Baptist in Chapel Hill, were subsequently ousted from the Baptist State Convention.

Members of Wake Forest Baptist Church on Sunday approved a statement asking God "to bless all loving, committed and exclusive

relationships between two people," but did not approve a statement affirming same-sex unions, officials said.

"What this means is that the church, as a body, does not affirm same-sex unions," said Richard Barnett, a deacon in the 350-member church. "But the church, as a body, does accept individual members' acceptance of same-sex unions."

Wake Forest will now permit its ministers to officiate a blessing ceremony for same-sex couples.

A blessing ceremony unites the couple in the eyes of the church but not legally, church officials said.

"We're more concerned with the effect this decision will have on our members than our connection with the Baptist State Convention," explained Ed Christman, a member of Wake Forest.

"The focus has been more on what this means for our long-standing members."

National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum Expresses Outrage at Violent Shooting of Black Gay Man in Baltimore

CALLS TO PASS NATIONAL HATE-CRIMES LEGISLATION

The National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum (NBLGLF) forcefully condemned the violent assault and shooting of a Black gay man in Maryland on Wednesday, October 28 as he was walking through the East Baltimore neighborhood where he grew up.

According to 31-year-old Leonard "Lynn" Vines, a lifetime resident of Baltimore, he was visiting family members and had planned to look at an apartment with his cousins that he was considering renting. Mr. Vines, who is a well-known drag performer in Baltimore and was dressed in drag at the time of the attack, said more than 20 young men and women approached him calling him a "drag queen faggot" and saying they did not allow "drag queen faggot bitches" to come through their neighborhood.

After repeatedly saying he did not want any trouble and that he was visiting his family, one of the assailants punched him in the face. As he tried to get away he was shot six times - twice in the arm, twice in the chest, once in the back and once in the shoulder.

Mr. Vines was able to drag himself to his cousin's front steps where he collapsed and was found moments later by his family. A firefighter who was nearby heard the gunshots and alerted the police and a medical response team. Amazingly, Mr. Vines survived the vicious attack and was released from the hospital yesterday, November 5. He is confined to a wheelchair and is expected to undergo a long painful recovery period.

America should be outraged by the targeting and attempted murder of a man who was simply minding his own business in his own neighborhood. This is certainly reminiscent of the recent murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming and the leaders of our nation must react and pass legislation to punish people who target citizens because of their sexual orientation, their gender,

their race or their religion. No more excuses!

How many people must die, how many people must be shot, how many of our brothers, sisters, sons and daughters must give their lives before we say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH," said Willa Taylor, Board Chair of NBLGLF.

"I believe that a climate has been created in this country which tells young people, like those who attacked Leonard Vines, that gays and lesbians are less than human and can be victimized at will. Why is it that gays and lesbians are the only group who are unprotected by our government against vicious crimes like this? That alone, sends a powerful message to people about the equality of gays in our society. People must stop and think, who is next? Who will be the target of these hate mongers when they have wiped gays and lesbians off the face of the earth?" said Anthony W. McCarthy, a Baltimore resident and a member of the Board of Directors of NBLGLF.

The Leadership Forum is calling on the Congress to pass Federal Hate

Crimes Legislation (H.R. 3081) which has been put on hold and marked for defeat by the Republican-led Congressional leadership.

An anti-violence and pro-hate crime legislation rally was held in Baltimore on Friday, November 6 in the 200 block of Madeira Street (where the assault took place) at 5:30 p.m. EST. Leonard Vines will be in attendance with members of his family. The rally is being organized by the Vines family in cooperation with NBLGLF, The Free State Justice Campaign (Maryland's gay rights organization), The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Baltimore.

The National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum is the only national organization that advocates for the nation's 2.5 million black lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people. Founded in 1988, the organization has thousands of members nationwide and across the world.

Clyburn replaces Waters as head of Congressional Black Caucus

WASHINGTON (AP) The new head of the Congressional Black Caucus says securing an accurate Census in 2000 and protecting affirmative action programs will be among his top priorities.

Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., ran unopposed Tuesday for the chairmanship of the caucus, succeeding Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif. His two-year term begins when the next session of Congress opens in January.

A low-profile legislator known for his administrative skills, Clyburn was first elected in 1992 as the first black to represent South Carolina since Reconstruction. He is also the first Southerner to head the Congressional Black Caucus, which was founded in 1971 to represent the interests of black members, which in the next Congress will comprise 36 Democratic representa-

tives and two non-voting delegates.

The one black Republican in Congress, J.C. Watts of Oklahoma, is not a member of the caucus.

Clyburn, 58, said in an interview that obtaining an accurate census in 2000 "is going to be a big issue with me." The administration wants to use scientific sampling to correct the past undercounting of minorities and other urban residents, but Republicans are insisting on individual headcounts.

That traditional method, Clyburn said, was "failing to give proper representation and proper respect to African Americans."

He said his caucus, strengthened by the strong black vote in the last election that was key to Democratic successes, would also push for more black judges and better environmental protections for people in minority communities.

He said Waters, a fiery speaker and

outspoken critic of GOP policies, was "just what we needed" after the Democrats' 1994 election losses. But "going into the 2000 election what we need is someone who is much more of a technician, someone much more interested in strategy."

"He's a conciliator," said caucus member Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas. "He will bring the caucus together and at the same time work well with all Democrats."

Clyburn was elected to Congress in 1992 after serving 18 years as South Carolina's Human Affairs commissioner. He has worked as a member of the Transportation Committee on such issues as improving roads in rural areas and has led efforts to secure money to renovate the nation's historically black colleges.

The caucus also chose Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas as first vice chairman, Corrine Brown of Florida as second vice chairman, Elijah Cummings of Maryland as secretary and Jackson Lee as whip.

Do You know Who Your Friends Are?

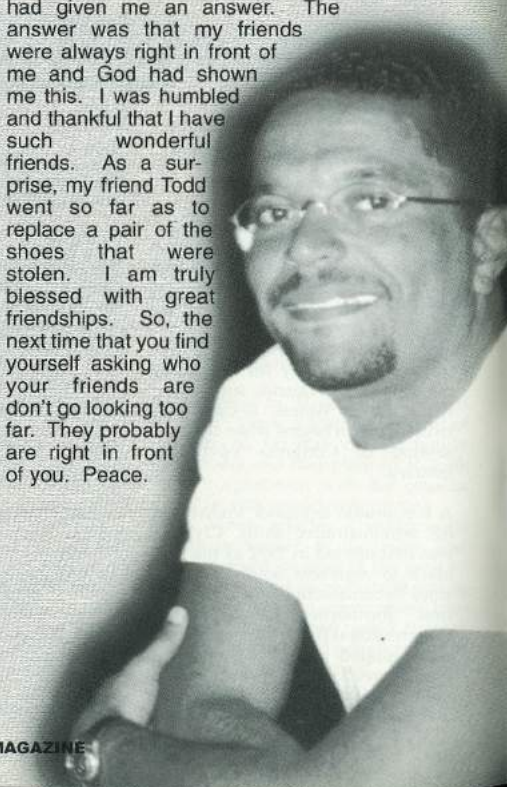
by Scott Bogan:

Recently, I was in New York City celebrating a friend's 40th birthday. My plans were to see my friends, say happy birthday and return to Atlanta. Little did I know that God had some life lessons in store for me. My trip started out like most trips. I arrived at the airport on time. Because I was only going to be in New York overnight all I had was a carry-on and my backpack. Thankfully, the Red Coat Agent was an acquaintance of mine, so I was upgraded to first class. With the exception of the man sitting next to me knocking over my orange juice, I was off to a good start. My friend met me at the World Trade Center, we picked up our gifts, grabbed some lunch and headed back to his place in Brooklyn. After we took a nap, we got dressed for the party. We arrived early because we had to help set up. A few hours later the guest arrived and was quite surprised. It was really great. As the night progressed, I found myself walking around the party looking at friends that I had not seen since this summer and I started questioning who my friends were. I started thinking to myself "who will be there when I turn forty", "who will be there if something happens to me"? It is said that when you put a question out into the universe, the answer will be revealed to you. Well, the answers to my questions were revealed to me the next day.

The next day we all planned to meet at Day-O in the village (it is one of my favorite Sunday Brunch's) at 2pm. I took my carry-on and my backpack to the restaurant because my flight left at 8:30pm. When we arrived at Day-O, I asked one of my friends if I could put my luggage in his car. He gave me the keys and I put my stuff in his trunk. We ate and drank for two hours. Whenever we get together we have such fun. As we left, we stood on the corner talking about what to do next. One of my friends' had a headache so I offered him some Tylenol that I had in my bag. I walked to the car, retrieved the Tylenol and returned to the corner. During my absence, my buddies talked to a girlfriend and we decided to meet up with her on 23rd St.. I was really excited about seeing Karen because I hadn't seen her since our vacation on the Vineyard. We had promised to stay in touch but for some reason we did not. We drove to 23rd St., parked and walked to Krispy Kreme. Karen joined us and we sat and talked for another hour and a half. So, around this time I needed to be headed to the airport. My friends' were going to take me to Port Authority to catch the shuttle and then they were going to have dinner. We all piled into my friends' rental car and headed to Port Authority. When we arrived, I jumped out and opened the trunk to get my luggage except when I opened the trunk nothing was there. I was shocked and stunned. My airline ticket, \$200.00, jewelry, my medication, all of my keys, new shoes, new clothes and most importantly my address book- all of it and much more, gone. I could not

think straight. My flight was leaving in an hour and I did not have a ticket. I did not know what to do. My friends immediately came to my rescue. One of them jumped on his cell phone and called my airline, another went and flagged down a police officer while another stood there rubbing my back consoling me. The whole time all of them are taking turns hugging me, telling me how sorry they are that this happened and asking me if I am ok. This was happening so much that I had to ask them to stop asking me if I was alright because if they did not I was going to cry and did not want to cry over "material things" that could be replaced. Anyway, to make a long story short- the police told me to file a report. The airline told me to come to the airport the next day with the police report and I would have to pay half of the face value of my ticket. Lastly, I was able to borrow medication from a friend. So, everything worked out (aside from my friend Todd turning Newark Airport out the next day, but that is another story).

It was not until the next day when I was on the plane returning to Atlanta that I realized why that incident happened to me. I remembered that I was walking around the party asking myself who my friends were and who was going to be there for me if something happened. I knew at that exact moment that I had asked God a question and God had given me an answer. The answer was that my friends were always right in front of me and God had shown me this. I was humbled and thankful that I have such wonderful friends. As a surprise, my friend Todd went so far as to replace a pair of the shoes that were stolen. I am truly blessed with great friendships. So, the next time that you find yourself asking who your friends are don't go looking too far. They probably are right in front of you. Peace.



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All Good Things

He was in the first third grade class I taught at Saint Mary's School in Morris, Minn. All 34 of my students were dear to me, but Mark Eklund was one in a million. Very neat in appearance, but had that happy-to-be-alive attitude that made even his occasional mischievousness delightful.

Mark talked incessantly. I had to remind him again and again that talking without permission was not acceptable. What impressed me so much, though, was his sincere response every time I had to correct him for misbehaving - "Thank you for correcting me, Sister!" I didn't know what to make of it at first, but before long I became accustomed to hearing it many times a day.

One morning my patience was growing thin when Mark talked once too often, and then I made a novice-teacher's mistake. I looked at Mark and said, "If you say one more word, I am going to tape your mouth shut!" It wasn't ten seconds later when Chuck blurted out, "Mark is talking again." I hadn't asked any of the students to help me watch Mark, but since I had stated the punishment in front of the class, I had to act on it.

I remember the scene as if it had occurred this morning. I walked to my desk, very deliberately opened my drawer and took out a roll of masking tape. Without saying a word, I proceeded to Mark's desk, tore off two pieces of tape and made a big X with them over his mouth. I then returned to the front of the room.

As I glanced at Mark to see how he was doing, he winked at me. That did it!! I started laughing. The class cheered as I walked back to Mark's desk, removed the tape, and shrugged my shoulders. His first words were, "Thank you for correcting me, Sister."

At the end of the year, I was asked to teach junior-high math. The years flew by, and before I knew it Mark was in my classroom again. He was more handsome than ever and just as polite. Since he had to listen carefully to my instruction in the "new math," he did not talk as much in ninth grade as he had in third. One Friday, things just didn't feel right. We had worked hard on a new concept all week, and I sensed that the students were frowning, frustrated with themselves - and edgy with one another. I had to stop this crankiness before it got out of hand. So I asked them to list the names of the other students in the room on two sheets of paper, leaving a

space between each name. Then I told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. It took the remainder of the class period to finish their assignment, and as the students left the room, each one handed me the papers. Charlie smiled. Mark said, "Thank you for teaching me, Sister. Have a good weekend." That Saturday, I wrote down the name of each student on a separate sheet of paper, and I listed what everyone else had said about that individual.

On Monday I gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. "Really?" I heard whispered. "I never knew that meant anything to anyone!" "I didn't know others liked me so much." No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. I never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. The students were happy with themselves and one another again. That group of students moved on. Several years later, after I returned from vacation, my parents met me at the airport. As we were driving home, Mother asked me the usual questions about the trip - the weather, my experiences in general. There was a lull in the conversation. Mother gave Dad a side-ways glance and simply says, "Dad?" My father cleared his throat as he usually did before something important.

"The Eklunds called last night," he began. "Really?" I said. "I haven't heard from them in years. I wonder how Mark is."

Dad responded quietly. "Mark was killed in Vietnam," he said. "The funeral is tomorrow, and his parents would like it if you could attend."

To this day I can still point to the exact spot on I-494 where Dad told me about Mark. I had never seen a serviceman in a military coffin before. Mark looked so handsome, so mature. All I could think at that moment was, Mark I would give all the masking tape in the world if only you would talk to me.

The church was packed with Mark's friends. Chuck's sister sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Why did it have to rain on the day of the funeral? It was difficult enough at the graveside. The pastor said the usual prayers, and the bugler played taps. One by one those who loved Mark took a last walk by the coffin and sprinkled it with holy water. I was the last one to bless the coffin. As I stood there, one of the soldiers

Continued On Page 48

HIP-HOP

THE POP BEHIND THE HYPE

First ridiculed as a fad, then marginalized as "black noise," rap music, often referred to as Hip-Hop, has become the most influential musical form of our times. Its techniques have been incorporated into R & B and rock music, creating new hybrids of sound. A wide range of products, from clothing to video games to soft drinks, utilize rap rhythms to sell themselves. And perhaps most importantly, rap has created an entire subculture and industry that enables black folk to empower themselves.

Currently, Hip-Hop is dominating the pop charts as never before, with even relatively unknown artists like Mia X debuting in the top 10. After predictions of rap's demise with the deaths of Tupac and Notorious B.I.G., it appears that rap's reach is stronger than ever.

The popularity surge extends to the black gay community as well. Whereas it was once difficult to associate hip-hop with a gay-friendly environment, clubs such as Phab in New York have opened eyes with their openly gay clientele. The

Hip Hop Over...

by:
Anthony Rucker



publication of James Earl Hardy's B-Boy Blues has not only shown another side of black gay male identity but also sent many men looking for their own personal ruffneck. And I have personally seen many former dance music fans eject house and bass music from their systems in favor of rap.

There is no shortage of explanations for the rise in rap's popularity. Some say the interest reflects the increasingly multicultural makeup of American society, in which people of color will assume greater presence than in the past. Others say that the maturation of the music and sophistication of production have made it more accessible to the masses. Yet others feel that sales figures are misleading and that hip-hop has sold its soul to corporate America.

To try and find out where the truth lies, let's look at some of the hottest artists out there and see where they fit in the equation.

To many, Lauryn Hill exemplifies all that is good about hip-hop. Here is a woman who sings as well as raps, writes her own material, and displays considerable production skills. Most media outlets have declared her the Queen of Rap and it's difficult to go two days without hearing or seeing L-Boogie.

Fortunately, Hill is one artist who is worthy of the hype. Her album merges traditional soul singing with hip-hop, a talent that gives her appeal to old schoolers and B-Boys alike. Her

disc speaks to women's issues and offers a more balanced outlook of black females compared to the likes of Lil Kim and Da Brat.

Puffy Combs is probably the most controversial figure in rap today. Depending on your frame of mind, he's either the most talented man in the biz or the antichrist. His productions have gone a long way towards making hip-hop danceable again, but at what price? Most of his samples are blatantly obvious, a tactic that is frowned upon by many "true" heads. What's worse, his lyrics are devoid of intellect, focusing almost exclusively on material goods and money. One of the more curious matters in some hip-hop circles is why Puffy is dismissed as a sellout while Wyclef Jean gets respect as a serious musician when they use similar production techniques (obvious samples, lots of remakes, all with an eye on pop appeal). In my opinion, both Puffy and Wyclef are best considered pop artists since their material reflects so little of the original spirit of hip-hop.

Master P has potentially replaced Puffy as the best paid performer in rap. More than anyone else, he symbolizes both the potential and problem in rap. In less than 5 years, P has gone from being a regional favorite to a multi-million dollar empire with ties to film, management, and music. Unfortunately, he's done so while essentially rhyming the same lyrics over and over ("Ugh") and building a roster in his image, with very little room for originality. His success proves you can make yourself into an

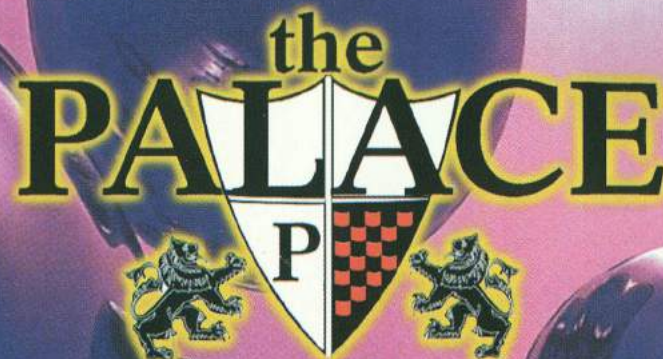
"overnight sensation" with hard work and a sound business plan, but hopefully the people he influences will be more musically inclined.

Jay Z's getting props for "Hard Knock Life," and deservedly so. The title song's use of an Annie sample is a brilliant concept: use the ultimate all-American musical as backdrop for reflections on ghetto life. His work explores the life of a hustler and reaps the double benefit of feeling "real" to hard knocks while fulfilling the ghetto fantasies of white suburban kids.

Outkast has surprised many people who have watched their latest album, Aquemini, rocket up the charts. Not the rap charts, where they've been a constant force, but on the pop charts. Outkast is representing southern black culture better than anyone out there, as evidenced by the video for "Rosa Parks," where you get a stepping band, harmonica player and other southern imagery in the mix. The ability of artists like Outkast and Master P to make the highest rungs of the pop charts without changing their content brings to mind the early 1970s, when decidedly black artists like the O'Jays and Curtis Mayfield hit the pop charts without trying.

While hip-hop is definitely leaving an impact on society, there remain some problematic areas within the culture. Perhaps the most painful is the level of hostility towards gays and lesbians. Despite the proven existence of gay hip-hop fans, they have been demonized or outright ignored by the larger hip-hop community. While much of

Continue On Page 28



7 DAYS OF EXCITEMENT BEGINS AT 5PM WHO NEEDS TO REST?

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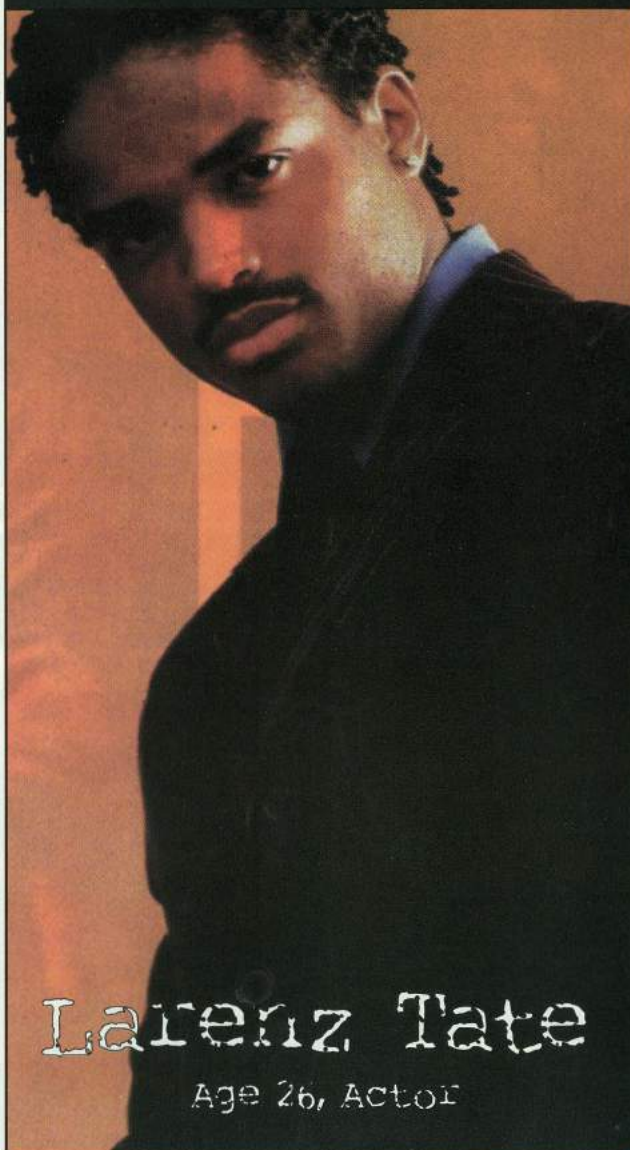
the blame must be attributed to fear and denial, we must also consider how our silence helps to perpetuate stereotypes. Mike Street, a same-gender-loving man who has worked with BET and Vibe magazine, states that "All the homosexuals work in the industry but help to maintain the heterosexual image. Many of the well known rappers are homosexuals, in relationships with other men, and happy to keep the industry the way it is. It will take a bold BROTHA to make a impact."

A second, and largely unknown, threat to hip-hop is the music industry itself. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), the trade association whose members control 90 percent of the music made in the country, is trying to require all samples, regardless of length, to be paid for. Any recording found to have uncleared samples runs the risk of being pulled from the pressing plant and destroyed. The plant pressing the "offending" material runs the risk of being fined.

This is notable for several reasons. One, it means that the cost of making records will increase substantially, meaning fewer people will be able to make records. Furthermore, this means more repetitive looping of established classics and less of the layered, multi-sample productions that have fueled innovations in hip-hop. It all boils down to the major labels expanding their control over hip-hop. The industry has never liked rap, and this move seems to be the latest attempt to penalize rap while profiting from it.

But as in the past, any attempts to stifle rap will fail because hip-hop is a street form that thrives on breaking the rules and defying the odds. Should there be a backlash against the commercial acceptance of rap, rest assured that a new hybrid will soon emerge. For hip-hop is black culture, and we are survivors.

Celebrity of The Month



Larenz Tate

Age 26, Actor

For movie directors, Larenz Tate is like a gift sent directly from heaven. Just the mention of his name in a movie these days guarantees success at the box office. This young, sexy, talented actor has appeared or starred in movies such as, Menace II Society, Inkwell, Dead Presidents, Love Jones, The Postman, and his most recent hit, Why Do Fools Fall In Love. Tate first made his acting debut on television in roles such as The New Twilight Zone and the Red Fox sitcom "Royal Family

I USE TO LOVE HIM, BUT I DON'T NOW!

BY TODD EDWARDS

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

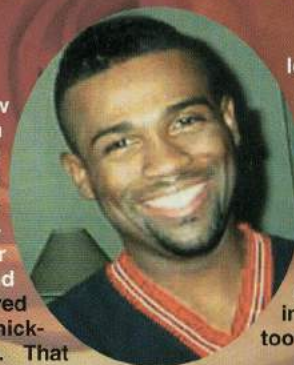
It was the day of the New Orleans Festival in San Antonio. My home boys and I were invited to a party by a mutual friend. I had recently separated from husband number three, therefore, a party or rather the freedom to attend single was as appealing as red fruit punch and a bucket of chicken on a Sunday after service. That evening I washed my "cat," adorned myself in black linen and me and my favorite home boys packed the Mercedes and headed out to terrorize the boy's. Love was present at this party as Whoopi stated in "How Stella Got Her Groove Back," "God is Here." The man I wanted to give of my time and energy to, was present. This man was affectionate, intelligent, ambitious, and an Attorney.

THE HOOK UP

My desire for this man heightened as I watched him gregariously interact with deep respect and affection with friends. I calculated an opportunity to drop the seven. I decided to give my number to a mutual friend and anticipate a phone call, a phone call that materialized two days after the party. Like Janet from the Velvet Rope, I thought that "My pussy would swell up and fall apart." On the other end of the receiver a strong New York accent reverberated. He introduced himself as the man from the party. We talked for hours, days, weeks. As I listened to his voice, I fantasized about his soft red lips and brown hair. A few weeks later we made plans to see each other. We decided to hook up at Splash, April 3, 1998, at the Doubletree, Guestquarters, Houston, TX.

THE DATING GAME

Our weekends were planned to spend time together, we talked, laughed, and exhausted



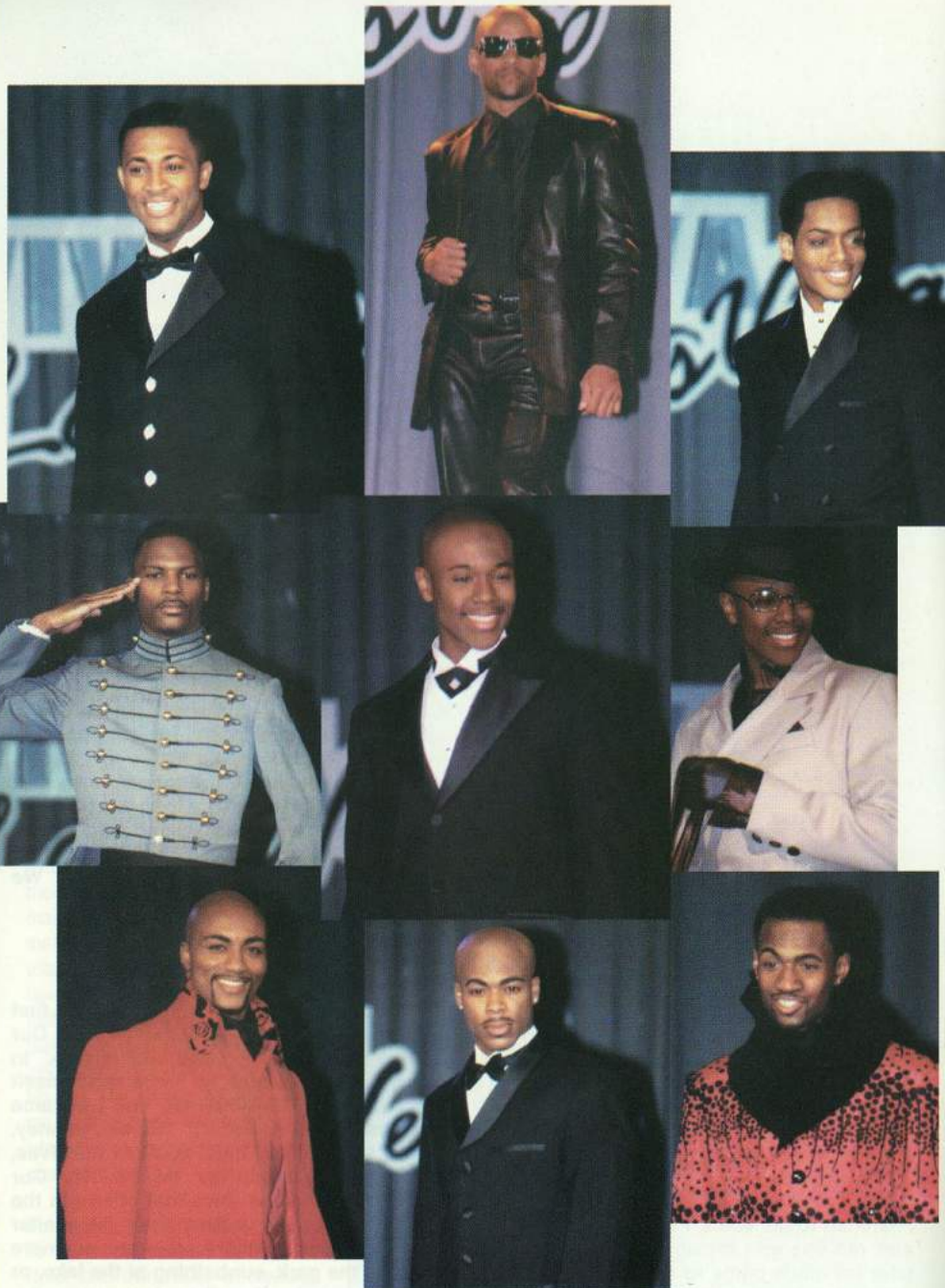
long days at the lake. The two of us absorbed the sun. Many hours were dedicated to intense conversation. We understood each other. Our favorite restaurant on Sunday mornings was Frank's, the food was good like our relationship, and tasty like our love making. I gave him white roses, in return he treated me well. We took strolls in the park.

LOVE

Love was demonstrated by means of respect for each other. I fell in love with someone who honored my aspirations. I applauded his efforts, his industriousness, his desire for success. When in need of assistance, we were there for each other. If I cried, he listened. After a long trip from out of town, dinner was prepared and ended with a kiss. We discussed children together and argued over who would have them. We were in love.

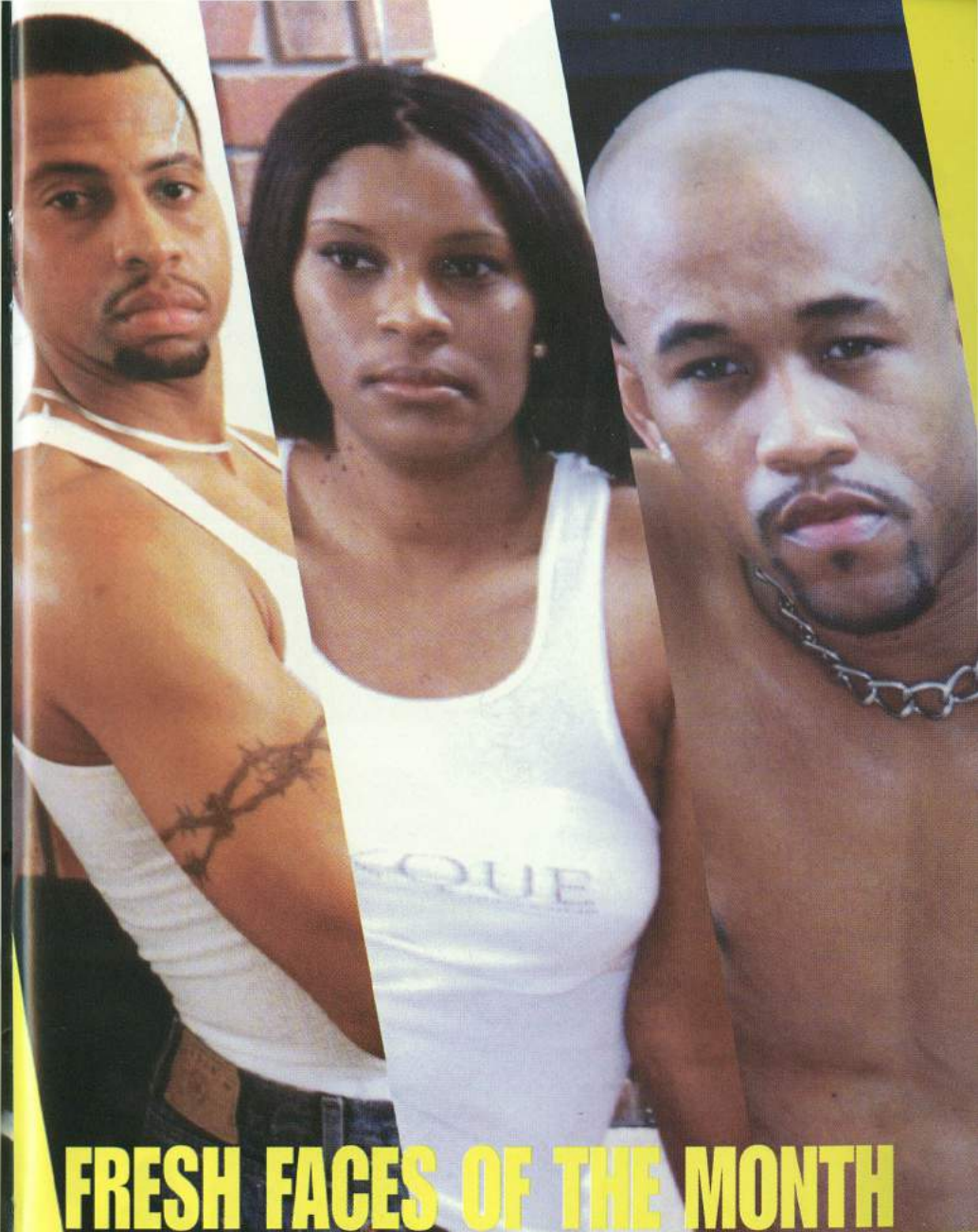
GROWING APART

As the relationship matured, I realized that we were both the victims of indifference. Our priority's no longer entailed relationship. In our quest for success, he immersed himself into books and the Internet, and I became engrossed in my acting. Career, money, family, became the focal point in our lives, leaving relationship last on the list. Our vision of being the item that others in the community could pattern their lives after changed. Eventually, there were no more walks in the park, sunbathing at the lake, or watching movies together, however, grits, eggs, pancakes and bacon at Franks on Sunday was tradition, partners or not I had to get my grub on. However, the friendship remains. As Lauren Hill said from the Miseducation of Lauren Hill, "I use to love him, but I don't now."



We Got It *Like That!*

Participants from the recent Mr. Black Universe in Atlanta, Ga.



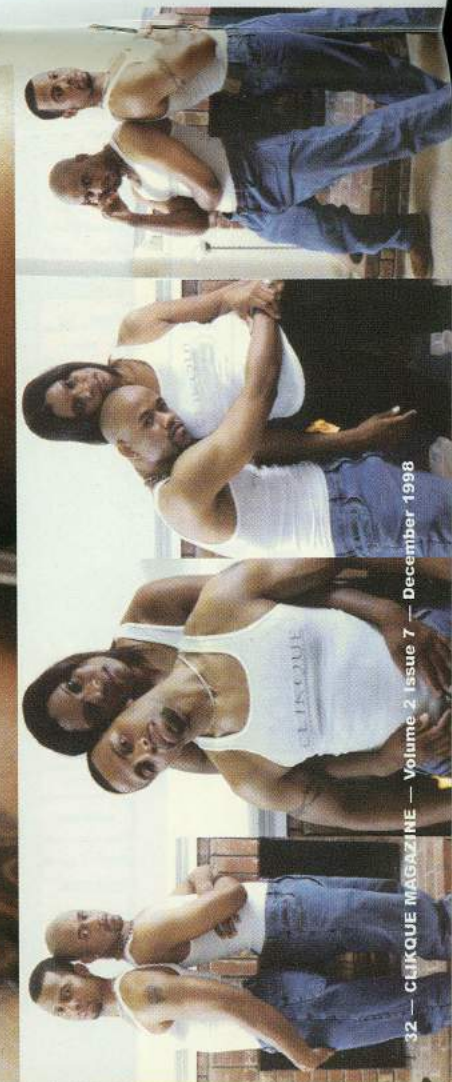
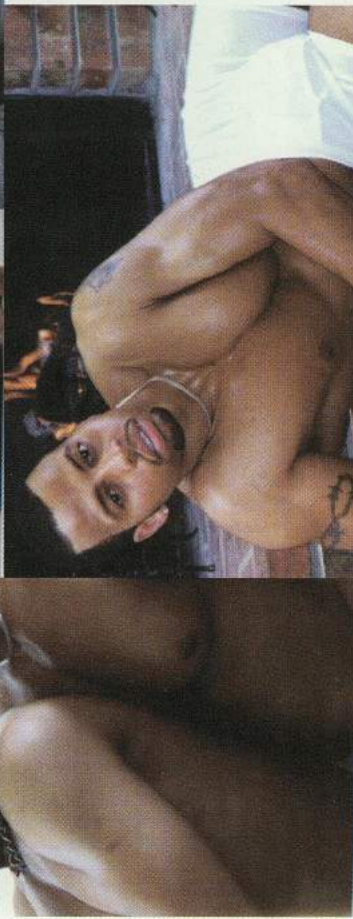
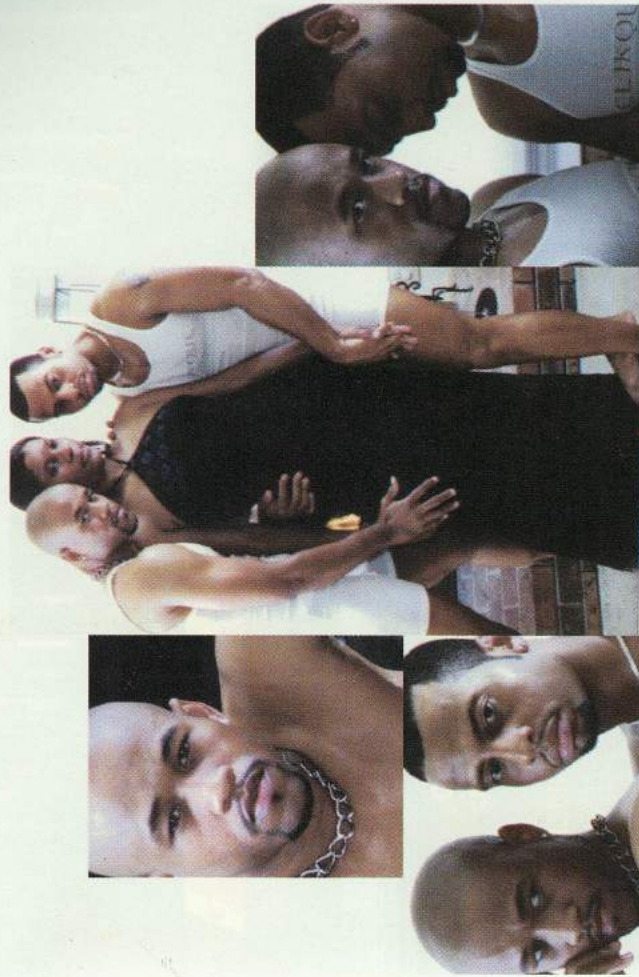
FRESH FACES OF THE MONTH

Terrance MaGee

Stephanie Kellogg

Monté St. James

Boys At Play?



Photos by: RenwickFarmer

Rascals Presents A

NIGHT OF THE STARS



RASCALS

WITH PERFORMANCES BY

Demetrius Domino
Trillions Deveraux
Tiffany Brooks
Monte Alexander
Allegra
Ms. Ann
Chauncey Davenport
Yolanda Adams
Tijuana Brooks
Freda Payne
Nichole Roberts
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Host & Emcee

Cookie LaCook

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10PM

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**Free Champaign & \$300
Balloon Drop**

\$5 Off For The First 10 Ladies In
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December 31st at 10pm

Thursday
Dec. 31

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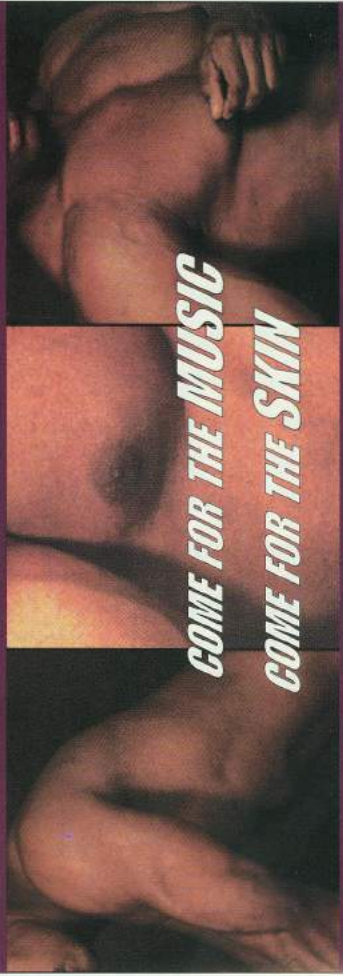
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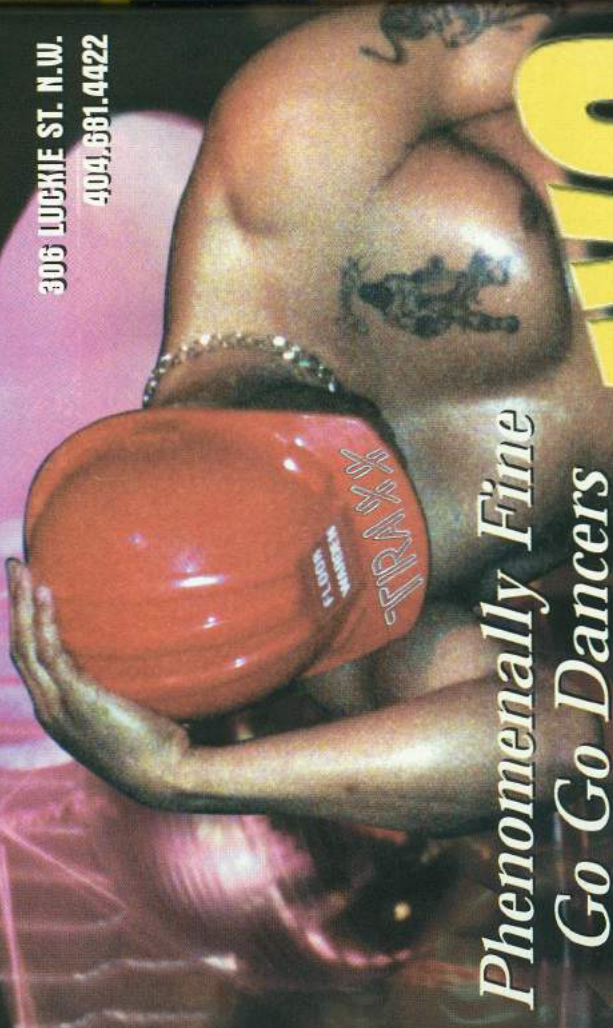
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30 — CINKOUE MAGAZINE — Volume 2 Issue 7 — December 1998

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**Houston praises fans,
bashes rumors as new
album releases**



NEW YORK — It isn't every day you get the two premier pop divas of the '90s together to perform a duet for a movie soundtrack.

So when word came that Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston were to record a song together for the upcoming DreamWorks picture "The Prince of Egypt," it was rumored that there was an ongoing

"Celebrity Death Match" between the two.

Now the duet is a track on Houston's first studio album in eight years, "My Love Is Your Love," and Houston is pleased for the opportunity to squelch the diva-cat fights rumor. "We came to sing; we didn't come to fight," she says, denying any rivalry between her and Carey.

"I'm not going to say people are mean," she says, "even though I know there are mean people. But I do think that people expect that two vocalists of such great caliber would have nothing else to do but fight. You know, (as if) that's what we looked forward to, coming in and fighting each other. No, we looked forward to working with each other."

"They're getting it all wrong"

The studio album marks a switch for Houston, who for much of this decade has released mostly ballads for movie soundtracks — "The Preacher's Wife," "The

Bodyguard," "Waiting to Exhale."

And Carey's isn't the only extra voice on this album. Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliot also collaborated with Houston, for a song whose lyrics — "They don't know anything about it, so I know they're getting it all wrong" — speak to the public's interest in Houston and her oft-arrested, reportedly abusive husband, Bobby Brown, and the gossip that swirls around them.

"I've read about myself and my husband and my family, to the point where they've called my parents, they've called my brothers, offering money to tell stories. They call friends of mine," Houston says. "I'd just like for them to just ... don't badger us. Don't scrutinize us. We have children and they have to live, too. It's not fair."

Whitney Houston has one other message for her fans, which she put in the title of her album. "I wanted to say something to the people — how I felt about them for loving and supporting me all these years, and for being devoted," she said.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE BLACK GAY AND LESBIAN CIRCUIT EVENTS OF THE YEAR

— JANUARY —
MARTIN LUTHER KING- JR.
(Holiday Weekend)
Atlanta, GA

— FEBRUARY —
MARDI GRAS
(Fat Tuesday- February 24th)
New Orleans, LA

— APRIL —
PENN RELAYS
Philadelphia, PA

— MAY —
HOUSTON SPLASH
Houston, TX

BLACK GAY PRIDE
(Memorial Day Weekend)
Washington, DC

— JUNE —
BLACK GAY PRIDE
Memphis, TN
Baltimore, MD
Pride Weekend
New York City
San Francisco, CA
Toronto, ON

— JULY —
THE BEACH PARTY
(Independence Day Weekend)
Los Angeles, CA

BLACK GAY PRIDE
(Independence Day Weekend)
Chicago, IL
Black Gay Pride
Detroit, MI

— AUGUST —
BLACK GAY PRIDE
Cleveland, OH

— SEPTEMBER —
LABOR DAZE
(Labor Day Weekend)
September 4 - 6
Atlanta, GA

— OCTOBER —
BLACK GAY PRIDE
Dallas, TX
HALLOWEEN MADNESS
(Friday, October 31)
The Village, NYC

DECEMBER
NEW YEARS EVE
Times Square, NYC
Pictures Wanted!
I was At The Beach... At
The Beach '98
Los Angeles, CA

In keeping with the holiday season, this month's edition of My Beat will address the two things every music fiend talks about at the end of the year: good gift ideas and end of the year charts.

By B.Graff

In keeping with the holiday season, this month's edition of My Beat will address the two things every music fiend talks about at the end of the year: good gift ideas and end of the year charts.

There are many discs available for your gift-giving pleasure, as any trip to the record shop will prove. What's harder to do is separate the wheat from the chaff of the cd bin. Here are a couple of stocking stuffers that should satisfy anyone:

Go Deep (Maxi Records) has nothing to do with **Janet Jackson**, but it's an accurate title for this blend of seductive deep house. Julius Papp orchestrates a 70 minute ride through the label's catalog of classics and comes up with Joe Clausell and Byron Burke, among other notables. **DJ Mix by Roy Davis** (Cold Front). Roy is one of my favorite DJs and this is a slamming, albeit brief, exhibit of his mixing talents. With several of his own cuts featured in the mix, this sometimes feels like a Roy Davis album, but you can't argue with "Gabrielle" and "Transitions." And since the label is distributed through K-Tel, you should be able to find this easily.

Mad Styles and Crazy Visions (BBE) is a three cd set of grooves that are proof that disco never died; it was simply reborn as house. The first disc is expertly mixed by Little Louie Vega, while the remaining discs feature the cuts in their full glory. Included are offerings from Lil Louis, Nuyorican Soul, and Roy Davis, as well as some slick updates of disco divas First Choice and Two Tons of Fun. Ignore this one at your peril.

Wheels of Steel (Formaldehyde). The Percolator himself, Cajmere, gets behind the decks for a journey into his twisted mind. Being from Chicago, there are plenty of tracks with the Windy City vibe, and several just happen to be from Caj's now defunct label Cajual. Mark Grant, Kerri Chandler, and Basement Jaxx are just some of the folks Cajmere works into the mix.

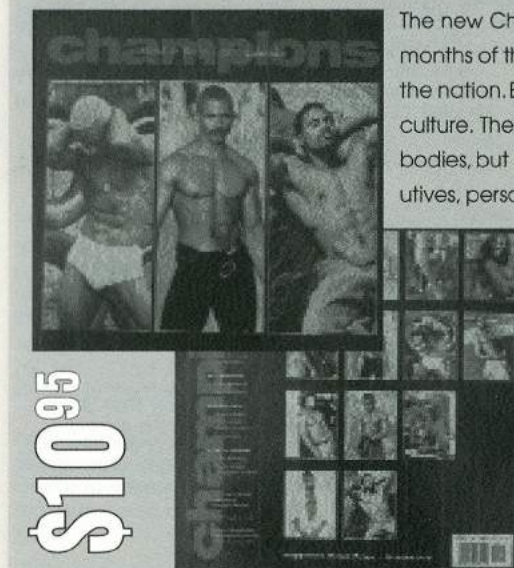
Part II

1998 was a strange year for house. Dance music continued to get more coverage in the media, yet the main beneficiaries seem to have been European acts who either have no connection to the black gay aesthetic that created house or take direct inspiration from black acts while garnering more attention (and money) than their brown-skinned bretheren. Nonetheless, this list of the past year's highlights is a testament to the soulful and spiritual appeal of our music. **The envelope please.....**

Cascades of Colour EP - Ananda Project (Nite Grooves). Atlanta native Chris Brann displayed his mastery of deep house with this EP featuring 4 quality cuts.

Rise Above the Storm - Kenny Bobien (MAW). The most inspirational song released this year. Evoking memories of Sylvester, this is guaranteed to help bring you through tough times.

Power - Glenn Turner (Hipbone). Another strong statement of personal strength. The sound harkens back to the 70s, and the



Champions

Mind & Body 1999 Calendar

The new Champions Mind & Body Calendar features 13 months of the sexiest African American men from across the nation. Each month showcases a different style in our culture. These men are more than beautiful faces and bodies, but hold professional careers as corporate executives, personal trainers, actors, and models.

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beat is definitely 90s, but the message is timeless.

Higher Things LP - Kim English (Nervous). If you read last month's column, you know the T. Children, there is a new diva reigning over clubland, and her name is Kim English.

Horn Song - The Don (Strictly Rhythm). Old school favorite DJ Pierre came back hard with this deeply melodic slice of spring fun. True to form, he bit his own sound for the next 5-10 records he mixed, but nothing tops the original.

When Can Our Love Begin - Kimara Lovelace (King Street). Timmy Regisford continues his string of soulfully elegant remixes. And who can't relate to the lines "I'm tired of being friends/It only takes one kiss for everything you know to change"?

We Had a Thing - Abstract Truth (Streetwave). The chorus includes the following couplet: "We had a thing but we're done, sometimes you fuck just for fun." Preach, sister, preach! But seriously, the

Body & Soul mix turns an already appealing song into an undisputed dancefloor classic.

Thank You - Bebe Winans (Atlantic). The hit that wasn't. A radio edit would have ensured some mainstream exposure for this uplifting gem of a song, but I guess we'll have to accept the epic KenLou mix from the Masters at Work. If you can't break a song to radio, you might as well focus craft an underground.

Steppin' Out - Deep Swing (Soulfulic Deep). Jazz house at its finest.

Thing for Linda EP - Kerri Chandler (Downtown 161). Chandler is my producer of the year and this is the best of all the quality work he released in 1998. Whether you prefer your house funky, jazzy, or deep, it's all here. Who is Linda, anyway?

That's all for now. Have a most joyous holiday season and I'll catch you in January!

A Plea for Help!

Hundreds of National Basketball Association basketball players in our very own country are living at or just below the seven-figure salary level (Atrocious!) And, as if that weren't bad enough, they will be deprived of pay for several weeks—possibly a whole year—as a result of the current lock-out situation. But now, you can help!

For only \$20,835 a month, about \$694.50 a day (that's less than the cost of a large screen projection TV) you can help a basketball player remain economically viable during his time of need. This contribution by no means solves the problem, as it barely covers the yearly league minimum, ...but it's a start!

Almost \$700 may not seem like a lot of money to you, but to a basketball player it could mean the difference between a vacation spent golfing in Florida or a Mediterranean cruise. For you, seven hundred dollars is nothing more than one month's rent or mortgage payments. But to a basketball player, \$700 will almost replace his daily salary.

Your commitment of less than \$700 a day will enable a player to buy that home entertainment center, trade in the year-old Lexus for a new Ferrari, or enjoy a weekend in Rio.

How Will I Know I'm Helping?

Each month, you will receive a complete financial report on the player you sponsor. Detailed information about his stocks, bonds, 401(k), real estate, and other investment holdings will be mailed to your home. You'll also get information on how he plans to invest the \$5 million lump sum he will receive upon retirement. Plus upon signing up for this program, you will receive a photo of the player (unsigned-for a signed photo, please include an additional \$50.00). Put the photo on your refrigerator to remind you of other peoples' suffering.

The Ten Commandments (in Ebonics)

1. I be God
2. Don't be makin' no hood ornaments outa me, or nuttin' in my crib.
3. Don't be callin' me for no reason - homey don't play dat and I don't eda.
4. Y'all betta be in church, you know what time it is.
5. Don't dis ya mama...an if ya
6. Don't ice ya peoples.
7. Stick to ya own woman.
8. Don't be liftin' no goods.
9. Don't be frontin' like you all dat an no snitchin' on ya homies.
10. Don't be eyein' ya homie's crib, ride, or non of dair junk.
- know who ya daddy is, don't dis him either.

How Will He Know I'm Helping?

Your basketball player will be told that he has a SPECIAL FRIEND who just wants to help in a time of need. Although the player won't know your name, he will be able to make collect calls to your home via a special operator just in case additional funds are needed for unexpected expenses.

Yes, I Want To Help

I would like to sponsor a striking NBA basketball player. My preference is checked below:
☐ Starter ☐ Reserve
☐ Star (Higher cost) ☐ Superstar (Much higher cost)
☐ Entire team (Please call our 900 number to ask for the cost of a specific team (Cheerleaders not included.)
☐ I'll sponsor a player most in need. Please select one for me.

Please charge the account listed below \$694.50 per day for a reserve player or starter for the duration of the strike. Please send me a picture of the player I have sponsored, along with a team logo and my very own NBA Players Association badge to wear proudly on my lapel.

Your Name: _____
 Telephone Number: _____
 Account Number: _____
 Exp. Date: _____
☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ American Express ☐ Discover
 Signature: _____

Mail completed form to NBA Players Association or call 1-900-2MUCH now to enroll by phone.

Note: Sponsors are not permitted to contact the player they have sponsored, either in person or by other means including, but not limited to, telephone calls, letters, e-mail, or third parties. Keep in mind that the basketball player you have sponsored will be much too busy enjoying his free time, thanks to your generous donations. Contributions are not tax-deductible.

THE TREE

by: Frederick French
Houston, Texas

The tree yet waits in the distance to the wandering eye

The Birds all flock together in the yander deep, blue sky

Plundering to settle on nature's pride
 A spectacular view to the naked eye
 the awakening of life above and below nature's bliss
 yet still, brings forth an erect stature in the mist

Actionless in its' stance
 gently swaying at a glance
 for the existence of life, itself,
 you see, would not be without the tree.

INVISIBLE

by: Damone M. Burchette
Atlanta, GA

A young one, such a pretty one, crying all alone.
 Running from hell, unpacking wombs in this water
 that earth, producing a young one, such a pretty one.

Breathing all alone, running from self, unpacking pain
 throwing away broken glass, whips, chains-scars.
 Recycling trees from the roots up.

ABCD- is that u?
 EFGH- chile, I heard u died? u know how them children talk about IJKL; call them every-thing but a child of God.

Names like MNOP and QRS.

So what's going on with you these days, chile
 what is the T?

Well, January through June, I mind my business

and July through December, I leave yours alone.
 I just enjoy recycling trees from the roots up.

A young one, a black one, a brown one, such a pretty one crying all alone. Sometimes walking amongst many relations
 hearing old fables, whispered down through the wind into the leaves.

A young one, such a pretty one crying all alone.
 Running from hell, unpacking wombs, in this water
 that earth. Recycling trees from the roots up...

WHITE SALE

by: Tim Gardner
Clarkston, GA

You,
 A Black Man
 Who by chance
 was born with dominate European Genes tells me
 A Black Man
 that I am lesser than
 because my skin reflects the color of my
 Ancestral Homeland!

I get mad
 NOT because I hurt
 but because even now
 as we head into a new millennium that
 The White Man
 can still sell that
 White is Right
 LIE
 At astronomical costs
 And my people still buy it
 by the
 Generations

I get sad
 Not because I see the
 > situation as
 Hopeless
 But because I can't understand
 Why you can't see that after all
 we've been through

Together
 that we should come
 Together
 and give back this
 Lie
 to its perpetrator

I wonder why
 You can't see that
 While my
 Afro-centric Genes
 were in the fields
 raising his crops that
 You
 Were just as much SLAVE
 AS I

I wonder why
 You can't see that
 While your
 Euro-centric Genes
 were in his Plantation House
 raising his prodigy that
 I
 Was somehow more Free
 than you

but we were both equal in
 His European eyes
 We were both
 Lesser than

NEXT TIME

by: Kiven A. Sutton
Landover, Maryland

The next time I fall in love
 I'll look before I leap.
 I'm saying this because
 I'm tired to crying myself to sleep.
 Love is something that last for years
 It really doesn't seem that way.
 After crying a river of tears
 But, that's exactly what I do
 When it comes to this thing
 called lovin' you.
 I'll never get over you
 Cuz yours is the first love
 I could claim
 Did you really feel the same?
 Or were you playing a really
 cruel little game?
 I gave you my herat
 And you broke it in two
 The next time I fall in love
 I hope it's not with you!

EXPOSED

by: *Khalid Dawuud Idawu*
Atlanta, Ga.

(my former life)

At the age of seventeen, I said fuck you to university life and could be found hustling my way through the insidiously twisted streets of New York. I was a young, skinny, black kid, close enough to vanilla the white guys didn't feel as if they were deceiving their race. Unlike my darker brothers, I could be caught behind closed doors with them. Certain lessons of lowbrow gluttony would be more painful to learn than others, but there was so much to love about getting busy. The hugging, the rubbing, the sucking, and the fucking, not to mention the money. My sex life was rocking and I was happy. A fools paradise, occupied by me, Christopher Street Whore. I'd forgotten that in the light, to them, I was still a nigger, but at night, I was their "caramel psuedo colored sticky-wicked" used for non-cerebral gratification.

(Black bandana, white t-shirt, saggy jeans, no underwear, holding up a wall)

"Going uptown?"
"Nah, man. Jus' tryin' to get to D.C."
"D.C.? What's in D.C.?"
"I would be if I could afford it."

This wasn't a familiar face. Probably a grad student with a taste for dark meat. New to the game.

"Some friends of mine are throwing a small gathering tonight. I'm sure between the few of us, we can raise bus fair for you. That is, if you're into partying."

Too many times to remember I'd succumbed to animal urges with men I wasn't mentally awed by. I'm sure this lack of awe was often mutual, but this guy had that all american white boy look; goofy! I believed I'd make at least 5 bills that night.

"Let's ride."

There were six all together including goofy. I surveyed the eclectically decorated east village studio. Post punk trash and english classic, splashed with pink and blue neon. Grace Jones' "Do or Die," blarred from hidden speakers while pornography played on the television. The scent of marijuana, poppers and sex filled the room. I'm on display.

"Here. Sniff this."

Poppers. Head rush. I reel. Where's my money? (In the background I hear...)

"Alright guys. Let's party."
"Does he talk?"
"I hope not."
"Me too. I hate when they talk."
"Make him dance."
"No lets see the dick."
"I want to see the ass."
"Smile boy."

Oh God. I'm on the auction block. (Where's my money?)

"Take off his shirt."

I'm staring into an ocean of nude white flesh. Shiny, pink erect heads, waiting to spill their demon seed on me and in me.

"Now flex."
"Get his jeans."
"Ooh, yeah."
"Mandingo honey."
"Now turn around."
"Tell him to bend over."
"Lets see that chocolate eye wink at us."
"Now kneel on the floor."

Encircled by ghosts of the past: bidders; touching, fondling, smelling, tasting, biting, licking, laughing.

What's your name nigger?
"Kunta Kinte!"

"Oh shit, I'm gonna cum."

Whack! The first crack of the whip lands on my back.
Whack! In my face.
Whack! Whack! Whack! My chest, my arms, my hair.
Whack! My lips!

"Now. What's your name nigger?"
"Toby."

I grab my clothes, covered with their seed and run blindly into the dark streets of New York, finding solace in a trash filled alley. How ironic.
(Where's my money?)

Black bandana, white t-shirt, saggy jeans, no underwear, remains of their unborn, holding up a wall.

"Hey little brother. Wanna party?"

No Locks On The Bedroom Door Continued From Page 16

more recent Supreme Court decisions cautiously favorable to lesbian and gay concerns. Challenging the Texas law, however, has been hampered by the lack of prosecutions under the statute. Lawyers could cite no other recent case in which consenting adults were prosecuted for private sexual activity. In a 1994 civil suit, *City of Dallas v. England*, a Texas appeals court held that the sodomy law was probably unconstitutional. The state Supreme Court later ruled that it had no jurisdiction over a civil challenge to the law, however, because the plaintiffs had not actually been prosecuted under it.

Even without prosecutions, however, the sodomy law has stigmatized and damaged lesbian and gay lives. In 1997, a supervisor for Texas's Child Protective Services agency (CPS) removed a three-month-old baby from lesbian foster parents, saying "Homosexuality is against the law and CPS staff were knowingly condoning it."

That incident paralleled a celebrated 1995 court case in Virginia, in which the state Supreme Court deprived Sharon Bottoms of custody of her son because she was a lesbian. The Court cited her status as a criminal under the state's sodomy law.

Scott Long, Research and Advocacy Director at the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, stated that "These statutes don't just fly in the face of privacy and common sense. They violate international law."

Mr. Long referred to the United Nations Human Rights Committee's 1994 decision in *Toonen v. Australia*. "That case was extremely similar: a

state within the federal union of Australia clung to a law criminalizing gay and lesbian sex. The United Nations ruled that the law was wrong because it violated the right to privacy, and because it discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation. The Australian state was finally forced to repeal the law. On both counts, the state of Texas today also stands accused."

The 1994 United Nations decision held that sodomy laws violate provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The United States has also ratified the ICCPR, and is bound by its provisions.

"This is the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the basic international document enshrining people's liberties worldwide," Mr. Long said. "After five decades of rhetoric about rights, it's time for the U.S. and its prosecutors and police to get on the bandwagon--and out of the bedroom."

Texas activists expressed hope the arrests would provide new momentum to eliminate the state's sodomy law. Clarence Bagby, president of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, said, "We need to get this off the books."

Harris County District Attorney John B. Holmes Jr. promised activists will get their chance in court. "We plan to go forward" with the prosecution, he said.

"Sodomy laws create second-class citizens," IGLHRC's Mr. Long observed. "They also give the state a dangerous weapon to destroy people's fragile privacy. This case shows all too clearly what these laws really mean."

UPDATE

UP TO PRESS TIME:

At the lowest court level, the two men (still un-named in this case) from Houston, Texas were arraigned on Friday, November 20th 1998. They pleaded no-contest. As a result they were assessed a court fee of \$125 and will have a trial at a later date. The fine, although rather insignificant, was appealed by the two men and their lawyer Mitchell Katine. They plan to challenge the state's 119-year-old sodomy law.

Also very interested in this case are members representing the Lambda Legal Defense. Suzanne Goldberg, a staff attorney there, said that her office plans to assist Mitchell Katine in this case, and that they will win, just as they did in Georgia.

Members of the ACLU are also putting this signature to this call for support and plans to be very instrumental in winning this case and repealing this old sodomy law.

by: *Dwight Powell*

Personals, Personals Personals

Over the past few months, many of you have asked us to include personals in our monthly line-up. Also, there have others that have advised us not to make such a move. If you would like to use CLIKQUE as a venue to meet other people, let us know. If you are opposed to such an addition, inform us of your opinion and why.

Via e-mail: clikquem@aol.com or mail: 931 Monroe Dr Ste 102-279, Atlanta, Ga. 30308

who acted as pallbearer came up to me. "Were you Mark's math teacher?" he asked. I nodded as I continued to stare at the coffin. "Mark talked about you a lot," he said.

After the funeral, most of Mark's former classmates headed to Chuck's farmhouse for lunch. Mark's mother and father were there, obviously waiting for me.

"We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it."

Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been taped, folded and refolded many times. I knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which I had listed all the good things each of Mark's classmates had said about him.

"Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, Mark treasured it." Mark's classmates started to gather around us. Charlie smiled rather sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home."

Chuck's wife said, "Chuck asked me to put his in

our wedding album."

"I have mine too," Marilyn said. "It's in my diary." Then Vicki, another classmate, reached into her pocketbook, took out her wallet and showed her worn and frazzled list to the group. "I carry this with me at all times," Vicki said without batting an eyelash. "I think we all saved our lists."

That's when I finally sat down and cried. I cried for Mark and for all his friends who would never see him again.
THE END

The purpose of this letter is to encourage everyone to compliment the people you love and care about. We often tend to forget the importance of showing our affections and love. Sometimes the smallest of things, could mean the most to another.

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GET INTO IT!

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SEE PAGE 18 FOR A REVIEW

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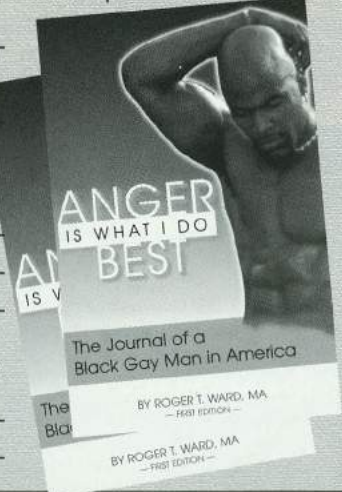
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POSITIONS

By:
"DOC" HOSKINS, JR.

A true "TOP" would never have allowed himself to be handcuffed. But that's just the position I ended up in messing with Dewayne.

Where to begin. Oh yeah, that night down in New Orleans. I came down to check out the cuisine and sites. I spotted a local bar called "WolfGangs" and figured I'd grab a drink and maybe a few phone numbers while I was at it. I didn't see much as I walked up to bar so I ordered my favorite. As I turned around to peep the locals further a brown skinned bald headed brother with a goatee approached me. He was about 5'10", 180 lbs with a dancers build and not bad looking either.

"Are you Creole?"

"Excuse me?"

"I guess you're not Creole, you don't have an accent."

"What's Creole?"

"Another story. From your looks and skin tone I thought you were on the wrong side of town. You're about 6 feet even and 175 lbs aren't you? Where you from?"

"Quick and to the point, I like that. Correct on both accounts. New York has my roots, but I'm chilling in Georgia's Little Apple, Atlanta."

"Ah! A former northerner you say."

"Yeah what about northerners."

"Nothing. You here visiting or you with someone?"

"Just me chillin' and peepin' the sights. I'll say one thing about this city, nostalgia seems to be prevalent everywhere."

"Well that's what New Orleans is supposed to represent. The way things used to be."

"Correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't the south lose the war."

"Funny. What're you drinking?"

"Ain't you even gonna ask my name?"

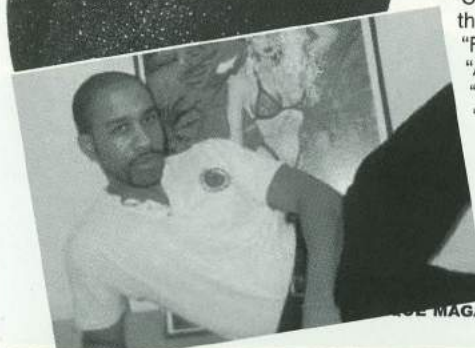
"You'll tell me when you want me to know."

"Maximus, and you?"

"Dewayne."

"Cape Cod."

Next thing I knew we were back at his place. With drinks in hand, interesting conversation flowed back and forth between us. The



attraction between us was animalistic. I could virtually see invisible fingers reaching out from both of us wanting to grab and violate the other. I figured I would have to make the first move because he sat there with a coy look on his face beckoning me towards him. I got up and placed all my weight on him wanting him to know just how much man he was getting for the evening. He didn't even flinch as I pressed my weight down. I forced my tongue between his BSL's (Big Sucking Lips) and tried to lick his tonsils. I don't know if it was the heat I was generating or him, but I felt warmth rising from my feet all the way to my forehead. He parted my shirt and played with my nipples as I reached down and forced my hands under him to grab his plumb behind I had peeped earlier. Gripping with both hands I pulled him towards me and he seemed to melt in my hands. I knew I had him.

Dewayne stopped massaging my nipples and gently pushed on my chest for me to release him. As we both stood he walked towards the bedroom discarding clothing as he walked. When in Rome do as the Roman's do. We left a trail all the way to the queen sized brass bed. He motioned for me to lie down on the bed as he walked to the bathroom.

A moment later I heard draws closing and the water shutting off. By this time I was naked on the bed and with my large friend standing at attention. I love it when brothers come out and see what I'm packing. They usually pounce on it right away.

Click, click.

"Oh man!" Is the first thought that went through my head as he stood there in nothing but a thong. Dewayne's muscle tone was out of this world. He must have only 2% body fat. His body was so chiseled I could

see the veins in his arms, neck and chest. No wonder most male dancers were gay. With bodies like that I would keep as many men around me as possible. "Well alrighty then!" Dewayne said looking at me waiting for him. "May I." "Why yes you may." I replied.

Dewayne wrapped his thick lips around my friend and I felt a jolt of bliss shoot straight up into my hypothalamus gland. As he worked me over I concentrated on his back side and what pleasure we were both going to experience. Looking at the picture of Grace Jones on the wall was all I could do to keep my eyes from rolling into the back of my head.

"Brother man was working me for real. I felt like I was going to erupt at any moment." I thought to myself. I reached down to massage his shoulders and he slapped my hands away. Looking up at me he said. "I got this bro." "Aw'ight, Yo." I responded.

Reaching his hands up he began to play with my nipples again. I could feel his hot breath in my groin. I started to squirm and reached down to lend a helping hand. He again slapped my hand away again. Looking me dead in the eye he stated "I've got a cure for that." Almost quicker than my near dilated pupils could follow, he whipped out a blind fold.

"What do you plan to do with that?" I asked.

"Have you ever done it blindfolded?"

"No, and I ain't about to. You buggin', yo."

"Trust me."

"Trust is given."

"Okay. If you don't want to get busy."

"Yo, I can get busy anywhere."

"But not with me. I promise you'll enjoy this."

"Been there, done that."

"Don't you Northerners try everything once and sex as

much as possible." I nodded.

"Then trust me."

I figured I'll give in and check it out, it might be kinda freaky like me.

"Aw'ight. But don't pull no stupid mess."

As he put the blindfold on me I groped and felt him all over for good measure. "Man! His body was tight. The slight thrill of not being able to see him, but feel him with my hands was turning me on. This kinky stuff might be aw'ight after all." I thought to myself. Before I knew it he started licking my toes. I could barely stay calm as waves of passion overtook my body over and over again. His tongue was working miracles on my feet. He started working his way up my calves and thighs, biting them occasionally to keep me hot. So I gripped his head and forced his face into my groin.

"Yeah baby you what I like."

I guess he didn't appreciate my dirty talk because he eased my hands over my head so that I would grip the metal railing of the bed. Moments later I heard two metal objects clink together. Before I could ponder the thought I felt cold nickel plating against my wrists, then Click Vvvvrrrrttt!

"Yo, what's up with dat? Yo!"

"Chill, Max your going to enjoy this whether you like it or not."

"If you don't get these things off of me, I'm gonna break you off a piece of somethin' you ain't gonna like."

"Okay, give me a second to find the key."

Sliding back between my legs, he continued his busy beaver routine like there was no tomorrow. Before I could protest further pure lust rushed forth ending my complaint. Then just as quickly he stopped and stepped back to inspect his work. I could hear him pulling off his thong and advancing toward me. Straddling me Dewayne

put his weight on my chest and removed the blind fold. I noticed a bottle of K-Y on the nightstand next to the bed. Putting a finger over my mouth to hush me he reached for the bottle with his other hand. "Don't worry", he said as he placed some jelly on the palms of his hands. I wriggled a little but he put his knees on my shoulders pinning me to the spot. I tried to arch my back to no avail.

Gripping my large friend with both hands he massaged me up and down, up and down and over again. My head thrusted back trying to gasp for air in-between strokes. Finally I gathered my strength and focused on breaking my bonds to make him stop.

He smiled as I strained and grunted. Then amazement crossed his face as the brass bedposts begin to bend before his eyes. Catching his senses he continued his massaging and drained most of the remaining strength I had left. My arms stopped in their tracks and the bed posts silently thank him. I write in agony and frustration.

Surprisingly he moved on wisking a condom from between the bed pillows. The momentary relaxation I began to feel was instantly replaced with tension. "It's getting hard to breathe in here." I thought. One more good pull though and these bedposts will give.

The K-Y jelly emerged once more and he placed it in all the right places. I sucked in what little air I could gasp and gave one last ditch effort to break my

chains but he sat on me and held me firmly before I could struggle any further. A feeling of warmth shot up into my body slowly and rhythmically. Then I felt a feeling of oneness and completeness.

I couldn't stand it anymore. Pulling my arms tighter and tighter the bed posts strained under my pull and began to bend once more. He reached for each arm but I wasn't about to let up now when I was so close.

THUNK! THUNK!

I looked over to see the top of each bedpost on the bed, so I easily slipped the cuffs off of them. Grabbing him in a bear hug grip, I passionately kissed him. I worked my hands all over his body. Moving down I kissed him on the neck and focused on his adam's apple sucking until he almost couldn't breathe. As he gasped for air I started to push up as he came down. "I didn't know there were cowboy's in New Orleans." I stated. "There's a few of us who can ride bucks."

When my thighs began to tighten with pain I motioned for him to stand up with me. Grinning at me I could tell he remembered my favorite position from our conversation earlier. "Standing up huh? This should be interesting." He stated.

I stood with my back next to the wall bracing myself for the bitter cold against my back. Before I could gather strength for the coming cold Dewayne pushed me against the wall.

Cold chills streaked through my body as he turned around and leaned against me. Just looking at him made me want him more. Blissful waves of passion quivered through my body for a few seconds as he leaned against me further. "Man! I love this position. A warm body in front and a cold wall on my back. Reaching his hands over his shoulders he gripped my head and leaned into me.

I grabbed his flat stomach and barrel chest and pulled him against me trying to become one with him. We both felt increasing passion. My hands tried to grip and hold the firm parts of his body, but they kept slipping from the sweat we were generating. Planting my feet wide, I locked my arms over his shoulders and wiggled from side to side. Dewayne started to moan and I growled to let him know I was feeling it too. I used my whole body to work us into a frenzy until we both had a hard time standing.

With his body heat adding to mine I swear I could feel the wall beginning to heat up behind me. Then it happened. That oh so familiar feeling started in my toes and rushed upward through out my body. As the convulsions (aftershock as I call it) hit me wave after wave I can barely stand. Then as the sun is going down the room slowly fades into black. Thirty minutes later I open my eyes to see that I've slumped to the ground where I stood with Dewayne lying between my legs. Snoring slightly I can see that he apexed with me. Oddly though I notice that we are handcuffed together.

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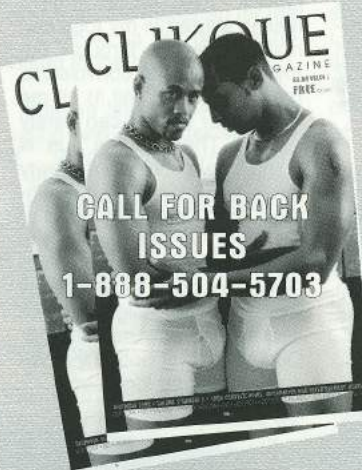
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CLIKASCOPE

GETTING YOUR MONTH OFF TO A GREAT START



ARIES

Aries- Stop battering yourself with thoughts of how you think others should act. You can only control your own life, not anyone else's. Don't let your sanity go, as you try to fix others. Loosen up and enjoy your life. A knight in shining armor awaits, but you are too busy to notice.



LEO

Leo- Your parenting skills are put to better use if used on a child. Your mate is your equal and not your child so give the fellow a break. Be on your best behavior, important people are watching. This holiday will be your best ever.



SAGITTARIUS

Sagittarius- As the moon enters your birth sign, you will find that most of your demons are escaping and you, my dear are being molded into a beautiful peach. The renewed you however, is still insatiable in bed, but the good news is that you have or will soon find your perfect match.



TAURUS

Taurus- Just when you thought you found Mr. Right he turns out to be Mr. Wrong. No! he is only Mr. Wrong for you. You already had Mr. Right but you were too busy to notice how good yours really was. Grovel and beg and he will come home



VIRGO

Virgo- Lovely ones, your ability to make things happen are truly amazing. You are absolutely fabulous and the worlds has taken notice. Look out for impostors because a few are lurking in the bushes, but so too is the man of your dreams. I see diamonds, gowns and champagne.



CAPRICORN

Capricorn- As usual you are taking care of your loved ones and holding back your tongue. Stop the abuse and let them know that you have needs as well. It is now your turn to be pampered, so sit back and let someone else do the slaving. Love is on the way.



GEMINI

Gemini- As usual your sweet talking self has earned you first place in yet another wonderful persons heart. Hopefully you have had enough practice and are fully aware of how to treat your man. Don't mess this one up, you may not be this lucky in the future.



LIBRA

Libra- Let someone else foot the bill this month and give your VISA card a break. You deserve the best and it is about to happen to you. My dear, for you all that glitters is gold, so go for it if it sparkles. You are in a total win-win situation this month



AQUARIUS

Aquarius- Your friends have gotten used to the idea that when you are in love, they come in a distant second. Remember that they were the ones, who stuck by you, when you were miserably single. This Christmas, get all your friends something they really want. Gucci, Prada, Westwood...



CANCER

Cancer- My dears, Isn't it wonderful to be living your own life again and not living for some man. You are in control of your own destiny and everyone has noticed. You are a magnet for Pisces men, but beware that they come in two types. The really good ones and then those that stink. A Leo is in awe of your greatness.



SCORPIO

Scorpio- You perky little sex kitten have found out that there is more to life than just having fun. You have matured into a wonderful person and the world and your mate are happier as a result. This holiday season Santa will bring all of your heart's desires.



PISCES

Pisces- You are in a battle between your old and new love interest. All that glitters is not gold, but this new love interest just maybe. If after you test the karat factor, you still find this precious gem desirable, then have a go at it. If not stick to your old piece and apologize to them for having even thought about straying.

CHECK US OUT ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB
www.brotha.com/clikquem/

For the past 8 months, Bianca has been giving her advice to many of you in need of assistance. Bianca Hopes that she was able to help you solve your problems or deal with your concerns. This month, we are pleased to present to you

THE BEST OF "ASK BIANCA"

ASK Bianca

Bianca is interested in helping you solve some of the greater mysteries of life. Write her at *Clikque Magazine*, 931 Monroe Dr., Ste 102-279, Atlanta, Ga 30308 Or email her c/o Clikquem@aol.com

Dearest Bianca,
Recently my boyfriend was hospitalized. Although I never asked, he volunteered to me that while he was in the hospital he tested negative for HIV. Three days ago I was in his house reading a magazine and there was a letter in it from his physician stating that he was positive for the HIV virus. I feel betrayed because he lied to me and I didn't ask in the first place. I will support him no matter what. Should I tell him that I know? What should I do?
Dazed and confused
Chicago, Illinois.

Now, Miss Gyrll in Illinois,
You Midwestern kids slay me. You just happened to be reading a magazine in your mans house, and out jumps this doctors note with his HIV status and it lands directly in your face, at eye level. You were not snooping around and you had no idea he could be positive. Where exactly did you find the note, you lying queen? You and I both know that you cannot tell this man of your findings until he tells, you because you are likely to get a severe ass whoppin. He lied to you because he knew you would not be able to handle the truth. You feel betrayed? Ha! How do you think he is going to feel when he finds out that you went through his personal files. Come clean with your boyfriend and tell him the truth. Even though you are not used to doing so, it feels good. He may or may not dump your ass but I am sure you will be able to handle it. Try to keep your messy life clean in "98"

Dear Bianca,
My roommates and I are all light skinned and beautiful and we get

along with everyone just fine. We are smart, intelligent, funny and genuinely sweet people. We have friends of all persuasions, races, shades of blackness and degrees of intelligence. Lately we have found ourselves having to defend our beauty based on our skin color. Some darker complexioned friends of ours have been taking issue with us claiming that, we are no longer associating with them. We had to cut some people off and push others to a far corner, but these decisions were not based on skin color, they were based on these peoples manners and attitudes. Too bad they happened to be dark skinned blacks. Now, we have to live with the legacy of having people talk about, how we think we are all that, because we are light skinned and beautiful. How do we cut these people off and restore our good name as the fun loving open minded individuals that we are.

Light skinned and Beautiful in
Houston.

Dear L S and B in H-town,
Your letter has a very shady tone and I doubt that you are as sweet as you think you are. I smell something funky, your breath maybe? I wish you had sent a picture of your beauty because I think you are confusing light skinned with being beautiful. The two are not one and the same and should never be used interchangeably. They can be complementary but they are not substitutes. I tend to believe that your friends are right, and that you cut those loose who were not yellow enough for your liking. You ought to be ashamed of yourself and go apologize to those nice darker skinned friends of yours and beg them to take you back as a friend. How convenient that your

roommates all happen to be light skinned. You southern girls are a trip and I can't wait to get my hands on a few of your behinds and slap some sense into your feeble minds. On the other hand you have every right to cut anyone loose without a viable reason, just be strong enough to deal with the consequences. When all the party invites go passing by your address don't sit and wonder why, you already know the reason. How ever if you are indeed a good person I would suggest that you take the situation to your God or buy those friends of yours something fierce, something Cartier, Mugler or Vivian Westwood may do the trick.

Good luck! Bianca

Dear Bianca,
My boyfriend of the last two months has decided that we should be just friends. He really means this and I can tell by the way he hugs me when we get together these days. Unlike other people who when they say let's be friends, this one seems to mean it. In the past, let's be friends usually meant, don't ever call me again. This time he is actually making an effort to be platonic friends and it is driving me crazy since I am very much in love with him still. What to do?
Caught up- in New York!

Dear Caught up!
Get a hold of yourself girl and take a firm grip. When people say these things they usually mean it and changing their minds is not usually a part of the plan. If the man says it, that means he has been thinking about it for at least a month. The first time killer dumped my ass he had already been involved with someone else

for a whole month. I am not suggesting your man has moved on, only that he means what he says. It is a very difficult situation being friends with a man you are in love with but you only have two options. Accept the friendship and suffer while you get over him or kiss him good bye for a while and stay out of his way while you re-cooperate. I am sure your friends will be more than willing to help you through this time and if they don't, you can have killers place in my bed since he claims it is too hot for us to sleep together. Good luck girl and be good.

Love Bianca

Dear Bianca,
I have made a very sticky bed and now I am having difficulty sleeping in it. I slugged around and I had quite a few friends and roommates and other peoples boyfriends. Not only that, but I had boyfriends of friends of mine and their roommates as well. I caused a lot of chaos and confusion in many a households and then I got bit by the true love bug. My problem is that, as in all cities, mine included, gay people all know each other and are separated by less than six degrees. Now my past is back to haunt me. I find myself having to explain to my new love how and in what way I was involved with these people. I cannot tell him the truth for fear he will leave me. What am I supposed to do?
Haunted by my past-Mississippi.

Dear Mississippi,
If you were a true pro you would never have to be explaining anything to your new boyfriend. Here is my advice. All that happened before he came along is your business and all that has happened since, is yours and his jointly. Because people are nosy and faggots are fierce and will be telling him all they know, I would suggest that you purge on you own. Make him a great dinner, buy him something diamond, then very nonchalantly tell him who you slept with and how horrible they all were. Tell him how he has tamed you and how sorry you feel for having wasted so much time on those good-for-nothings. With a full stomach and a diamond he will be too relaxed to argue. As my

grandmother used to say, "hunger fuels anger." Come clean, this way he will be able to tell the gossip mongers that he is well aware of what you used to do. In order to appear credible though, you will need to stop slugging around in case someone decides to get messy and tell him that you are still living a loose life. Sorry honey, but every hoe has his day and today seems to be yours.
Good Luck, - Bianca.

Dear Bianca,

I am in love with a crooked dick man who could not care two cahoots about me. He screws me once in a while and is always chasing other asses all over town. What do I do?
In love with the crooked dick.

Miss Gyrll,

I understand your obsession with the crooked dick. Killer has a nice crooked one that does me lovely as well. However you have a problem and you have acknowledged it. There is only one thing left for you to do and that is solve it. Next time the man comes to your house bound and gag him and never let him leave until you have had enough to last you until he decides to come over again.
love Bianca.

Dear Bianca,

I have recently found out that my boyfriend of seven years has been having an affair with a friend of ours for the past year and I am going to leave his ass. As soon as I can find a place to live I am out of here. I am sick of his shit and his playing me like this. He pays the bills, does the laundry sometimes, cooks and the sex is good, but why did he have to do this to me. I hate him and I am outa here. That no good son of a bitch is going to miss me and pay dearly for what he has done to me.
No one treats Josephina like shit and gets away with it.

Dear Josephina,

I know that is not your name but that is okay. Sounds to me like you are the one who is going to miss him and I don't see from your letter where he has treated you like shit. Sounds like you have a good man to me and you are the

sorry one. The sex is good and he pays your bills, now heifer, what else on earth do you want from this man. Good dick and my bills are paid and me and killer are together forever. If he cheated for a year and you could not tell, act like you still don't know, or go find the man and your friend, Beat them both and then take your man home. If that does not work, ask this wonderful man of yours if he has time for a third girl, I am free on weekends as killer is usually out of town. Sorry to disappoint you! Love Bianca.

Dear Bianca,

There was a rumor that you and Killer had broken up because you caught him in bed with the Publisher of *Clikque* and his boyfriend locked in a three way. If this was true I would like to help you beat him to a pulp because you deserve better, and oh, by the way, I would like to ask you out on a date.
Love Donnie X in LA

Dear Donnie X,

Are you related to Malcolm X? What ever! Who cares? First of all, Killer is not Gay and would never sleep with my boss nor his boyfriend even if they paid him. They are not cute enough! I would never leave Killer over some bullshit like him sleeping with someone else. Where did you get your gossip from, must be the same source that told Catorce that the House of Mizrahi(NY) was closing last month. I am not about to move to LA for a man. Been there, done That! So no thanks, to your offer for a date. My sources tell me that you are goggle eyed and walk with a fierce limp and that you look like a real fag. Don't ever write to me again.
Bianca

Write To Bianca at *Clikque Magazine*, 931 Monroe Dr., Ste 102-279, Atlanta, GA 30308.
Or email her
Clikquem@aol.com

ASK Bianca

Stepping Out

YOUR PREMIER GUIDE TO CLUBS ACROSS AMERICA

Be advised that clubs go out of business and clientele sometime changes. Therefore, it may be in your best interest to call before you visit any of the clubs listed below.

ATLANTA

ARMORY, 836 Juniper, Atlanta 30309, 404-881-9280. Blackest on Fridays for Female Impersonation Divas Show

CLUB FUSION, 550-C Amsterdam Ave., Midtown, 404-872-6411. Black and gay on Fridays and Sundays.

CLUB MILLENNIUM, 1447 Peachtree St., 404-607-8568. Blackest on Tuesdays: Female Impersonations & Thursdays: Dance Party

LORETTA'S, 708 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, 404-874-8125. Rebirth of an Institution. Doors open at 7:30 7 days a week.

MARQUETT, Atlanta, GA

OTHERSIDE, 1924 Piedmont Rd., Atlanta 30324, 404-875-5238. Blackest on Wednesday.

PALACE, 91 Broad Street, Atlanta, GA 404-522-3000. Doors open at 5PM seven days a week.

WAREHOUSE/TRAXX, 306 Luckie St., N.W., Atlanta 30313, 404-681-4422. Black and gay on Saturday. Straight on Thursday and Friday.

CHICAGO

FACES, 130 N. 4th St., East St. Louis 62201, 618-271-7410.

GENERATOR, 306 N. Halsted St., Chicago 60661, 312-243-8889.

GENTRY ON RUSH, 712 N. Rush

St., Chicago 60611, 312-664-1033. Blackest on Saturday.

GENTRY ON HALSTED, 3320 N. Halsted St., Chicago 60657, 773-348-1053. Blackest on Saturday.

JEFFREY PUB, 7041 S. Jeffrey Blvd., Chicago 60649, 773-363-8558.
LITTLE JIM'S, 3501 N. Halsted St., Chicago 60657, 773-871-6116. Blackest on Saturday.

NUTBUSH CITY LIMITS, 301 N. Harlem Ave., Forest Park 60130, 708-368-5117.

RAILS, 1675 N. Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 708-802-1705

ROSCOE'S TAVERN & CAFE, 3354-6 N. Halsted St., Chicago 60657/773-281-3355.

DALLAS

METRO, 2204 Elm St., Dallas 75201, 214-742-2101. (Mail: Box 1187, Dallas, TX 75221), manoman226@aol.com

TRAXX, 1920 Martin Luther King Blvd., Dallas 75215, 214-421-8181.

HOUSTON

INCOGNITO, 2524 McKinney St., Houston 77003, 713-237-9431.

RASCALS, 1318 Westheimer, 77006, 713-942-CLUB. Open Thursday - Sunday from 10PM.

MIAMI/FT. LAUD.

BOARDWALK, 17008 Collins Ave. N., North Miami Beach 33160, 305-354-8617.

COPA NIGHTCLUB, 2800 S. Federal Hwy., Ft. Lauderdale 33316. Blackest on Sunday.

ON THE WATERFRONT, 3615 N.W. South River Dr., Miami 33142, 305-635-5500. Blackest on Tuesday.

SUGAR'S, 17060 W. Dixie Hwy., North Miami 33160-3113, 305-940-9887. Blackest on Friday and Saturday.

NEW YORK

CLIT CLUB, 432 W. 14th St., New York 10014, 212-406-1114. Fridays only. Women.

KELLERS, 384 West St., New York 10014, 212-243-1907.

MANHATTAN MONSTER, 80 Grove St., New York 10014, 212-924-3558.

NO. 1 HOT SPOT, 1 Front St., Brooklyn 11201, 718-852-0139.

OCTAGON, 555 W. 33rd St., New York 10001, 212-947-0400.

RED ZONE, 2018 45th St., Astoria 11105-1230.

SOUND FACTORY, 618 W. 46th St., New York 10001, 212-643-0728. Blackest on Saturday.

TWO POTATO, 143 Christopher St., New York 10014, 212-255-0286, 212-242-9304.

ORLANDO / TAMPA

PARLIAMENT HOUSE***, 410 N. Orange Blossom Trail, Orlando 32805, 407-425-7571. Blackest any night after 1 a.m. and on Friday and Saturday.

SOUTHERN NIGHTS****, 375 S. Bumby Ave., Orlando 32803, 407-898-0424. Blackest on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

TRACKS, 1430 E. 7th Ave., Tampa 33605, 813-247-2711. Blackest on Friday and Saturday.

WASHINGTON DC

BACHELOR'S MILL, 1104 8th St., S.E., Washington 20003, 202-544-1931.

CIRCLE AKA RASCAL'S, 1629 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington 20036, 202-462-5575. Blackest Friday and Saturday nights, and Sunday afternoon.

DELTA ELITE, 3734 10th St., N.E., Washington 20017, 202-529-0626. Gay on Friday and Saturday.

EDGE, 56 L St., S.E., Washington 20003, 202-488-1200. Blackest Monday, Thursday and Friday.

MR. P'S, 2147 P St., N.W., Washington 20037, 202-293-9009.

TRACKS 2000, 1111 - 1st St., S.E., Washington 20003, 202-488-3320. Blackest on Sunday. Mostly black Woman's Night last Tuesday of month..

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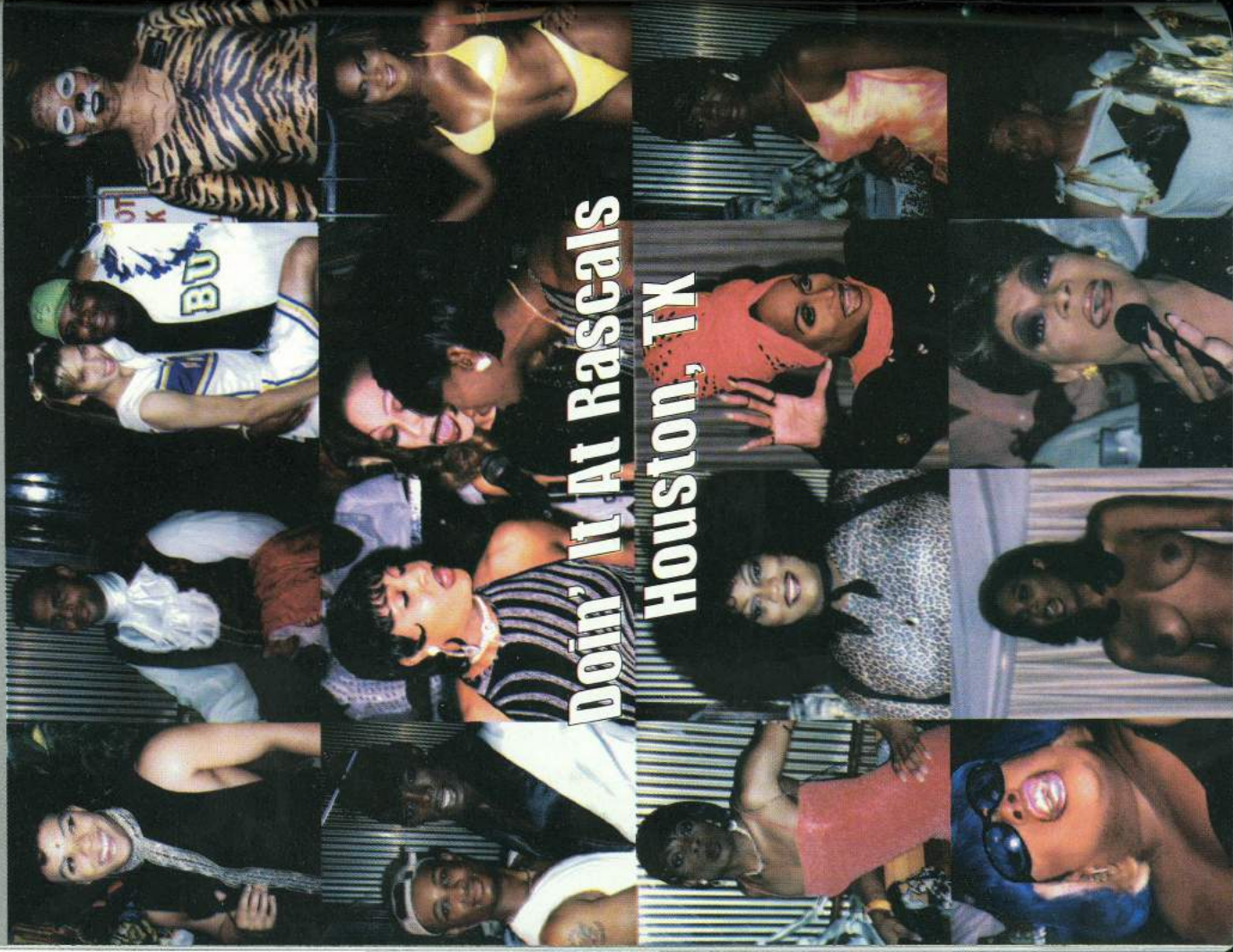
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IT'S A BLACK UNIVERSE

OCTOBER 31ST 1998, IT WAS HALLOWEEN FOR MOST PEOPLE. THEY WERE OUT IN THEIR SCREAM COSTUMES TRICK-OR-TREATING AND BEGGING FOR CANDY. YOU KNOW THE SAME OLD-SAME OLD. ON THAT SAME NIGHT I WAS AT THE GEORGIA WORLD CONGRESS CENTER WITNESSING THE "BLACK UNIVERSE" PAGEANT. IT WASN'T THE SAME-OLD-SAMEOLD.

FEMALE IMPERSONATORS AND MALE PERFORMERS CAME FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TO COMPETE FOR THE VERY PRESTIGIOUS TITLE OF 'MR AND MISS BLACK UNIVERSE'. IT WAS AN EXTREMELY PROFESSIONAL AND CREATIVE DISPLAY OF STYLE AND TALENT. SPEAKING AS A 'PAGEANT VIRGIN' (THIS WAS MY FIRST ONE) I CAN TRULY SAY THAT I WAS BLOWN AWAY AND VERY GLAD THAT I WENT

THE PAGEANT BEGAN ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20TH AND CONTINUED THROUGH SATURDAY 31ST. I ATTENDED THE LAST NIGHT WHERE THE FINAL 12 MISTERS AND MISSES WERE SELECTED. THEY COMPETED IN EVENINGWEAR, SPORTSWEAR AND TALENT CATEGORIES. THE 5 WHO SCORED THE HIGHEST IN THOSE CATEGORIES WERE SELECTED AS THE FINALISTS AND HAD TO ANSWER AN UNREHEARSED QUESTION. THIS PRETTY MUCH DETERMINED THE WINNERS AND RUNNER-UP.

THE TENSION AND THE COMPETITIONS WERE THICK AS MOST OF THE GIRLS WERE EXTREMELY GOOD IN ALL OF THEIR CATEGORIES AND ALWAYS GOT A ROUSING RESPONSE. THE GUYS, THOUGH TALENTED, JUST DON'T GET THE SAME TYPE OF RESPONSE THAT THE GIRLS GET, ESPECIALLY WHEN PERFORMING. HOWEVER, OF SPECIAL NOTE IN THE MALE TALENT CATEGORY WERE: ORIS MAYS' 'BE A LION' SKIT, ALFONSO DUPREE'S ARTISTIC TRIBUTE TO THE FORMER AND CURRENT REIGNING MISTERS AND MISSES TO BILLY OCEAN'S "THE COLOR OF LOVE", MONTE ST. JAMES' ELECTRIFYING SALSA NUMBER, AND CLARK KENYATTA, WHO WASN'T A TOP 5 FINALIST BUT GAVE AN EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE BY CREATING A SCENE FROM EDDIE MURPHY'S "HARLEM NIGHTS" AND THEN BREAKING INTO A TIGHTLY CHOREOGRAPHED RENDITION OF "HERE COMES THE HOTSTEPPERS. THE LADIES TALENT SEEMED TO GRAB THE AUDIENCE'S ATTENTION THE MOST. AMONG THE BEST PERFORMANCES, WERE: RACQUEL LORDS JANET JACKSON MEDLEY, NIKKI BONET'S SELF-CONFESSING TRIBUTE TO HER PENCHANT FOR HIGH FASHION, TAMISHA IMAN'S ENERGETIC CONCERT-LIKE PERFORMANCE, MARISSA'S CLASSY NUMBER FROM "HELLO, DOLLY", TIFFANY BROOKS' RENDITION OF MARIAH CAREY'S 'MY ALL' SET IN A MEXICAN VILLAGE, AND NICOLE 'LUV' DUPREE WHO GAVE A STUNNINGLY SUBTLE PERFORMANCE BY A MONOLOGUE FROM 'EVE'S BAYOU' WHERE DBBBIE MORGAN'S CHARACTER EXPLAINED HOW ONE OF HER MANY HUSBANDS DIED.

THERE WERE MANY MEMORABLE MOMENTS THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT. AMONG THEM WERE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BLACK UNIVERSE FOUNDATION FOR AIDS RESEARCH WHICH WAS KICKED-OFF WITH A STIRRING PERFORMANCE BY THE PREVIOUS MISTERS AND MISSES COMING TOGETHER TO DO KIRK FRANKLIN'S NEW SONG FEATURING R. KELLY, MARY J. BLIGE AND CRYSTAL LEWIS. IT WAS QUITE A TOUCHING MOMENT

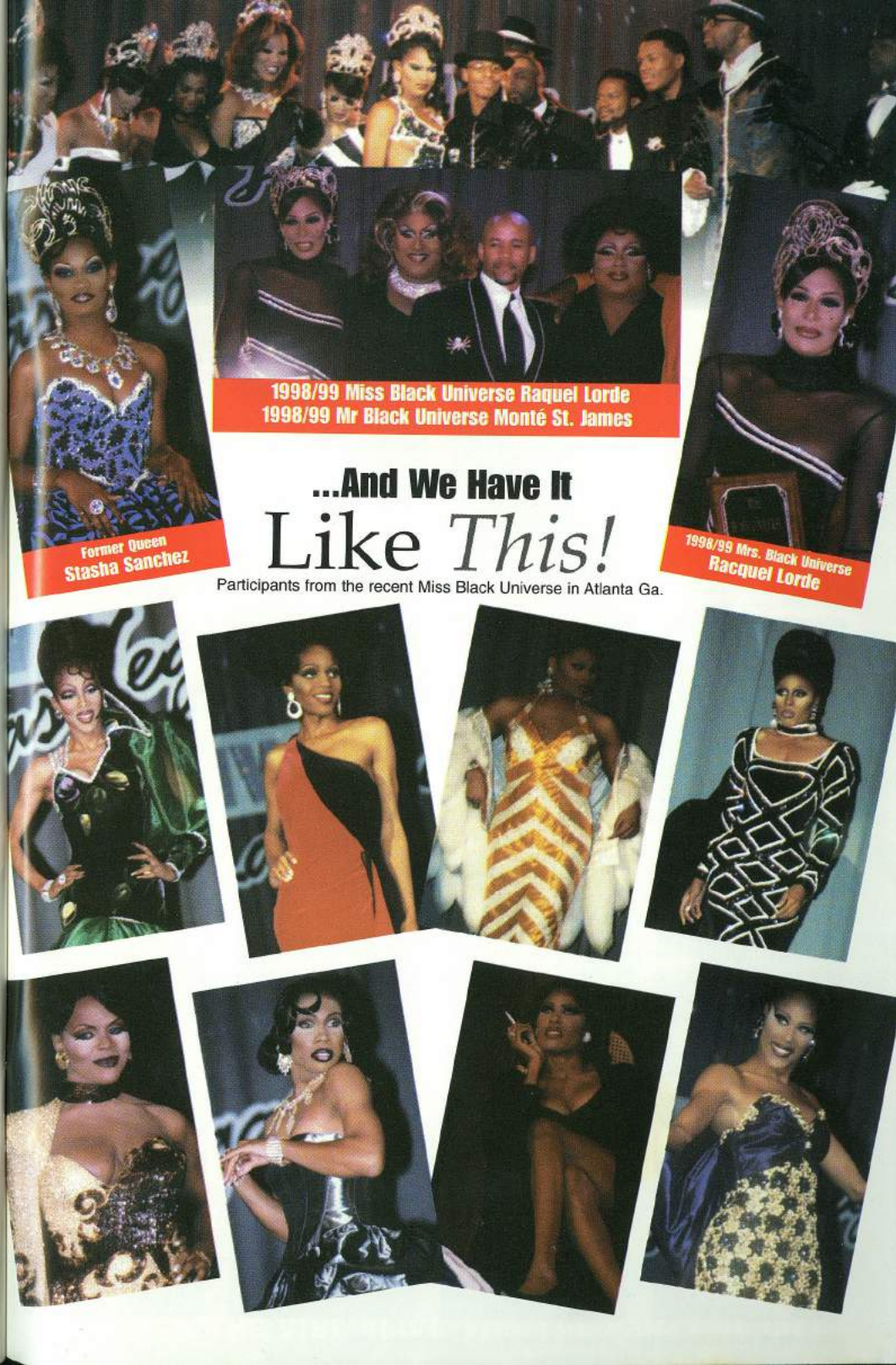
TO HAVE SASHA VALENTINO, ATLANTA MOTHER NIESHA DUPREE, R'DARIUS BLACK, STASHA SANCHEZ AND OTHERS ON STAGE PERFORMING TOGETHER. ANOTHER TOUCHING MOMENT CAME WHEN 1997 QUEEN, STASHA SANCHEZ, PERFORMED HER FAREWELL SONG, 'I'M STILL HOLDING ON' AS HER MOTHER CAME UP ON STAGE AND EMBRACED HER DURING THIS VERY EMOTIONAL MOMENT. 'THERE WERE PLENTY OF LAUGHS PROVIDED BY THE OFFICIAL HOST, SOPHIA (CLIKQUES' FAVORITE EMCEE), FROM DALLAS, TEXAS. SHE KEPT THINGS, MOVING AT A GOOD PACE AND IN BETWEEN PERFORMANCES KEPT THE CROWD DOUBLED-OVER WITH LAUGHTER (USUALLY WITH SOME GOOD-NATURED READS AIMED AT SOME OF THE AUDIENCE MEMBERS AS WELL AS AT SOME OF TIM JUDGES.)

STASHA SANCHEZ, THE 1997 QUEEN, SAYS SHE WAS -SHOCKED AND COULDN'T BELIEVE IT WHEN SHE WON. SHE FELT LIKE BEING MS. BLACK UNIVERSE WAS A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE, SHE GAINED A WHOLE NEW FAMILY IN THE BLACK UNIVERSE SYSTEM AND BECAME BEST FRIENDS WITH HER PARTNER, MR BLACK UNIVERSE, R'DARIUS BLACK. SHE ALSO NOTES THAT THE BLACK UNIVERSE PAGEANT IS "ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS BLACK NATIONAL TITLES AND IT WILL TAKE YOU A LOT OF PLACES". SHE'S HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, DC, MIAMI, HOUSTON, DALLAS, LOUISVILLE, WISCONSIN, MEMPHIS AND NORTH CAROLINA. SHE OFFERS ONE BIT OF ADVICE FROM HER EXPERIENCE, "TAKE IT SERIOUSLY, BUT AT THE SAME TIME HAVE FUN WITH IT AND YOU MUST HAVE SOMEONE BY YOUR SIDE."

THIS YEAR'S WINNERS, RACQUEL LORD AND MONTE ST. JAMES, WHO HAVE REIGNED TOGETHER PREVIOUSLY AS ALTERNATES FOR THE RIVER CITY SYSTEM DEFINITELY HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO CARRY ON THE NOW 8 YEAR OLD TRADITION OF THE BLACK UNIVERSE FAMILY. RACQUEL, WHO WAS VERY CONFIDENT THROUGHOUT, SAYS SHE WOULDN'T CHANGE A THING ABOUT THAT NIGHT AND SAYS SHE WAS "VERY HAPPY, HER EFFORTS PAID OFF AND IS DETERMINED TO KEEP IT GROWING." BOTH RACQUEL AND MONTE ARE VERY POPULAR AND TALENTED PERFORMERS WHO RESIDE IN ATLANTA AND, THROUGH DETERMINATION, HAVE BECOME STRONG PRESENCE IN THE PAGEANT COMMUNITY. RACQUEL AND MONTE RECEIVED A NICE CASH AWARD AS WELL AS LOVELY GIFTS AND WILL BE TRAVELING TO VARIOUS CITIES TO REPRESENT THEIR TITLES WITH THE GRACE AND PROFESSIONALISM THAT MADE THEM THE WINNERS THAT THEY ARE.

UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THE AUDIENCE DID NOT GET TO SEE THE NEW KING AND QUEEN CROWNED AS THE GA WORLD CONGRESS CENTER WAS ABOUT TO CLOSE AND EVERYONE HAD TO LEAVE. THAT WAS PROBABLY THE ONLY DRAWBACK TO THE WHOLE NIGHT, THOUGH IT WAS NO ONE'S FAULT BECAUSE UNLIKE MOST FUNCTIONS, THIS ONE DID START ON TIME. SO NEXT YEAR, AS PEOPLE ARE TRICK-OR-TREATING, I'LL BE AT THE 9TH BLACK UNIVERSE, PAGEANT NOT DOING THE SAME OLD-SAME OLD.

BY DANNY MIYAKE-MUGLER



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