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## Apex : A Point of Departure, Vol.4, No.03 (April 1995)

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**WILDE MEMORIALIZED**

(Philadelphia Gay News) - 100 years after his play *The Importance of Being Earnest* opened in London, Oscar Wilde was honored in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey with a stained glass window memorializing him.

Wilde's career ended - and his disgrace and exile began - when he was accused of having an affair with Lord Alfred Douglas, son of the marquess of Queensberry. The present Marquess of Queensberry noted that Wilde once called homosexuality "the love that dare not speak its name," but the ceremony "is highly symbolic in its acceptance of homosexuality, and I am delighted by that."

**AVENGERS DUMP LOCUSTS**

San Francisco (*The Blade*) - The Lesbian Avengers stormed the office of an "ex-Gay" ministry 2/8 and released a "plague of locusts."

Avenger Liz Harris said that five members of the group brought about 1,000 locusts to Exodus Ministries. They burst into the ministry's headquarters, chanting "Exodus, stop your hate and fear! Help like you is killing queers!"

Exodus Ministries, which purports to turn homosexuals into heterosexuals, was founded in 1976 and has at least 70 chapters in the U.S. and 90 others world wide.

**BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...**

- \* Lesbian S/M (p.4)
- \* Molly Ivins Retorts (p. 15)
- \* School Board Relents (p. 8)
- \* Santerre Responds (p. 3)

## THE STATE OF OUR QUEER NATION

March 23 the Matlovich Society of Portland, ME featured Lisa Keen, senior editor of the *Washington Blade*. As editor of the nation's oldest weekly gay/lesbian publication, Keen is well-qualified to assess this country's political scene, and Maine's place in it.

For the *Blade's* anniversary issue, Keen called around the country to get the opinions of 30 long term gay activists. Their concensus was that the national gay civil rights movement was in limbo. The reasons:

- \* We have no leadership or infrastructure.
- \* Our national gay political machinery spends huge amounts of time raising money; reacting to crises as they develop, not pushing a proactive agenda.
- \* We're not capitalizing on the friendliest White House in history.
- \* We're forced to funnel money away from national to state level to fight growing attacks from the radical right.
- \* The movement lacks coordination between national and statewide organizations.
- \* Though more gays are out than ever before, only a tiny percentage volunteer time or money.
- \* We've spent too much time and too much money staging national marches, marches which didn't translate into political clout.
- \* The diversity of our community gives us that many reasons to disagree among ourselves and we take that opportunity as often as we can.



photo by Annette Dragon

Keen warned of big and dramatic changes in the next six months. "We may be watching a train wreck, or we may be watching a beautiful rainbow." The U.S. Supreme Court will rule on three vital cases. (1) The first and most dramatic test will be the Colorado Amendment 2 case [a proposal similar to the one Concerned Maine Families is pushing]. The fact that the Court will hear the case is a bad sign, because we won at the lower level. "There's an interest there in reversing the Colorado decision." She used as comparison the 1986 *Hardwick* decision, which ruled that states could prohibit same-sex couples from engaging in sex in the privacy of their own homes. "The impact of that ruling reached far beyond our bedrooms and sex." The *Hardwick* decision has been used in the past 10 years to justify treating gays differently in the military, to deny parental custody, and to justify the anti-gay initiatives themselves. The ruling on Colorado Amendment 2 could devastate the movement.

(2) The Court will rule on the ban on gays in the military.

(3) The Court will rule on the clash between laws which prohibit discrimination and the first amendment. Can citizens use the first amendment to express their

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Phoenix Press is a collectively run organization whose purpose is to build and empower our community by providing positive lesbian/gay images. We will be a forum for the exchange of ideas through debate and discussion. The collective will work to reflect the political and social diversity of our community.

SUBMISSIONS

All submissions should be typed and double-spaced if at all possible. Please include your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Your name will be withheld at your request, but any material received without a contact name or number will not be published. If your submission has appeared or will appear in any other publication, we must be notified. Submissions *must* be received by the 20th of each month. Thank you for your contributions.

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*More NATION from page 1*

animosity against gays by excluding them from a parade, or other areas, like housing? Some landlords say they shouldn't have to rent to gays because of their (landlords') religious beliefs. The wrong decision could undermine a lot of existing civil rights laws.

"With those three issues alone: Colorado, the military, and marriage, it's guaranteed the gay community will become a hot potato issue in the presidential campaign."

There will be a landmark ruling from the Hawaii Supreme Court on same-sex marriages. The lower court has said denying licenses to same-sex couples is discrimination based on (how ironic) gender. "If another woman and I apply for a marriage license and they deny it, they're not denying it because we're gay, but because one of us is not a man." The state now has to

prove why it should limit licenses to heterosexuals.

Keen said we're going to see the Republicans hold hearings on gays, especially gay-related education in public schools. The first 100 days of their "Contract For America" will be up April 13, "so right after you pay your taxes, the shit will hit the fan."

Commenting on Maine's decision to postpone introducing a state anti-discrimination bill for another year, Keen said, "I imagine that while some people felt it best to put the statewide gay rights bill on hold here in Maine for a year, others feel it would be best to go ahead, put it on the ballot, fight it out head to head with the anti-gay initiative, and use it as an opportunity to educate the public. ...Our success is probably going to depend as much on our endurance as it is on our ingenuity." ♦

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## APRIL FOOLS?

This April 1995 issue of *APEX* is a week late. It is the first time in our three plus years of publication we have come out after the first of the month. Our computer crashed on the weekend of production and we were faced with the possibility of no further publication. We were able to find people who donated time and money to fix the computer (fortunately we didn't need any new parts). This made us very aware of how lucky we are to have come out of this still functioning. *APEX* operates on a shoe string budget. This is no joke. The more community support we receive - subscriptions, advertising, donations - the less marginal we'll be. So, if *APEX* is important to you and you have money that you just don't know what to do with...

apex\`a-peks\n. 1 a: the uppermost point: VERTEX (the ~ of a mountain) b: the narrowed or pointed end: the highest or culminating point (the ~ of her career) syn see SUMMIT.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the collective.

# AL SANTERRE AND SGM GO SEPARATE WAYS

Two and a half years ago, the editors of APEX spoke at a Monday night program of the New Hampshire group Seacoast Gay Men. The invitation to speak came from Al Santerre, SGM's facilitator, and organizer of its weekly lecture series.

For the last six years of the club's twenty-year existence, Al has moderated with imagination and creativity. In 1994, election year, the flavor of SGM became less social and more political. Al called a press conference in which he threatened to out the New Hampshire legislators who voted against the state's gay rights legislation. He invited campaigning pro-gay Democrats to speak to the club, refusing to invite the homophobes.

A division formed within SGM. Some were fearful of publicity and exposure. Some wanted to be out and active.

In November Al left the group. He spoke with APEX March 12.

**APEX:** Tell me about your origins.

Al: I was born in Lowell, MA in 1935. I'm 60. My parents came down from Canada. My father was a barber. My brother is a Catholic priest.

**APEX:** When did you identify as gay?

Al: Probably in my early twenties. Today it's a different thing - everybody has to come out and all that. In those days there were only bars to meet people. Then the social groups started showing up in the seventies. Now it seems to be getting away from that again, not only

in the gay community - it's all over the place. The groups in NH besides SGM - Monadnock Gay Men up in the Keene area - that folded up last year. That was there for 11 years. There's another group SAM up in West Lebanon in the Hanover-Dartmouth area - that's been going on for a dozen years. I don't know how long that's going to hold up, they had some problems last fall.

But Seacoast Gay Men in Portsmouth - I always said it was like a fish out of water. There was no such thing anywhere else. All these other gay social groups, like gay bowling teams and gay outdoor clubs - they all have a certain focus. What we were doing in Portsmouth was like a polyglot-type organization where people show up and you sit there and be entertained every Monday night.

**APEX:** When did SGM start having problems?

Al: One of the troubles with SGM was that they had a problem accepting women. It was always open to the public and many programs had a lot of - well, 5 or 6 - women showing up. Every time that happened some of the mem-

bers would come down on me. One time we had a program on stained glass, and about a dozen women showed up. There were people bitching about that for two weeks.

When the ODCC (Open Door City Council) started trying to put that gay rights thing through in Portsmouth, there was a lot of trouble. SGM had been meeting on Monday night for about 20 years. ODCC decided to have a meeting to launch that gay rights thing on a Monday night. Someone from ODCC thought, "Well, Monday night the guys from SGM meet downstairs in the Unitarian Church - we could have our meeting upstairs and open it to the public." The only problem was, no one told us about it. I read about it in the paper before anyone called us up. Someone came down that night and said, "Why don't you guys join us upstairs?" We plan things a month and a half ahead of time, and we're supposed to drop everything and go upstairs?

The whole gay community except us went upstairs to that meeting.

*More SGM on page 7*

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## LESBIAN S/M - Consensual, Erotic...Empowering!

By Gabriella Saralyn Sigel

As an out Lesbian who has recently come out as an "S/M Dyke," I have been shocked and offended by the negative stereotypes and misconceptions of my friends and the so-called feminist community about what S/M is and isn't, and who S/M dykes are. First of all, I will explain what S/M is NOT. S/M is NOT forced, nonconsensual, anti-feminist, oppressive, misogynist, patriarchal, or "bad." As a proud feminist activist in the movement against violence against women, I STRONGLY condemn all sexual (and other) acts where consent is not clearly evident, including battery, assault, harassment, rape, and sexist, women-hating imagery that prevails in the mainstream media portraying women as victims. It is precisely because of my belief in women as powerful, valuable, autonomous human beings who deserve equal status to men and respect within our cultural structure that I decry the ill-titled feminist myth that all sexual images of women are INHERENTLY violent, that sex - and female eroticism and sexual power - is "bad," and that Lesbian S/M oppresses women and minorities. Nothing could be further from the truth. In my own experiences, I have found S/M to be a valuable tool in cutting through social conditioning that oppresses women, offering release from the tensions of functioning within a male-dominated, heterosexist society.

Lesbian S/M is intrinsically revolutionary; its existence not only affirms the existence of female sexuality without the presence of a dominating male, but involves women taking and giving power to each other in a mutually-consensual, safe environment. Because of the exchange involved, Lesbian S/M can be a dynamic way of subverting the patriarchy and affirming the "survivor" status of women constantly being depicted as "victims" by mainstream press and "feminists" alike. By exploring our sexuality and our fantasies, and learning to shatter the restrictions we women have been forced by both the growing contingent of

feminists reminiscent of Victorian sexists and the white man's world to place on our feelings - sexual and otherwise - as women and Lesbians, S/M dykes contribute to the empowerment of all women. Lesbian S/M declares the power and right of each woman to choose her own limits, sexuality, and exploration of Self. As an ethnocultural minority and a working-class Lesbian, I am entitled to take or give the power that has been denied me by the greater society in S/M play.

S/M IS about finding yourself, about listening to what your body wants and not being afraid to explore and claim your emotions and sexual nature as a woman. If we as Lesbians or as women are afraid of S/M, it is because we are afraid of reclaiming the power of consent required in S/M and of divulging our own self-truths. S/M is sexuality stripped bare of pretension and empty formalism; it necessitates an uninhibited ability to communicate what you really want to your partner/s and to accept unrepressed love from another person. S/M may or may not involve role plays, mutual masturbation, oral or anal sex, cross-dressing, military and police uniforms, doctor-nurse and other fantasies, bondage, whipping, cutting, and many other forms of play. It is crucial to remember that many of these acts, when performed by unskilled, careless players, or outside the context of consensual S/M acts can be unsafe, violent, and destructive forms of abuse. S/M is a sensual and often sexual form of psychodrama: S/M "scenes," or acts, often involve creating the illusion of an alternate reality in which all players are empowered to create a "role," or persona, of their own design.

Few non-S/M Lesbians are aware of the legitimate physiological process that justifies S/M. During S/M, whether a player is acting as a "top" (dominant), "bottom" (submissive), both, or an entirely different role, the intense psychological, physical, and emotional arousal experienced by the players releases adrenalin and chemicals in the brain called endorphins. Endorphins are a group of naturally-occurring proteins in the brain with potent analgesic properties. "Analgesic" is defined by Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary as "causing insensibility to pain without loss of consciousness." During S/M, because of dramatically increased tolerance to pain caused by endorphins, physical acts that would normally be painful function as sexual stimulants and give the players the powerful sensation of a "runner's high." As in meditation and yoga, the complete release from constricting thoughts and repressive physicalities in S/M suffuses participants with total equilibrium, freeing their minds from the responsibilities of our busy world for a temporary interval.

### LOOKING FOR MAGAZINES?

Outlook, 10 PerCent, Out, Bad Attitude, On Our Backs, RFD, James White Review, Sinister Wisdom, Christopher Street, Heresies, Lesbian Contradiction, Sojourner...



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Although many Lesbians and Feminists are unable to make a distinction between a consensual S/M act between two (or more or less) lovers/partners and an act of battery within an abusive relationship, many glaringly obvious facts contradict this oversimplified view of human interrelations. First, in the case of the S/M act, a "safe word" is almost always used to allow any involved partner/s to immediately terminate the scene if it becomes mentally or physically unhealthy for them. In the case of physical or mental battery within an abusive relationship, however, a battered partner has no viable method of terminating a violent situation with a single word, nor is she encouraged to be aware of her option to use this word by her assailant. Second, S/M is most commonly used to enhance sexual play, as an expression of mutual love, and as a therapeutic tool for spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical release. After S/M scenes, players feel revived, invigorated, or completely sated. In contrast, after a case of physical, mental, or sexual assault, battered women feel humiliated, degraded, and violated. Third, trust and safety between all partners are prerequisites to S/M scenes, while a woman experiencing abuse and battery fears and distrusts her batterer.

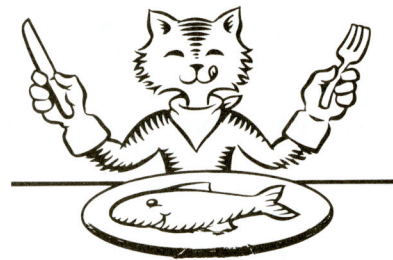
There are many harmful myths and stereotypes about people who practice S/M. Tops are viewed as violent rapists with little or no regard for human life, while bottoms are seen as perpetuating female victim status and violence against women. I am an S/M dyke. I am also a vegetarian (though I have a strong fondness for "pleather"!), and an activist against Lesbian battering, spouse/lover abuse, and other forms of violence in our society. I am not a nymphomaniac (though I confess an uninhibited love of sex and female sensuality!), and I do not conform to any of these negative perceptions about S/M and its players. S/M dykes are, in reality, people just like everyone else - Surprise, surprise! We love, we hurt - oh, baby, do we hurt! Some of us are wonderful people, some of us are not. While S/M may not appeal to everyone, our fundamental right to consent to this and any other type of sexual act we choose to participate in must be secured if any women are to restore our sexual freedoms. We are S/M dykes, and WE ARE YOUR SISTERS!!!!!!!!!!!!◆



photo by Annette Dragon

### Kate Schrock at CiTi

Every Thursday is Women's Night at CiTi, the most recent addition to Portland, ME's queer club scene. Upcoming performers include Darien Brahms, Lisa Gallant Seal and the Brotherhood Dogs, Cordon Bleu, and Yagottawanna. See Calendar on page 10 for further information.



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# PASSAGES

Jon M. Piefer, age 36, of 118 Brackett St., Portland, ME, died Wednesday, March 8, 1995 at his home due to complications from AIDS. Son of Donald and Jeanette McGarry Piefer, Jon was born and educated in Chicago and served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He had been an AIDS activist and volunteer. He and his partner, Charles N. Wynott, founded the Portland Chapter of PAWS, Pets are Wonderful Support. Jon and Charlie were this year's recipients of the Maine Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance's Cameron Duncan Award. Together they resided at the AIDS Lodging House. Surviving are his father and stepmother, Donald and Lugene Piefer, a daughter, Jennifer Piefer, and maternal grandmother, Ann McGinnis, all of Chicago; a brother Lawrence of Denver, CO; and an aunt, Edith Viverito.



Jon met Charles back in 1989. To me it was a match made in heaven. I remember Charlie being so happy and content. It was so nice to know my friend Charlie had met someone so special. Anyone who knew Jon, knew him as a kind and loving man. Mrs. Wynott told me a few days after the funeral that she was very grateful for all the support Jon received and that Charlie is still receiving from everyone. Charlie is and always will be my best friend. He left Maine, and went to California. I felt a loss but not at all like the loss Charlie is feeling right now. I remember him calling me one night, and telling me about meeting Jon. Charlie was a changed person, he was in Love - real Love. We spoke many times on the phone and as time was going on their love became stronger. In 1992 Charlie and Jon moved here to Lewiston, Maine. Charlie wanted to come home. That's when I met Jon. He was everything Charlie said he was. Jon touched many hearts and we will all miss him, but we all know he is in a better place. - Richard J. Robichaud.

*Charles Wynott extends his thanks to all those who helped him and Jon through the past weeks, especially The AIDS Project, Peabody House, Dr. Gwen O'Guin, Sandy Titus, and Stratogen Health.*

## TABITHA JEAN'S

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More SGM from page 3

Lack of communication started the whole thing. ODCC did Monday night meetings. All of a sudden we were distant cousins, and we should follow them. That group also had a lot of lesbians involved, and they knew the attitude of some of SGM, so no one wanted to talk to us. So, like the tail wagging the dog, I had to go after them all the time.

The night they had their first big meeting, Sarah Louise, a transsexual who's been on national TV, was there to do a program for SGM. She's always been a supporter of SGM. She went tear-assing upstairs and raised hell up there. She disrupted the whole meeting. She came down with 20 or 30 people to salvage the whole evening. So they hate her. Period.

*APEX:* Who hates her?

AI: Well, the lesbian community. They don't want to accept her because she's a transsexual. Mind your own business - you don't belong here. It was a three-ring circus.

☆☆☆☆☆☆

The Unitarian Church has a large gay/lesbian congregation. After services on Sunday they have a coffee hour. Everybody shows up there, do all their cruising. So they don't have to show up on Monday nights anymore. The younger generation is all there, so what we ended up with in SGM was a lot of older

men. That's all right if they want to have a hang-out, but it just went downhill from there. We lost all the younger members and it's going nowhere now.

☆☆☆☆☆☆

My programming - progressive programming - got the church upset. HEAL, a group from NY, attacking the AIDS bureaucracy, claiming AZT is a poison - that came down on me. The local AIDS group had a badmouth campaign going around to keep people away from that meeting. So nobody showed up, maybe 15 people. And they were mostly from out of town. The AIDS group - they're trying to dominate the gay community in Portsmouth for money reasons, which I understand.

Same thing with the church. The Unitarian Church keeps on buying property and they try to hold on to the gay community 'cause they have deep pockets. When we (SGM) started out at the church, there was a lot of concern about money issues. The church needed



photo by Annette Dragon

money all the time. Now it's even grown worse because they've been buying property and started putting people on paid staff. So naturally they try to dominate the gay community. But when they rattle the cage too much, we get a little uptight. I was trying to move SGM out of there, because we didn't have the money to pay them. We were going to cut back to one program per month that we had to pay for. We started going to Stroudwater Books. We could go there for free and save money. Then some of the older guys who belonged to the church got involved. The church was losing

More SGM & page 13

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## IT'S FINALLY OVER - Sex Ed and Health Clinics Approved

by Marina Nolan

"I think that condoms should be passed around - the streets, schools, everywhere - because they don't cost that much and people need to see them, use them, and take responsibility for protecting themselves," exclaims Shannon Larson, a Deering High junior.

Junior Alison Fiser agrees, "I definitely think that there should be condoms available in schools."

In the hallways of Deering High School one often hears the words "sex" and "condom" but on Wednesday, March 1, the talk about these topics went beyond hallway conversations and straight to the Portland School Committee. Students, parents, and other community members went to the March 1st Committee meeting to express their opinions on expanded sexual education and condom availability for the last time before the deciding vote was to be cast. The debate over these issues has been going on in the Portland community for approximately three years now. The vote was on ten curriculum recommendations to expand the sexual education program and on a service recommendation to implement a school-based health clinic. The clinic would make condoms and other services available to low-income students.



Students who attended the 3/1 School Committee Meeting

photo by Ben Halstead

Many students went to the School Committee to express their support for the recommendations. "High school is the place we learn all the basics. We need to include the basics of sexuality; it is a part of life," stated junior Marion Stephens, urging the School Committee to pass all of the recommendations. "I want all people to be safe. I believe condoms can save people and I think they should be available," said Stephens.

One argument of those opposed to the recommendations is that condoms will send a message that it is okay to have sex and that condoms make sex safe. Susan Tully-Young, a parent, commented, "I think that by giving condoms in school...the school is saying it's okay to be sexual." Daniel Booth, also a parent, feels that if the school were to make condoms available, the school would be replacing a vital part of family life by teaching sexuality and morality outside of the home. A parent of two elementary aged children, Ken Jones stated that he felt condom availability would undermine the decisions of abstinent students.

"It has been suggested that condom availability sends a message. I believe that is ridiculous, it's the same as saying that band-aids encourage students to skin their knees," remarked Mike Roland, a School Committee member.

Sandy Lovell, a sexuality educator for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, pointed out that, "There is no evidence that sexual education encourages teen sex...education does not equal permission."

Hillary Thompson, a graduating junior, expressed her concern for students who are having sex saying that an abstinence only curriculum is not realistic. "Sixty-five percent of high school seniors are having sex. This number will not be zero percent in my lifetime," said Thompson.

Andrew Novick, a Deering senior and president of the student council, also spoke, saying that he fully supported the recommendations because, "I care about my school, community, and the environment in which I live."

Senior Jon Doughty proclaimed, "I know so little having gone through twelve years of public education." He urged the Committee to pass the recommendations in front of them in order to ensure a better education for other students, such as his younger sister, a Deering freshman.

Many parents and concerned community members showed up to express their opposition although no students came to speak against the recommendations. Some opponents urged the Committee not to pass any of the recommendations while others were only opposed to the idea of the clinic. "I urge you to pass the recommendations, except for the service proposal," stated Davis Hartwell, who was concerned about the cost and effectiveness of a school-based clinic.

Mark Carpenter, who supported none of the recommendations, commented, "You are creating an environment which takes away responsibility...You are treating the symptom and not the problem."

There was also a fair amount of finger-pointing between the two sides. Mike Schools, a parent opposed to all of the recommendations, exclaimed, "The proponents of these recommendations are controlled by the homosexual community, Planned Parenthood, and other left-wing liberal groups."

Bonnie Blythe, a parent in support of the recommendations, responded, "These recommendations are moderate, not radical by any means. What is radical is the opposition to homosexuality; that's really horrible. That attitude contributes to the teen suicide rate."

After hours of discussion and debate, the School Committee voted 7-2 to pass all of the recommendations. Jim Banks and David Ripley opposed the vote, Banks saying that the clinic would not build self-esteem or responsibility and Ripley sticking to his conviction that these recommendations should not be the school's responsibility but rather the parents' responsibility.

Although the passing recommendations are quite a bit watered down from Larson and Fiser's ideas about wide spread condom distribution, junior Meredith Daggett feels, "It is definitely a step in the right direction. People are finally listening to the concerns of the students and doing something about them."

The recommendations were given to the School Committee by the Family Living and Human Sexuality Advisory



Deering students bound and determined

photo by Annette Dragon

Board (FLHSAB), who appointed a Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Subcommittee. The Subcommittee investigated the issues of condom availability and expanded sexual education to see if these factors could play a role in the prevention of STDs. They conducted and analyzed surveys of parents, students, and educators for feedback on these issues and also on student sexual behavior. After much research, discussion, and debate they created the curriculum and service recommendations which were passed on to the full Advisory Board and later approved.

These curriculum recommendations included: increased parental involvement, continued emphasis on abstinence and decision making, clear information about how to use condoms, sexual abuse prevention, increased reality-based education reflecting on the diversity of the schools' population, including the experiences of homosexual students, and the implementation of an elective course in

sexuality for eleventh and twelfth grade students. A service recommendation was proposed that a school based health clinic make condoms and other services available to students.

After FLHSAB approved the recommendations, they were passed on to the School Committee for a final vote. Some modifications to the recommendations were made because of community opposition and logistical problems. The clinic, originally intended for all students, will now only be available to low income students with parental permission. The clinic will be moved from City Hall into the high schools. Because the City Hall clinic is currently funded by tax payers, it is available for low income student use only. The restrictions on the city clinic will also apply to the high schools so that the clinic can be moved into the schools as soon as possible. In coming years, if the clinic is successful, alternate funding will be sought in order to make the clinic accessible to all students.

Opponents point out that once moved to the high schools, the total hours the clinic currently operates will be split between the two schools. Hartwell and his wife, who oppose the change, submitted a Transportation Proposal which would have been an alternative to the school-based clinic. The proposal would have provided transportation from the high schools to City Hall, where the clinic already exists. As the proposal states, "The students should be brought to the health clinic instead of the health clinic being brought to the students." The total population of both high schools exceeds 2,000 students and Hartwell approximates that only about one hundred and fifty Deering students would be eligible to use the clinic and only a little over three hundred students would be eligible at Portland High School.

# CALENDAR

CALENDAR LISTINGS ARE FREE TO GROUPS SPONSORING COMMUNITY EVENTS. THOSE WHO CHARGE FOR PRODUCTS/SERVICES ARE INVITED TO CONTACT PHOENIX PRESS REGARDING DISPLAY ADVERTISING.

## MONDAY 4/3

**Seacoast Gay Men *Spring is Coming*** Potluck. Unitarian Church, 292 State St., Portsmouth, NH, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (603) 430-4052.

## TUESDAY 4/4

**Paula Stockholm - Gay Resources on the Internet.** The Gathering, 326 Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland Campus, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (207) 774-4919.

## THURSDAY 4/6

**Women's Night at CiTi** presents Darien Brahms with her rock trio. 8:30pm, \$4. 137 Kennebec St., Portland, ME. FMI ☎ (207) 772-5699.

## FRIDAY 4/7

**First Friday Fabulous Film Festival** presents *The Color Purple* at G/L Community Services Ctr. of No. ME, 398 S. Main, Caribou, ME (207) 498-2088. Free. Center opens at 8pm (Maine time)/9pm (N.B. time); film at 9pmM/10pmN. Free popcorn, BYO beverage.

## SATURDAY 4/8

**Women Meeting Women** general meeting, Unitarian Church, Nashua, NH. FMI ☎ (603) 881-4268.

**Aries Birthday Celebration** and Potluck at Gwen's. Bring musical instruments/sheet

music. FMI ☎ (603) 448-0573. An Amelia's Event.

**NH Pride Fundraiser Auction and Dance.** Pat's Peak, Henniker, NH. FMI ☎ (603) 382-9308.

## SUNDAY 4/9

**NOW's action to stop violence against women.** Rally, Washington, DC. FMI ☎ (202) 331-0066.

## MONDAY 4/10

**Crafts Night at Seacoast Gay Men.** Call Ron Main Mon-Thu. 9am-6pm if you want to "show your stuff" at our first craft show. Unitarian Church, 292 State St., Portsmouth, NH, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (603) 430-4052.

## TUESDAY 4/11

**S/M, Dispelling the Misconceptions.** Tracey Woods, moderator. The Gathering, USM Campus Center, Rooms B&C, Portland, ME, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (207) 774-4919.

## WEDNESDAY 4/12

**Upper Valley P-FLAG Meeting.** 7pm. FMI ☎ Jeannette (603) 643-8079.

**What Makes a Heroine?** Whom do we Honor? Why? Women's Center in Belfast Discussion Series, 6:15-8:30pm, 9A Main St., Belfast, ME, 2nd Fl. FMI ☎ Jan (207) 338-1429.

## THURS.-SUN. 4/13-16

**7th Gulf Coast Women's Music Festival.** Fundraiser for Camp Sister Spirit. FMI ☎ (601) 344-1411 or write: GCWF, POB 12, Ovett, MS 39464.

## THURSDAY 4/13

**Portland Pride - Past, Present, Future.** Michael Rossetti presents a slide show of past parades and discussion. Matlovich Society, Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring St., Portland, ME. 7:30pm. Parking, accessible. FMI ☎ (207) 772-2374.

**Kath Weston lectures on *City Cousins, Country Cousins, Kissing Cousins: Sexual Identity and the Great Gay Migration.*** 11am, Colby College, Page Commons Room. Free. FMI ☎ (207) 872-3107.

**Women's Night at CiTi** presents Lisa Gallant Seal and the Brotherhood Dogs. Rhythm/Blues. 8:30pm, \$3. 137 Kennebec St., Portland, ME. FMI ☎ (207) 772-5699.

## MONDAY 4/17

**Seacoast Game Night.** Bring your own games, cards, etc. Unitarian Church, 292 State St., Portsmouth, NH, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (603) 430-4052.

## TUESDAY 4/18

**Magic: An Eclectic Spirituality.** Suzanne Cardinal. The Gathering, USM Campus Center, Rooms B&C, Portland, ME, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (207) 774-4919.

## THURSDAY 4/20

**Women's Night at CiTi** presents Cordon Bleu (Duo). Acoustics, percussives, vocals. 8:30pm, \$3. 137 Kennebec St., Portland, ME. FMI ☎ (207) 772-5699.

**Andy Reinhardt of *BYTE* Magazine** speaks at Colby College. FMI ☎ (207) 872-3107.

## FRIDAY 4/21

**Northern Lambda Nord sponsors Women's Night,** 7-9pm (Maine time)/8-10pm (N.B. time) at 398 S. Main St., Caribou, ME. Light refreshments. Smoke/alcohol/drug free. FMI ☎ Sheila (207) 764-7838.

## SATURDAY 4/22

**"Lost & Found," Map and Compass Clinic.** 12-4pm, Chesterfield, NH. FMI ☎ (603) 763-5488. Sponsored by Women's Outdoor Challenges.

**BAGAL presents Key West II.** (It's a dance) BYOB, but refreshments and soft beverages will be on sale. West Village Meeting House, Brattleboro, VT., 8pm-1am. \$20/door, \$13/adv. FMI ☎ (802) 254-5947.

## MONDAY 4/24

**"Sharing Our Talents." Seacoast Gay Men,** Unitarian Church, 292 State St., Portsmouth, NH, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (603) 430-4052.

## TUESDAY 4/25

**Working With the Public School to Successfully Implement AIDS Education: A Personal Account of the Five Year Journey in Old Orchard Beach.** The Gathering, USM Campus Center, Rooms B&C, Portland, ME, 7-9pm. FMI ☎ (207) 774-4919.

**How Sexuality Affects Working Relationships.** Women's Center in Belfast Discussion Series, 6:15-8:30pm, 9A Main St., Belfast, ME, 2nd Fl. FMI ☎ Jan (207) 338-1429.

**THURSDAY 4/27**

**Matlovich has a makeover.** Ferranti and other Portland divas show how it's done. Join us for a backstage look at drag performance as we discuss the why and wherefores of drag. Matlovich Society, Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring St., Portland, ME. 7:30pm. Parking, accessible. FMI ☎ (207) 772-2374.

**Women's Night at CiTi** presents Yagottawanna, an a cappella trio. 8:30pm, \$3. 137 Kennebec St., Portland, ME. FMI ☎ (207) 772-5699.

**Doris Kearns Goodwin**, author and historian speaks at Colby College. FMI ☎ (207) 872-3107.

**FRIDAY 4/28**

**Family Issues, VCLGR** Interactive TV discussion of G/L/B/T issues such as gay marriage and adoption. 6:30pm. FMI ☎ (802) 889-9413.

**SATURDAY 4/29**

**Chem Free Spring Dance** sponsored by Portland Roundup, 9pm-midnight at Williston West Church, 32 Thomas St. (bet. Spring and Pine), Portland, ME. \$2 donation. This event is a fundraiser for Portland Roundup's 11th Annual Labor Day Conference for Sober Lesbians and Gay Men. Come socialize and dance in a chem-free, smoke free space. All are welcome. Donations of snacks and soda welcome. If only high school dances had been this queer! FMI ☎ Scott (207) 874-0635 or Janine (207) 729-7403.

**"Nightwalk in Nature,"** Night Adventure, Sponsored by Women's Outdoor Challenges. FMI ☎ (603) 763-5488.

**NOTICES**

**QUEERS R US** is putting together an anthology of all that radical, queer anti-assimilationist material that deserves a bigger audience than it got the first time around. Send us your broadsides, 'zinework, newsletter pieces, articles, demo fliers, transitory agitprop (wheat-pasting posters, stickers, spray paint documentation, etc.), along with some info: why you did it, what you did with it, responses. Send material (multiple copies if possible) or inquiries to D. Gould, 4646 N. Winchester Ave., #2, Chicago, IL 60640. E-mail to E. Rand: erand @bates.edu. New material welcome. Deadline: 5/1/95.

**Heather Bishop**, 8pm, Saturday, 5/6, First Parish Church, 425 Congress St., Portland, ME. Tickets \$13.50/Adv., \$15/door. FMI write POB 17, W. Buxton, ME 04093.

The *Harvard Educational Review*, a research and opinion journal, plans to publish a special issue on the topic of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgendered People In Education. It is calling for papers exploring relevant issues such as race, gender identity, homophobia, parenting issues and policy advocacy from a theoretical, research or practice perspective. Deadline 9/1/95. Contact: *Harvard Educational Review*, Gutman Library, Suite 349, 6 Appian Way, Cambridge, MA 02138.



**SYMPOSIUM XXI - PRESQUE ISLE**

**Keynote Speakers** *Mary Bonauto*, Boston attorney working with "Maine Won't Discriminate" to fight the referendum. *Tuma Young*, MicMac activist with Atlantic First Nations AIDS Task Force in Halifax, speak son "The Fine Line Between Spirituality & Sexuality." **Live Entertainment**

*Karen Williams* "Funniest woman on the comedy stage today!" **The Maritones** 12 voices of 55-member Maine Gay Men's Chorus **Casino Benefit** The Gay-Lesbian Phoneline of Maine wants a toll-free number. Proceeds will go towards establishing 1-800 service. **Bookseller** will offer a large selection of titles of interest. **Workshops** will feature a wide variety of topics. **Housing** Dormitory rooms, double occupancy; linen, blanket, pillow, towel provided. **Limited space, first come, first served. Guaranteed housing reservation MUST be received by May 1, 95.** **Meals** Full meal plan: Saturday breakfast, lunch, buffet supper; Sunday brunch & barbeque; Monday breakfast. Meat and vegetarian menus available. *Please reserve your meal ticket by May 1, 1995.* **Child Care** Free - ages 2½ & older; **requests must be received by May 1, 95.** **Registration** Registration fee includes admission to all events. Housing and meals are not included in the registration fee. **Pick-a-Plan Early Registration Discount Prices end May 1st. U.S. funds only. Non-refundable deposits required!** **Plan A** - "The Full Package": three nights lodging, six meals, and registration, all for \$109 (requires a \$50 non-refundable deposit). **Plan B** - Two nights, six meals, registration \$95 (\$50 deposit). **Plan C** - One night, five meals, registration \$80 (\$50 deposit). **Plan D** - Six meals plus registration \$65 (\$50 deposit). **Plan E** - Registration only, \$25 (no deposit). Also available at the door. **NOTE:** To qualify for the *Discount Prices*, your **non-refundable deposits** must be **postmarked by May 1, 1995.** *After May 1st*, registration prices/deposits are (U.S. funds) **Plan A** - \$125/\$50, **Plan B** - \$110/\$50, **Plan C** - \$90/\$50, **Plan D** - \$75/\$50, **Plan E** - \$25/\$0. **Limited-income registrations** Some registrations are available for limited-income persons who wish to help during Symposium in exchange for reduced fees; students especially encouraged. Check the appropriate box. **Symposium Info: 207/498-2088** *Call Wednesdays, 7-9pm; leave message at other times*

**Early registration discount ends May 1st!**

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- I request free Child Care - must be reserved by May 1

Number of children \_\_\_\_\_ Ages of children \_\_\_\_\_

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## ASK THIGHMASTER - advice with holes

Dear Thighmaster,

This is an ageless dilemma but something that sort of baffles me at the moment.

Basically after years of single living (as a loner actually), I'm in the market for a honey.

Here's the problem: people, particularly we fags, tend to notice a person's plumage, instead of what's "inside."

I'm looking for sort of an "inside" relationship, beyond the surface "sizzle." Is this possible, or am I truly fucked?

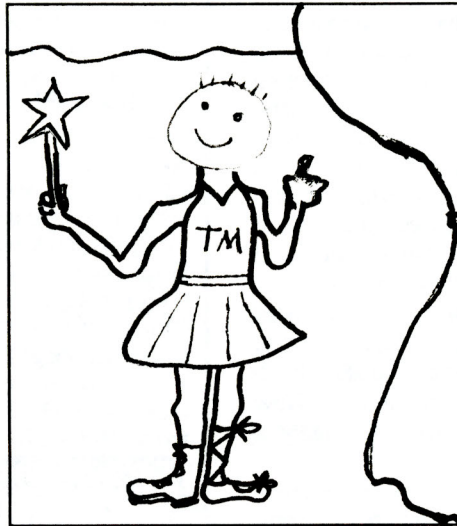
Your Fan,  
Not Yet Desperate

Dear So-Called Fan,

You've given Thighmaster two choices here. Thighmaster can get into drag as Susie Sunshine and give you a pep talk - get out there, keep looking, you can find what you want, chirp chirp chirp. Or, Thighmaster, the queen/king of name-your-punishment-I'll-pick-the-outfit versatility, can deliver the same basic message in textual leather gear. On second thought, though, there's really no choice here (a good thing because that Susie Sunshine costume is quite dusty and doesn't fit Thighmaster too well anyway), because you've angered Thighmaster immensely by proclaiming yourself a fan when you have not shown yourself worthy of the Thighmaster fan club. Sure, a true fan throws in sex words whenever possible. But would a true fan use "fucked" as a negative? Never. More important, would a true fan have failed to memorize every previous Thighmaster column? Of course not. And you, Mr. self-identified plumage foe, have clearly treated Thighmaster's texts as the very plumage you claim to despise: as a flashy display to cruise, use, and toss after a quick once-over. If this weren't the case, you'd have deduced from your Thighmaster archives the following recurring

theme in too many letters from too many people who think that everyone around them wants the opposite of what they want themselves. One-night wonders see only the marriage minded, the marriage minded see only one-night-wonders, etc.

So let's pretend you're taking a standardized college-admission test. Don't worry, this isn't going to be the usual standardized-test routine, where the questions are designed to



drawing by Naomi Falcone

get the over-privileged into over-priced schools. There are no analogies coming like "the Yacht Club is to wine spritzers like West Palm Beach is to \_\_\_\_\_," a question Thighmaster flunked on the SATs many years ago but recently learned the answer to on the highly educational USA-channel TV classic *Silk Stalkings*. This show, by the way, is a must-see for anyone stuck in the despicable situation where access to education depends on feeding the greedy testmakers because, unlike those \$600 test prep classes, *Silk Stalkings* offers "know your snot culture" trivia in a free and painless way: by sprinkling it into a plotline that is driven by kinky sex every single week. Besides, you have no idea what culture has to offer if you haven't seen this incredible episode where the chcyk who used to play Emily on *As the World Turns* gets handcuffed, arms overhead, to

an indoor chain fence, and then her strapless top is removed from behind so that, when the supposedly bad guy presses into her back, you can totally get the feeling of breasts pushed into cold metal while the steamy disco atmosphere suggests the heat that makes the cold bearable while simultaneously heightening each sensation by high contrast.

You've got this scene in your mind, right? Good, so you're primed to follow Thighmaster anywhere, and we return then, to your standardized admission test. You're onto reading comprehension, which concerns Thighmaster's complete works. (This is a fantasy, remember, so you can handle this in the famed "allotted time.") Question One: From Thighmaster's complete works, it appears that the average Thighmaster supplicant is: (A) A unique and special individual destined for despair in the world because her or his desires concerning the three M's (Meet, Mingle, and Mate) are shared by no one on the planet. (B) A not-so-special individual who has the very common ailment which goes by the scientific term "sizzle-and-plumage cataract," or SPC. This form of cataract - a cataract is a cloudy film over the eyes that gets its name, as *Jeopardy* fans will know, from the Greek term for "waterfall" - is prejudice induced. It's caused by the long-running homophobic cascade of crap about how queers can never be happy because we are deviant and destined for misery. Its common symptom: failure to see anyone whose desires match yours combined with a tendency to prove your doom theories by repeatedly hooking up with people who don't, in fact, want anything you want, and who blare this information with neon-sign brightness that anyone without SPC could see clearly. The answer to your test question? (See, in this fantasy test there are only two choices so you have a 50/50 chance of being right.) Obvi-

# CLASSIFIED

## EVENTS

**Celebrate the Body Erotic** is coming to New Hampshire! This full two-day workshop teaches men to feel at home in their erotic bodies. Through initiation rituals of sacred touch, participants experience their erotic energy as playful, sacred, energizing and transformative. Call (508) 454-4875 to register or for f information./

## GROUP THERAPY

**30 week group for gay women late 20s** through 30s wanting to bring their full selves into more satisfying, balanced relationships. Focus on recognizing and "rewriting" relationship patterns. Attention given to themes of homophobia, trust, power, authenticity, commitment. Thursdays, 7:30-8:50pm, beginning 4/27/95, Portsmouth, NH. Led by Susan Lager, M.S.W. For more info call (603) 431-7131./

## PERSONAL

Eligible - GWM healthy, prof., 40s, trim build, kind, sensitive and honest. Seeks

attractive, caring, intelligent man with integrity to explore friendship, possibly more. Reply Boxholder 200, c/o Phoenix Press, POB 4743, Portland, ME 04112./

**Very lonely incarcerated GWM.** Mascu-line, 100% top, brown hair, green eyes, 160 lbs. athletic build. Sincere, honest, romantic. Seeks caring, stable, feminine GM, professional, for long lasting relationship. Give this very romantic guy a chance for a life time mate and a new life. Race unimportant. Donnie Duke 106874, POB 128, K.S.P., Eddyville, Kentucky 42038./

ously, B. The prescription? Well, Thighmaster offered it right at the beginning (consult Susie-Sunshine dragtext above). Angry about your long time in the textual waiting room when you could have been in and out in a flash? Get over it. Wasn't this textual lashing-into-fantasy better than that holiday issue of *Lady's Home Journal*?

~\*~\*~\*~\*~

Thighmaster eagerly awaits your submissions. No problem too complicated or twisted! Thighmaster, c/o Phoenix Press, PO Box 4743, Portland, ME 04112.♦

~\*~\*~\*~\*~

**More SGM from page 7**  
money. Instead of \$140, \$150 a month, we were down to \$35 a month. So they worried about that. They conspired behind my back to put all kinds of rules and regulations in place. They had meetings to have bylaws, which we never had before. No way would they come up to me and say "Won't you sit in with us?" They wouldn't do it. They thought I was going to become one of their lackeys. They would come up with the 10 commandments and just slap me  
**More SGM ↪ page 14**

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More APPROVED from page 9

Although many students are glad that the recommendations passed, some are opposed to the income restrictions placed on the clinic. Deering High senior Dave Allen comments, "I think it is kind of foolish to limit the availability of access to the clinic to students because of their economic background. Financial status isn't and shouldn't be a variable in matters concerning public health."

The clinic is not only about condoms; it also includes services such as physical examinations, immunizations, treatment for minor illnesses, laboratory testing and HIV testing and counseling. School Committee members Paula Craighead and Mike Roland both say that they hope to expand clinic access to all students within two years. In the meantime, says Craighead, "The clinic is a statement to students to say, 'pay attention and take care of your health needs.'" Roland says that the clinic and new Sex Ed curriculum should be in place by the beginning of the 1995-96 school year.

Chuck Morrison, a sexuality educator for the City of Portland, says that he wishes that the clinic was not so restricted but says, "At least it is progress...It has been ten years that we have been trying to get a clinic into the schools." Margaret Hoyt, Portland's other sexuality educator, points out that the clinic isn't the only victory. She feels that the eleventh and twelfth grade elective is extremely important. The class will be taught one semester at Deering and the other semester at Portland. Hoyt says it will give students another chance to ask questions, give them more information on reproductive health, provide opportunities for aspiration building, and include information on parenting and relationships.

"I think that the curriculum piece will be very beneficial, providing a more comprehensive approach to life issues, health and human relations, including making decisions about sexual activity," comments Craighead.

Nick Nadzo, a School Committee member, concludes,

"[Students] need a place where they are going to hear straight, factual information and a place where they can ask questions...Portland is trying to ensure that we can provide the most thorough education possible."

Roland adds that a lot of the credit for the passing vote goes to students. "[The vote] is an example of how student involvement can make our decisions better... A large part of the credit goes to the students," says Roland.

Craighead also credits student participation as a factor in helping the recommendations to pass. "I think that it is important that students came [to the School Committee meeting]. This is a strong vote because of the articulate and well reasoned presentations by the Deering students."

\* \* \* \* \*

More SGM from page 13

with it - do this or else. So I just walked out.

**APEX:** Have you joined any other organizations?

**Al:** CAGLR - Citizens Alliance for Gay/Lesbian Rights. It's a gay civil rights organization, the oldest in the state. They're the ones who introduced the bill last year. They're going to do it again next year.

CAGLR has been publishing a newsletter since they've been going, but it's the same people doing the same thing over and over again. Now they're making moves towards maybe a statewide publication. But everything moves slow, especially in this state. We're having a meeting on that in April - we're going to see who shows up. New Hampshire is the only state that doesn't have some kind of gay publication.

**APEX:** What's the future for queer rights in New Hampshire?

**Al:** As long as the governor, the bible-thumper Governor Merrill is there, we're not going to get anything. He's the darling of the Christian Coalition, and I don't think any progress will be made til he's outa there. ♦

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# TORT REFORM WILL PUT MORE UNSAFE PRODUCTS ON MARKET

by Molly Ivins

AUSTIN - How come America can't produce the kind of news Mexico produces? We're falling so far behind in the generation of interesting news, it's a blue-bellied shame. We're a second-rate power - a pitiful, helpless giant knocked on Page One by shenanigans that make O.J. pale by comparison.

In Mexico, at last report, the brother whose brother was knocked off covered up for the brother of the last president. The cash is stashed in Houston. Is this good stuff or what? And what do we have? Just piddly stuff, like you can't get your day in court anymore unless you have at least \$100,000 worth of whip-out money to hand over.

Most of us weren't planning to sue Exxon any time soon anyway; it's the sort of thing that occurs to you only if you're a fisherman and an Exxon tanker runs aground and kills all the fish in the sea so you can't make a living anymore. Or something like that. Bought a house in Love Canal. Lived next door to Rocky Flats. Some carelessness on your part of that nature.

Or maybe you live in Alton, Texas, and some pop-bottler truck with faulty brakes rams into the local school bus and kills both your kids. You may believe that large trucks should not be running around with bad brakes and killing school kids, but unless you have that big dough to whip out upfront, you got no case.

Now, in a moment of mercy, even the Republicans figured a straight-up loser-pays law was a little stiff, so they changed their bill from the original Contract With America proposal to a modified version: Under this dandy modification, you're the loser if you don't win more than the company offers to settle for. Here's how it works: You have a transparently legitimate claim against a corporation. They offer you \$50,000 for the damage they done you. You ask for a jury trial, but the jury thinks your injury is worth only \$40,000. Instead of winning \$40,000, you are now the "loser," and you have to pay legal costs, which happen to amount to \$50,000. Congratulations - you won, but you're in hock. This here is what is called "incentive to settle," meaning: Take what the company offers you and shut up.

It's not exactly as though you were ever going into court on a level playing field against Exxon to begin with. Sure, your friendly local legal shark agreed to take your case in the first place because he knew it was worth at least \$40K and he's going to take a big cut of the settlement. But your friendly local legal shark, no matter how sharky he or she may be, is still up against a team of Exxon lawyers the size of the Justice Department. On top of that, 60 percent of sitting federal judges were appointed by Republican presidents who chose them because they had records favoring big business over injured citizens to begin with.

Now, your local legal shark has less incentive to take your case and even less incentive to fight it. He's no fool - he'll take the settlement. Big corporations would rather keep paying one out-of-court settlement after another than change an unsafe product. Ask anyone who got hurt in a Pinto crash; ask the women who can't have children because of the Dalkon Shield. So, now we're going to get more unsafe products on the market injuring more people.

But doesn't the government stop companies from marketing unsafe products? The Federal Trade Commission, The Food and Drug Administration, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration, all those guys? Ah, you have failed to appreciate the full beauty of the Contract With America. The FTC, DA, and OSHA will be, the Senate permitting, under the dandy new rules that put health, safety and the environment subordinate to the cost of protecting them. They call it risk-assessment/cost-benefit analysis, and it has already passed the House.

The amazing thing about these developments is that they're based on the unlikely assumption that poor, picked-upon Exxon can scarcely function anymore because it is so beleaguered by "frivolous lawsuits." Uh, checked the stock market lately? Looked at any annual reports?

Bidness interests in this country always make a b.f.d. out of any jury award that goes against them. Take the woman who got millions for spilling McDonald's coffee on herself - silliest thing you ever heard of, right? Juries, oddly enough, are seldom made up of total idiots. They seem to have been impressed by the fact that McDonald's had had 700 previous complaints about people burned by hot coffee without doing anything about it. And, of course, the woman's settlement was knocked down to a fraction of the original judgment on appeal. In other words, the system was working fine.

But the Republicans just fixed it anyway. But good. ♦

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