

february 19, 1993

volume one, issue one

INTREPID

(in-trep' id) *adj.* Resolutely courageous; fearless; bold; dauntless. [Lat. *intrepidus*.]



Onward Christian Soldiers
The fundamentalist war against equal rights

THEY SAY... FORT WORTH

IS WHERE THE WEST BEGINS



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Pleiades Productions Presents Jamie Anderson

TENDING THE SOLDIERS

By Beverly Fletcher

A ticket to any one of the Pleiades Productions stage shows by far surpasses the usual offerings in entertainment value. Passing through the doors to Orchestra Hall grants admission to an exclusive club where womanly essence is exalted, where womanly strength and forbearance are glorified, and where the expression of womanly sensuality is made honorable. Outside those doors remains a world intent on beating us down and stripping us of our value, but gathered together in our exclusive club we wax rebellious, honoring ourselves in spite of that world outside and, perhaps, to spite it.

Pleiades Productions provides a "safe space" haven for our gentle affections. We are like soldiers day to day, fighting a defensive war for being women, for being lesbians, for being of color, for being perceived as weak and likely targets. During those hours we are gathered together as allies, the shelling against us ceases, our souls drink in the sustenance provided by the rousing, healing music, and we are rejuvenated.

The Feb. 13 presentation of songwriter Jamie Anderson provided just such sweet fare. Anderson joined our ranks as easily as a time-honored friend and applied soothing salves of humor, mirth and satire to our war-sustained afflictions.

The audience warmed itself up during the half hour preceding showtime by exchanging delighted repartee and fond greetings. The camaraderie grew incrementally from hushed murmur to steady buzz to vibrant, pulsing rhythm.

There was the long-lost college friend, not seen in 10 years, tapping me surprisingly on my shoulder to recount the people and places of our wilder days. There was Baby Cammie, official mascot of our culture, collectively mothered by the many, basking in the dotting arms of her charmed admirers. There were the couples, the new ones who glowed still and the for-years-together ones so peacefully contented, sharing the platitudes of domesticity. There were the

buoyant singles full of flash and sparkle, infectiously spreading their good humor.

The audience was primed and politely hushed when Anderson stepped to the mike. She seemed at first glance a shy, reticent target of our attention, moved immediately into song, and with those first notes was transformed by bright smile and knowing wink into bemused analyst.

"I'm sorry that you're straight," she sang cheerily. "It can't be your fault. Have you tried counseling or talking to god? ... There's help for people like you - you could change if you wanted to."

The audience giggled appreciatively at the tables turned. "Does anybody wonder where I got the material for that song?" Anderson quipped sarcastically. She followed with a tone-setting number counting the tragedies that accompany a "Bad Hair Day." She would shave her curly tresses like Sinéad, she sang, but it would grow back and she'd have a "Bad Stubble Day..."

She voiced the plague of us all in "All of Me": mandates of fad and fashion that determine the acceptability of our physical features. Weren't we pressured to conform to fleeting styles, and to hide away our parts judged inferior? Did we lose the lovely vision of who we are along the way? Anderson, clad in a jumper that screamed for attention with fluorescent pink, lime green,

orange, red and yellow, proclaimed self-acceptance: we can love our bodies, just as they are, and wear what we will to celebrate ourselves.

The zesty lyrics of Anderson's repertoire tapped into the essence of the lesbian experience and lesbian sensations. Our attractions might court disappointment in this era of relaxed roles, as captured in "Straight Girl Blues" ("Why do these straight girls look so butch to me?") and "Winona (Judd), Why Not?" (if she rides a Harley and swaggers like so, shouldn't she be family?), but when we do connect it's the soft thighs and shuddering thighs portrayed in "Dark Chocolate." Perhaps our loving embroils in confusing issues: in co-dependency ("I was nothing before you came, I was slime in the cat's dish"); in destructive affairs born out of impetuosity ("It was a bad idea, I knew it then - I'll never do anything so stupid again"); in the soul-searching for identity required for first love ("If it feels like love, is it all right? I close my eyes to shut out the light"). But for everything we are and for all that love signifies, we struggle on to overcome and hold our ground against societal oppression: "Sure I'll come to your wedding, but I'll dance with the girls," and "Some think a closet is where I should be but I don't belong there, I need light to see."

Punctuating the uplifting content of her songs were readings of maga-

zine and newspaper clippings ranging from The Wall Street Journal to National Inquirer. Anderson used these juicy tidbits - a letter to the editor by Pat Robertson denouncing ERA as leading women to kill their children, two teen-aged girls who made history "sitting on their butts" by attending their high school prom together - to comment on the hopeful movement of women's empowerment. Her personal anecdotes engaged several in the audience to testify with one-upmanship insistence that Gov. Ann Richards wears leather and rides a Harley.

Anderson's easy style erased the boundaries of the stage. The line between the entertainer and the entertained grew virtually indistinguishable. By the end of the show Anderson was herself an audience, clapping at the performers in front of her and cheering them on, giggling at the barbs called out to her and offering them back with quick-witted flair. "No, I'm not interested in you unless you're 35 or older and slightly butch," she chastised one vocal admirer. And the hands of those in the audience who fit that criteria shot up in the air, waving frantically for attention.

That easy, off-the-cuff interaction grew out of the intimate bond Anderson established by her celebration of lesbianism and her glorification of womanhood. The audience required only a modicum of encouragement

to match her enthusiasm. We were ripe for the affirmations, starved for the positive images she offered so coyly, eager to return her warmth and kindred spirit.

If the audience seemed too courageously intrusive it was Anderson's fault for inspiring the courage and for delighting in the feedback. In so few arenas are our lives and our loves so encouragingly, humanly depicted that we could scarcely stave off her seduction. She used her humor as a tool to lure us away from the daily fears and anxieties of being vulnerably lesbian to embrace the value so often overlooked. She led us on a tour of ourselves, past society's foibles, calling for the redeeming chuckle that strengthens and enlightens. Anderson's lighthearted, sensible approach confirmed that it is not just okay to be gay - it is absolutely glorious.

Pleiades Productions has expanded its scope dramatically over the past year, offering more concerts and more widely renowned artists, moving from a small, intimate crowd at a church chapel to the formidable gatherings at Orchestra Hall. The Fort Worth community has responded with a loud, appreciative presence, proving that the time is now to savor our culture and wash ourselves in it. The music Pleiades presents us is not just for the listening - it is a part of us, a part of our movement, and a part of our celebration of ourselves.

Dear Eddie,

My lover and I broke up almost five years ago, and while he has seemingly been able to get on with his life (he's had two serious relationships), I can barely manage a crawl. I haven't seen him in three years, but mutual friends tell me what he's doing.

He occupies my thoughts every day, and I can't get the idea out of my mind that he's going to call me and want to see me again. Because of that, I don't date much, even though I'm asked out frequently. I want to be ready when he does call. Do you think I'm doing the right thing?

Waiting in Bedford

Dear Waiting,

Frankly, your chances of winning the lottery are better than the chances of him calling you. You made an important statement, but you've failed to notice it. You said he's getting on with his life, with two more relationships already under his belt. Obviously, he's over you.

You're doing what many people do when they don't want to let go of a relationship. You're keeping embers alive, fanning them every day, hoping they'll ignite into flames again. Five years is too long to wait for anyone to return, and you must extinguish any hope that the relationship can be resurrected. It's over, and you need to accept that. Close that door on your life, start dating again, and consider some counseling. Face it, he doesn't even know your phone number.

Dear Eddie,

My friends think I have a great relationship. Jeannie is beautiful and successful, working as a model for a large agency in Dallas, and I feel lucky to be with someone who has appeared on the covers of fashion magazines.

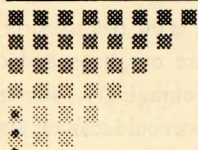
The problem is that Jeannie is always running home to her parents. They are wealthy, and any time we have problems, no matter how small, she goes home. They buy her new cars, great clothes and provide money--as long as she's at home. She gets annoyed that my income isn't substantial.

Consequently, I've taken on a second job. I want to give her what she's used to having, otherwise I know she'll leave, and I'm afraid I'll never meet anyone like her again. Any ideas on how I can make her happy?

D.R.

Dear D.R.,

Why would you want to meet someone like her again?



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"A LOVING HEART IS A HELPING HAND"

-TIM HAYES

They Said What?

"You're as sick as your secret. I think that when you feel you need to have secrets, it's hard to feel good about yourself, and I think part of growing up is the pursuit of being able to feel good about yourself."

—David Geffen

"I am quite sure that the American people feel it is more important to be able to hit the target than it is to haggle over who makes a weapon or who pulls a trigger."

—President Dwight Eisenhower

"Every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience."

—President George Washington

THANKS FOR PICKING UP THE PREMIER ISSUE OF *INTREPID*. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY IT; WE HOPE YOU RELATE IN SOME PART TO THE CONTENT, TO THE VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES PRESENTED IN THESE PAGES; AND WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL MAKE THIS PUBLICATION YOUR OWN AND SEE IT AS A PART OF YOUR UNIQUE CULTURE.

THIS MAGAZINE REPRESENTS A COMMITMENT TO OURSELVES AND TO OUR COMMUNITY, TO FOSTER PRIDE AND AWARENESS, TO VOICE OUR CONCERNS AND ISSUES. WE SHARE WITH EACH OF OUR READERS THE STRUGGLES INHERENT TO OUR DIVERSITY, THE JOY IN OVERCOMING THEM, AND THE PAIN THAT IS A PART OF THE PROCESS OF ACHIEVING. TOGETHER WE BECOME A COLLECTIVE VOICE, SONOROUS, COMMANDING . . . HEARD.

THIS MAGAZINE IS DEDICATED TO RAISING THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF GAYS AND LESBIANS OF TARRANT COUNTY. WE HOPE TO REPORT FROM THE PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE THE ISSUES AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITY: THOSE WHICH SADDEN US, ELATE US, ANGER US, MOTIVATE US. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO JOIN US IN OUR MARCH TO SECURING WHAT IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF ALL HUMANS — TO BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT. WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING YOUR COMMENTS. OUR GREATEST HOPE IS THAT THIS PUBLICATION WILL ENCOURAGE YOU TO BECOME MORE COURAGEOUS, MORE VOCAL — MORE INTREPID.

INTREPID

A FEATURES MAGAZINE FOR THE LESBIAN/GAY COMMUNITY OF TARRANT COUNTY

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Beverly Fletcher

We welcome submissions of materials relevant to the lesbian/gay culture, including illustrations, photography, columns, features, short stories, poetry, reviews, etc. We reserve the right to enforce our own judgments regarding the suitability of advertising copy and submitted materials. We cannot return manuscripts unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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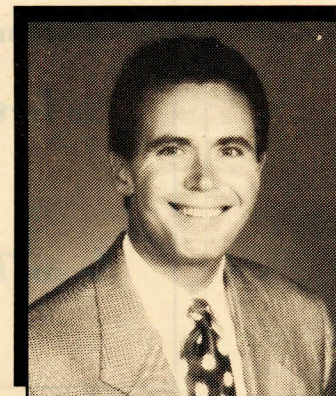
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... God will help our unbelief, our fraying
Resolve. But what was wrong or odd
With last night's loveliness between us?
Given a God, if he had seen us
And he is just and loving-kind,
Why should you think that he would mind
My touch, your trembling, our caresses,
The loving smart in your clear eyes,
My hands ruffling your hair, our sighs?
If anything, I'd say he blesses
The innocent bodies that express
So forthrightly such happiness.

from *THE GOLDEN GATE*

GAY MEN

=

Best friends

A little over a year ago, I was doing hard time at a college whose chief source of entertainment was fraternity parties—those endless, sodden studies in excess that often climaxed in a dubious sport called “gatoring,” in which thick-necked guys in various states of undress hurled their bodies along beer-slicked basement floors to the tune of “Louie Louie.” Illustrious days, those—when guys jumped to the siren call of “road trip!” and “toga!”, and dates, more often than not, involved projectile vomiting and less than consensual sex. Of course, there were good guys, too. Still, I think it is safe to say that the college experience tended to encourage some of the male animal’s less savory traits.

Surely this crash course in hetero mania is what predisposed me so favorable to the gay men I’d meet upon graduating and moving to the city, where a tolerance for diversity more than made up for what was lacking in bucolic splendor. The first predominantly gay party I remember going to was somehow tied in with the America’s Cup Race. Revelers included a few dozen guys with terrific haircuts, linen slacks, loafers. We drank champagne from crystal flutes, selected snappy little appetizers (my first brush with toast points) from painstakingly arranged platters and quipped wittily about movies and men. There was effervescence, a sophistication and ample proof of the age-old cliché about gay men having a lot of style. It was so new to me, guys who accessorized smartly, for God’s sake, who called me “honey” utterly unsalaciously, who displayed stunning familiarity with Joan Crawford’s oeuvre. It was all so fun and frothy—yet there was, undeniably, something else. What

I’d quickly come to realize was that, for all their youth, charm and good humor, a lot of these guys had a real world-weariness about them, based on the simple fact that they’d already been through plenty, having faced the treacherous business of “coming out.” These were men who, by the tender ages of 22 or 24, had already perused the trickiest reaches of their souls and developed skillful strategies, coping mechanisms, for navigating the hetero world. Behind the ruddy tans and Ray Ban’s, there was irony.

Gay men know from inner turmoil. They’re well-versed in matters of the heart. Some have families who don’t accept or understand them; many are scarred by the trials of forging romantic relationships in a society that doesn’t encourage or accommodate them. Most of my gay friends have had bazillions of sexual partners over the course of years—it takes its toll. Even in long-standing partnerships, there are gay men who feel the constant strain of hiding their loves from parents and colleagues. And this, I think, is what tends to make them great listeners and compassionate friends. Whatever your problems are, they can handle them, for it is likely they’ve already seen worse.

Even as you thrash around and cry yourself silly, they don’t flinch—by their very nature, (“out”) gay men are crusaders against repression; their whole gay deal is predicated on emotional honesty. Ergo, they’re disinclined to tell others to put a lid on it. One time, a gay friend called up in tears—not on account of his woes, but mine; he was that distressed about a breakup I was going through. Another time, my desperately low spirits prompted my ceramist friend Matt to send over a gorgeous ornate cup

he’d made and could ill-afford to give away, along with a note urging me to remember how much I’m loved. In the day-to-day, his lover, my stalwart friend Edward, routinely sends notes trimmed in Xs Os and hand-drawn hearts, just to say hi.

I dare say gay men have a facility and a generosity with their emotions that a lot of straight folks don’t. Maybe it’s some sort of alchemical reaction against the antagonism and disapproval so many gay men feel from their families. At the risk of sounding like their pain is our gain, those who have been disowned by their folks tend to re-create family else-where—among friends. Can’t make it cross county for Thanksgiving with the folks? Chances are, a gay friend will take you in, and the food will be fabulous.

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lems are,
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If you can bear another sweeping generalization, gay men also tend to have blessedly diverting senses of humor—irony, again, coupled with a refreshingly jaded take on institutions and taboos—which can really take the edge off when you’re going through hell. Feeling really miserable years ago over the unrequited nature of my love for some jerk, I’ll never forget how one gay friend put things into wonderfully nutty perspective by saying, “Girl, he’s a pig. Now listen to me, you’ve gotta wash that man right outta your hair!” Two Campari-and-sodas and a dozen of my friend’s jazzy aphorisms later, I was still hurting, but no longer musing over suicide methods.

Perhaps there is a natural affinity between straight women and gay men—a shared sensibility that straight guys just aren’t in on. After all, straight guys demonstrate little interest in borrowing out clothes, dishing bad dye jobs, hooting over the getups from hell on Academy Awards night or parsing the issues that make moms such a handful. That old joke some straight men tell about how long it takes their wives or girlfriends to get dressed would never play with most gay guys: I’ve read magazines cover to cover waiting for gay friends to narrow down the evening’s neckwear options.

Of course, gay men are also great commiserators in the realm of romance—probably because they ponder and pine for the same thing we do: men. They are true connoisseurs of the male physique; there’s nothing quite as heartfelt and compre-

hensive as a gay guy’s paean to a standout set of pecs and a perfect pair of buns. Of course, there can be an element of competition in this. While lots of straight women, confronted by hunky homosexuals, harbor the tacky sentiment, “What a waste,” some gay men suggest that we’re luring away and corrupting their best and brightest, advancing a tedious theory about the latent homosexual that’s trapped inside each and every seemingly straight guy. A case in point is my friend Daniel, who openly, if sort of jokingly, professes undying lust for the guy I’ve been seeing for years now, a guy Daniel’s known twice as long as I have. It’s Daniel’s contention that our androgynous-looking mutual friend could have gone either way, and that maybe one day he’d come around, if only I’d release him from my evil hetero clutches. For the most part, this surreal rivalry is played out in good fun, as is Daniel’s chalking my moods up to hormones and referring to my breasts as “the knockers of doom.”

For straight women, surely a large part of many gay men’s appeal is the plain fact that they’re men, after all, just like the objects of our desires—big, tall and hairy, perhaps; protective, able to hoist large items, reach things in high places, gallantly see us home if the party breaks up late and maybe, just maybe, shed a tiny bit of light on the vexing conundrum that is maleness. Yes, they’re all this and more—but with none of the thorny hassles that we’ve grown to

Continued on page 10

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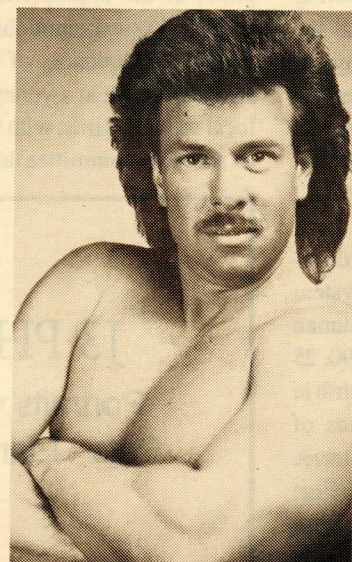
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FRIENDS

continued from page 8

expect from horny straight guys. Face it—gay men don't want us. As such, there is no sexual agenda in their warm embrace and no chance that they'll reject us down the road. Never do we have to ask, Will they respect us in the morning? Meanwhile, almost all relationships with straight men—be they your boyfriend's best friend, your assistant, your boss, your stepbrother, your professor—are at some point shot through with a frisson of sexual tension. Even relationships with women can be tinged with the titillating prospect of "What if...?" Not so with gay men (in my experience, anyway), who can be downright graphic and overzealous about how distasteful they find the whole notion of soft female flesh and (ew, gross) hetero sex. Fair enough. For me, that's a small price

to pay for the solace and serenity that these virtually uncharged friendships provide. Call it sanctuary from mixed messages: There's something really lovely about the affectionate gestures of a guy who's not angling for a piece of your butt.

Of course, dig overmuch on that sort of sanctuary—from sex, commitment, the romantic fray—and you run the risk of being labeled, charmingly, a "fag hag": a campy, wild-haired dame who favors ratty velvet capes, costume jewelry and the company of over-the-top homosexual quip-meisters. Single, theatrical and wounded, deep down, this is a woman who basks in the sheer noisy faa-abulousness of her no-risk, low-maintenance gay friendships, as they obfuscate what's wrong and lacking and scaring her to hide inside friendships with gay men. Along with never pressuring you for sex, they're never going to push you to get mar-

ried or get pregnant—in fact, not a few gay guys express mild disdain for these milestones, smacking, as they do, of the great American status quo. Confess your desire for making babies, and gay friends, however facetiously, might write you off as a "breeder." Annoys the hell out of me—as if having children were a goofy, bourgeois impulse, like paneling the basement and installing a wet bar.

Maybe some gay friends are less than sensitive on this score because it hits close to home: Chances are slim they'll have kids of their own, and paternal urges will go unexpressed. My friend Daniel admits there's a thrill in walking around town with his pint-sized friend Rory, buying her trinkets and watching strangers mistake them for father and daughter. He refers to these interludes as "getting his daddy ya-yas out"; for him, a rare concession to

convention. And for me? A reminder that my gay friends don't exist to amuse and divert, nor to satisfy the shameless voyeur in me—something I worry about when tagging along on gay bar junkets or pumping promiscuous friends for details of their latest sexual exploits. In the age of AIDS, could there be anything more callous?

Surely the fear of losing friends to the plague has underscored my appreciation of them. Increasingly, they bear the scars and sorrows of so much sickness and loss, spending the better part of their days delivering meals to housebound friends, holding hospital vigils. Talk about irony: Here's Daniel, whipping through a stack of photos, identifying old friends like this: "Dead, dying, HIV-positive, sick, almost dead, dead, dead..."

I used to think a happy by-product of my gay friendships was that they

allowed me to feel like den-mother-for-a-day: Tracking their Byzantine romances and participating in slapstick efforts to keep parents in the dark made me feel like my life was comparatively normal, and that maybe I wasn't the terminal teen-aged I'd often felt fated to be. But that's changed. These days, it's my gay friends teaching me life's hardest-won lessons—about taking care of friends, about being true to oneself, about living and dying with dignity. Where it matters most, they're my standard-bearers, these ineffably unlikely mentors—for that, I could never thank them enough. Although perhaps I will consent to write the Daniel's life someday, as he's so often suggested I should—tentatively titled Screams and Laughter. "Oh, goddess," he's saying to me right now, with a big giggle. "You are just too, too, too twisted." ▼

Moncrief submits life skills education bill to teach Texas children sex awareness

While adults debate whether or not children should be sexually active, adolescent pregnancies are on the rise. Texas leads the nation in the number of babies who die during their first year of life, and it has the second highest rate of teen pregnancies. The bills are coming in, and the statistics are horrifying. Adolescent pregnancies cost the state \$193 million in 1991, but the nightmare isn't confined to monetary figures. Lack of a comprehensive health education program in the school system points to a hidden cost of human misery that is far worse. In 1990, 25 girls under the age of 12 gave birth in Texas, and documented cases of AIDS are now common in pre-teens.

Sen. Mike Moncrief (D-Fort Worth), in an effort to remedy these staggering social and health-care problems, has filed Senate Bill 20 for the 73rd Legislature. Titled a **Bill for Self-Development and Life Skills**, it would require that public schools offer a health education program in grades K-12. The legislation is based on the strong belief that children of all ages must be armed with the information and confidence they need to protect themselves. SB 20 proposes a comprehensive way to help children develop problem-

solving and communication skills, self-confidence, respect for others, resistance to peer pressure and responsible behavior.

In addition, instruction would explore, at the appropriate age, the terrible physical, emotional and economic consequences of becoming sexually active at a young age, and local school boards, with the help of an advisory committee that is repre-

sentative of the community, would select the choice of curriculum. Parents would be informed about the courses' contents and would retain the right to deny their child's participation in a course.

However, despite the moral responsibility to provide for all the children in our society, opponents of the bill are preparing a vigorous battle based on misinformation and distor-

tions of what the bill might do. They are opposed, in general, to any kind of human sexuality education in the public schools, and they have predictably aligned themselves to the fanatics who claim that SB 20 would require the teaching of ideals or behavior unacceptable to most parents.

If one believes the wisdom of the adage, "it takes a village to raise a

child" . . . that we all must intervene on behalf of those children who are not taught health literacy and the life skills necessary to achieve their fullest human potential. . . then we in Texas are failing a generation of young people. SB 20 can address those wrongs if a majority will find its collective voice and respond in support of children's rights to an appropriate education.

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WHO WROTE THE ORIGINAL HEBREW BIBLE?



A WOMAN, MORE TALENTED THAN HER EDITORS, MAY BE THE AUTHOR

Works of Biblical scholarship are usually not candidates for the bestseller list. Yet Yale Prof. Harold Bloom's *Book of J* has achieved just that, partly because of its provocative thesis that the author of the oldest parts of the Bible – the stories of Adam and Eve, Noah, Joseph and Moses – was a woman, a descendent of King David working in the 10th century B.C.

Despite its popular appeal, however, that thesis is the least controversial part of Bloom's argument. Indeed, the idea that the Old Testament was penned by a woman was suggested in 1987 by Richard Friedman, a scholar at the University of California at San Diego. What has really "gored the scholarly and religious oxes," as Bloom puts it, is his assertion that the J author (so called because she referred to God as Jahweh) was not a religious writer at all. It was only through the subsequent meddlings of "second-rate plagiarists and moralizing men," ar-

gues Bloom, that her script became Scripture." Such afterthoughts as sin and humanity's fall from grace are nowhere to be found in the original. Neither, says Bloom, was J's Jahweh anything like the transcendent, righteous God portrayed in the Torah, Koran and New Testament. Modern Judaism, Islam and Christianity all, in effect, worship an imposter.

Not surprisingly, religious scholars are queuing up to critique Bloom's ideas. Though his work has numerous defenders, it is blasphemy to those who believe the "Pentateuch" – the first five books of the Bible – was divinely revealed through Moses. Secular critics are nearly as livid. Some reproach Bloom for relying on a new translation by David Rosenberg, which jettisons the high language of King James for a rougher tone, full of puns and irony. They call it clunky, klutzy, overwrought – and often wrong. Berkeley Prof. Robert Alter, author of *The Art of Biblical Narrative**,

accuses Rosenberg of "misconstruing Biblical terms.... This is less an English version of the original than a prefabricated interpretation masquerading as a translation."

Bloom dismisses such criticisms ("I'd put my Hebrew against theirs anyway"), adding that disputes over translation have always dogged Biblical scholarship. Even with the help of archaeology and philology, absolute judgments as to the meaning of a 3,000 year-old language remain impossible. "All our accounts of the Bible," writes Bloom, "are scholarly fictitious or religious fantasies."

Equally controversial is Bloom's reliance on the "documentary thesis," which posits several authors of the early texts. German scholars in the 19th century noticed in the Bible multiple and often contradictory versions of the same story, frequently with an abrupt change in voice. They theorized that four authors had each contributed pieces, which were then interwoven by an

editor in about 450 B.C.

That theory is now the foundation for most Biblical scholarship. But it is rejected by Jewish scholars, who deem it Christian-created and anti-Semitic. The Germans, they argue, viewed the J text as the primitive faith that evolved only after centuries into the true religion: High German Christianity.

Defenders of the documentary thesis also criticize Bloom's work, arguing that the only legitimate "author" to be studied is the collective one – the sum of folk traditions, numerous writers and finally the editors – that produced the text we know today. In trying to extract the J components from the rest, these critics complain, Bloom has indulged in lavish intention.

Bloom in turn scoffs at the notion that collective artistry or oral tradition could create such a masterpiece, a work he ranks with Shakespeare and Homer. And he insists that he is defending the canon. Buried within

the prose of J's successors, whom Bloom deems "ghastly, crashing bores," he says he can hear in the Hebrew a most original genius, one he wishes to reveal. "Such a writer is worth more than many creeds, many churches, many scholarly certainties."

But Bloom also admits to a "desperate yearning" to uncover a religion less ossified than what he finds in the modern Western faiths. J's Jahweh was like a child, exuberant, capricious and wild. Why, asks Bloom, should such a vital life force have been supplanted by a "divine bureaucrat" inspiring only awe and fear? His book is a best-seller, he suspects, because "religious mavericks all over the country are not content with the accounts of how the Bible ought to be read. Jawheh is one's breath, one's personality and freshness. How can you not believe in such a God? Determining who wrote the Bible is clearly not just an academic exercise.

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H O R O S C O P E

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(FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

Act quickly when a guess proves correct. You needn't get a consensus on everything. Walks and outdoor activities help you make a choice.

ARIES

(MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

Refuse to give in to unreasonable demands. Develop skills as a coach or instructor. Go all out to romance a lover.

TAURUS

(APRIL 20-MAY 20)

A loved one opens up slowly but surely with your encouragement. A power struggle opens doors.

GEMINI

(MAY 21-JUNE 21)

Take on only as many duties as you can handle. A platonic friend offers romantic advice but may actually be in love with you.

CANCER

(JUNE 22-JULY 22)

The last remaining hurdle is the most difficult, but it is soon behind you. Refuse to give up.

LEO

(JULY 23-AUG. 22)

A sense of humor helps minimize difficulties with in-laws or members of your extended family.

VIRGO

(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

Extend the olive branch to an estranged pal. Your love affair helps you see the world in a new light.

LIBRA

(SEPT. 23-OCT. 23)

To restore family harmony, seek common ground and make an encounter fun. A professional could save you lots of money.

SCORPIO

(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

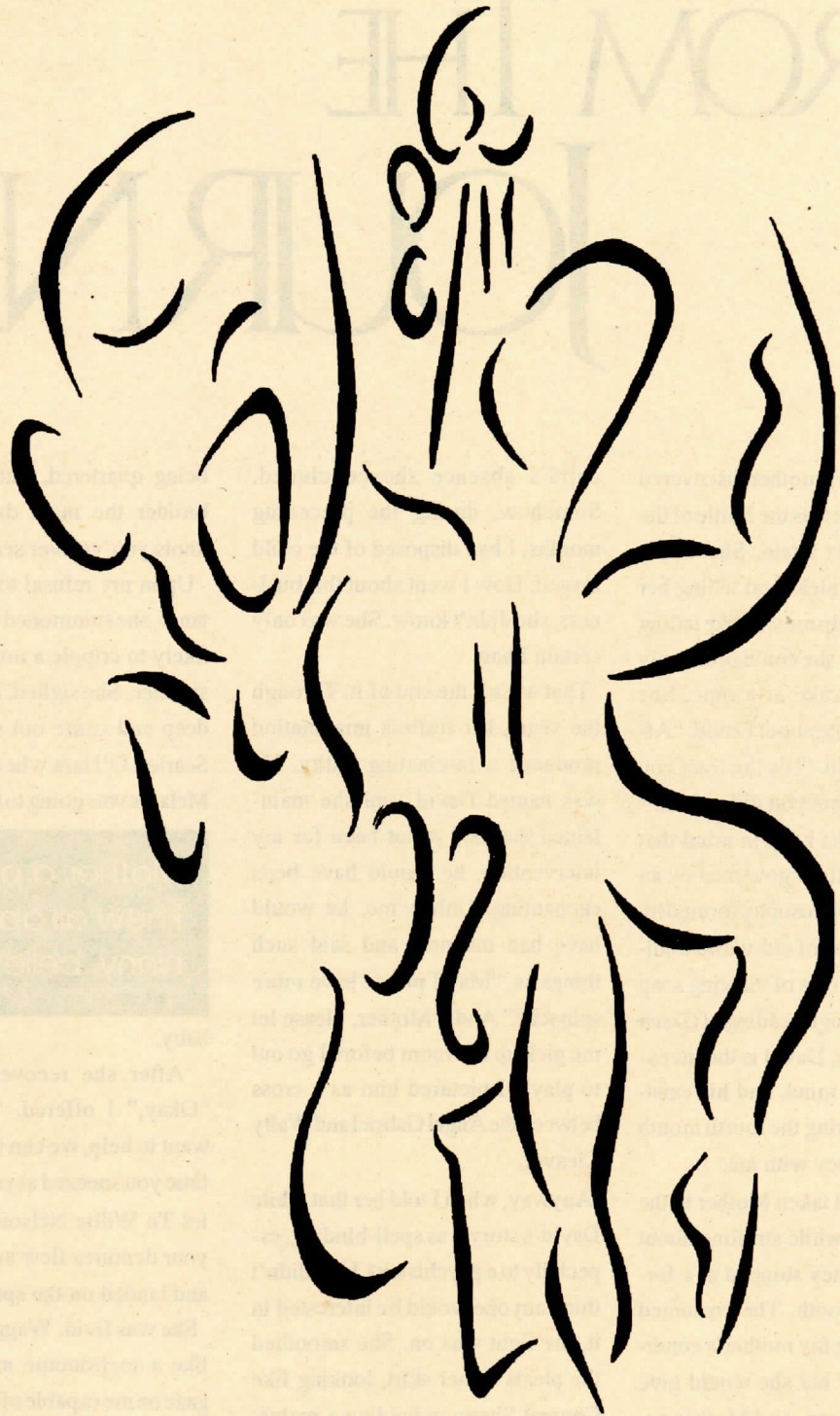
Last-minute alterations make an experiment turn out better than expected. Keep up a friendship with an old schoolmate.

CAPRICORN

(DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

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FROM THE JOURNALS OF Ernest Mayhem

When my mother discovered I was writing, it was the Battle of the Alamo all over again. She was a cornucopia of ideas and telling her she couldn't help me was like telling Zsa Zsa Gabor she could order only one wedding cake at a time. She suggested I write about David. "After all," she said. "It's the least you can do after what you did to him."

Now one must keep in mind that my mother's life is governed by an indiscernible philosophy formed by the combination of old-world traditions, twenty years of viewing soap operas, and a single reading of *Green Eggs and Ham*. David is the invention of such a mind, and his existence began during the fourth month of her pregnancy with me.

My father had taken Mother to the state fair, and while strolling about the grounds, they stopped at a fortune teller's booth. The costumed woman, noting my mother's condition, informed her she would give birth to twin boys, and Mother accepted this announcement as easily as if she had been given the weather report. She began to prepare for the arrival of her twins.

When I was born, and it was obvious I had arrived alone, Mother demanded to know the whereabouts of my sibling. Despite the doctor's as-

child's absence she concluded. Somehow, during the preceding months, I had disposed of the child myself. How I went about this business, she didn't know. She was only certain I had.

That wasn't the end of it. Through the years, her restless imagination produced a fascinating entity. He was named David, and she maintained that had it not been for my intervention, he would have been enchanting. Unlike me, he would have had manners and said such things as, "May I please have more spinach?" And, "Mother, please let me pick up my room before I go out to play". I pictured him as a cross between the Angel Gabriel and Wally Cleaver.

Anyway, when I told her that while David's story was spell-binding, especially to a psychiatrist, but I didn't think anyone would be interested in it, the fight was on. She smoothed the pleats of her skirt, looking like General Sherman holding a match, and I knew we were in for guerilla warfare. She reminded me of all the expert advice she had provided in the past. Calmly, I said her credentials were wonderful, but I could remember the time I was a Cub Scout learning to tie knots. Mother, a paragon of knowledge, said she

being quartered, but I could embroider the most darling French knots you've ever seen.

Upon my refusal to accept assistance, she summoned the tactic most likely to cripple a mulish son's resistance. She sighed. It began down deep and came out sounding like Scarlett O'Hara when she was told Melanie was going to have Ashley's

Mother, a paragon of knowledge, said she knew all about knots, and I, the perennial ninny, believed her.

baby.

After she recovered, I spoke. "Okay," I offered. "If you really want to help, we can write about the time you sneezed at your Missionaries To Willie Nelson meeting, and your dentures flew across the room and landed on the speaker's lap."

She was livid. Wagging her finger like a metronome and focusing a gaze on me capable of bringing down a charging elephant, she said, "Your Cousin Delbert doesn't speak to his mother that way."

That's because they won't let him make phone calls from prison," I reasoned. That finished her. She gathered the scorched remnants of her composure about her and swept out of the room without another word.

I almost hated to see her leave. Her departure left me with no excuse not to write, and I found myself facing a hostile typewriter. What could I possibly write about? My friends, who have dismissed me as being severely retarded, asked the same question when I told them I intended to be a writer. Their looks of surprise were quickly marred by spasms of laughter, and they managed to say be-

tween snorts that my chances of succeeding in any literary endeavor were equal to the possibility of Madonna entering a convent.

They obviously think I have as much creative talent as a dead fly, but they're wrong. I've always felt an urge to express myself through writing, and I learned at an early age. When I was in the second grade, one

description of the new coat his best friend had received from his boyfriend. He expressed dismay over his own scanty wardrobe, proclaimed he would die if the situation wasn't remedied, and implored the heavens three times to tell him why he should be shackled to a miser while his friend's buddy was the soul of generosity and kindness. I watched the performance with only a modicum of interest since I had served as the audience for the same production many times.

However, as he was ranting with the fury of a disturbed beehive, I knew I had a topic. My friends provide enough material to write an assortment of comedies, a dozen soap operas, and a thesis on the acutely insane. Of course, they'll say my observations are a pack of lies; the guilty are always quick to say something like that in their defense.

But I'm safe. They'll never know anything was written about them because they never read. My friends view the printed word as a frightening invention to be left within the confines of a school building, and my lover thinks books were manufactured by someone who wanted to fill his shelves with something other than bric-a-brac.

That leaves my mother. When I tell her I'm writing for various magazines, she'll give me a smile reserved for orphans and three-legged dogs and say, "David would have owned those magazines." Well, now you know why I did away with him.

By ERNEST T. MAYHEM

David is the invention of such a mind, and his existence began during the fourth month of her pregnancy with me.

assertions that she hadn't been carrying twins, Mother couldn't dismiss the fortune teller's prophecy. There could be only one explanation for the

knew all about knots, and I, the perennial ninny, believed her. When she was through with me, I couldn't tie a square knot under threat of

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The Locker Room, 809 N. Collins	548-9938
Magnolia Station, 600 . Division	332-0415
Mid-Pointe, 1900 W. Division	792-3980
Office Lounge, 3837 Hwy 377 South	737-0503
Partners, 1912 Hemphill	926-5176
Ropers & Riders, 3031 S. Cooper	476-5628
651 Arlington, 1851 W. Division	275-9651
651 Club, 651 S. Jennings	332-0745

CHURCHES/RELIGIOUS

Affirmation/Tarrant County	656-8056
Aape Metropolitan Community Church	535-5002
Dignity (Catholics)	282-8588
Evangelicals Concerned	472-9008
Fellowship of Love Outreach	921-LOVE
First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church	451-1505
GLAD (Disciples of Christ gays/lesbians)	214-946-2184
Harvest Metropolitan Comm. Church, Denton	817-497-4020
Honesty (Baptist) 923-8487	
Lutherans Concerned	924-3966
Trinity Metropolitan Community Church	265-5454

HEALTH/AIDS/COUNSELING

AIDS Coordinating Council	870-1937
AIDS Interfaith Network	927-2437
AIDS Outreach Center	335-1994
Advanced Counseling Center	451-2505
CAREMARK	924-1177
Charter Hospital	481-1999
Crisis/Suicide Line	927-5544
HIV Anonymous Group	292-9494
Lambda AA	921-2871
The Source	924-1177
Spiritual AIDS Ministry (SAM)	924-1177
TGRA AIDS/HIV Information Line	800-468-AIDS

LESBIAN/GAY ORGANIZATIONS

First Friday Fort Worth (Lesbian)	817-599-6008
Gay/Lesbian Youth	338-4551
Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington	261-3558
Lesbian Info. Line/LEsbian Visionaries	214-528-2426
Tarrant Conty Lesbian/Gay Alliance	763-5544
Tarrant County Gay Parents	656-8056
Texas Doubles Bowling	477-1832
TGRA Hotline	496-1333
Texas Gay Vetterans	763-5544
U.T. Arlington Gay/Lesbian Assoc.	794-5140

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the news?

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and we'll list you

in this section.

(8 1 7)

4 6 0 - 4 7 3 2

MEETINGS/EVENTS

- March 3: Dignity/Fort Worth Meeting, 7 p.m., Renewal Center
- March 4: P-FLAG, 7 p.m., First Jefferson
- March 5: AOC Friday Forum, "AIDS and the Law," 11:30 a.m.
- March 5: First Friday Fort Worth, 7-10 p.m.
- March 6: Men's Potluck dinner, Agape MCC, 6:30 p.m.
- March 6: MCC Balloon Note Victory Party, 8 p.m., E.S. Lion Club
- March 6: Miss Gay Pride Week Pageant, 9:30 p.m., Across the Street Club
- March 8: Tarrant County Parents Group, 7 p.m., TCLGA Office
- March 13: Leadership Forum, 12:30 p.m., Dos Gringos
- March 13: Beyond Vanilla: S/M, Leather, Fetish Seminars; 9:30 a.m., DGLA
- March 18: TCLGA meeting, 6 p.m., Luby's Cafeteria, 251 University Dr.
- March 20: Jefferson Freedom Cafe: Will Taylor Concert, 7:30 p.m., Universalist/Unitarian Church
- March 21: Lutherans Concerned, Dignity/Fort Worth, Honesty Monthly Meeting, 3 p.m.
- March 26: AOC AIDS Awareness Weekend
- March 27: Women's Potluck dinner, Agape MCC, 6:30 p.m.
- April 17: GLAAD Media Award Dinner, (214) 526-4523
- May 21-23: Texas Lesbian Conference: "Menstrual Cycle to Motorcycles", Houston

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY

- First Jefferson Unitarian/Universalist Services, 11 a.m.
- Fellowship of Love Outreach, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.
- Agape MCC, 9 a.m., 11 a.m.
- Trinity MCC, 11 a.m.
- KNON Radio: Lambda Weekly, 89.3 FM, 2-4 p.m.

MONDAY

- HIV+ Healing (diagnosed ARC or AIDS), 5:30 p.m. AOC
- HIV Testing, Ryan White Clinic (Health Dept.), 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.
- Positive Support (newly diagnosed HIV+), 5:30 p.m. AOC
- Living with HIV/AIDS, Arlington AOC office, 6 p.m.
- Care partner support group, St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, 1 p.m.
- Ray of Hope support group, Agape MCC, 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY

- Families Helping Families, 6 p.m.
- HIV Testing, Ryan White Clinic, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- EISIDA y su Vida, Hispanic HIV/AIDS support group, AOC, 6 p.m.
- Support Arlington, Arlington AOC office, 6 p.m.
- HIV support group, 7 p.m., College of Osteopathic Medicine, Room 540

WEDNESDAY

- Positive Women, AOC, 5:30 p.m.
- Fellowship of Love Outreach, prayer service, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

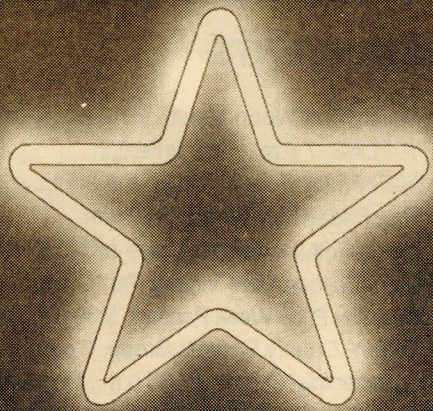
- Positive Women, AOC, 5:30 p.m.
- Fellowship of Love Outreach, prayer service, 7 p.m.
- Grief Group, AOC, 6:30 p.m.
- Trinity MCC service, 7 p.m.
- Spiritual Support Group, JPS Hope Room, 7 p.m.
- HIV Testing, Ryan White Clinic (Health Dept.), 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

THURSDAY

- HIV Testing, Ryan White Clinic (Health Dept.), 1-8 p.m.
- Caregivers Support Group, AIDS Interfaith, 5:30 p.m.
- Teen Support Group, AIDS Interfaith, 5:30 p.m.
- The Men's Hour, AOC, 6 p.m.

SATURDAY

- Families Helping Families, AOC, 11 a.m.
- Daily Lambda AA, 8 p.m.



FORT WORTH