

## After Stonewall

I watched *Before Stonewall* on television last night. This morning I feel more than a little depressed — not because of the movie, but because I see how little the lot of lesbians and gays has progressed in the eighteen years since the Stonewall rebellion.

What I want to discuss here is not *Before Stonewall* but political pressure, without which the film would not have been broadcast at all. *Before Stonewall*, originally broadcast nationally on PBS in December, was bypassed by Oregon Public Broadcasting. After publicity and pressure concerning the program deletion, the film was scheduled for March 25.

"Every time I had [a confrontation] with bigots, there was no one to stand at my back," a lesbian in *Before Stonewall* says. "What I'd hear was 'Gee, it's too bad it happened to you, but . . .'" Unfortunately, many people who believe in equality are still unwilling to stand up and protect their friends; not to mention the future generations left unprotected.

The religious right, on the other hand, are experts at militantly rallying their forces; and as in the past they are communicating their opposition to gay/lesbian rights to their (and our) legislative representatives. The religionists are writing letters at a rate which overwhelms mail urging passage of HB 2325.

At the House of Representatives Judicial Committee subcommittee hearing on February 23 the numbers were reversed. The forces testifying in favor of HB 2325 were formidable indeed while the opposition was represented by a pathetic little band of religious zealots led by Priscilla

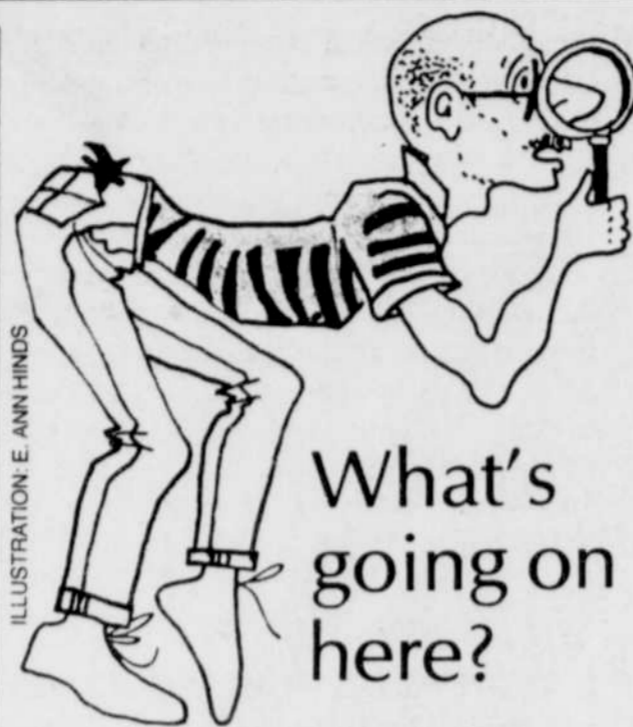


ILLUSTRATION: E. ANN HINDS

B Y J A Y B R O W N

Martin and Betty Freauf.

The religionists, however, didn't stop there. They're now out getting those letters to the politicians in Salem. (The latest estimate is 35-1 against the legislation.) Some of the politicians are also out on the stump against HB 2325. John Minnis (R-Portland), for example, has expended quite some energy in this vein.

Lesbians and gays and their friends made a big show in Salem, but HB 2325 will not even get out of committee unless representatives know that more people support the bill. The representatives need their backs covered, too.

Those people representing rural districts need special urging. Gays and lesbians and their friends must tell their state representatives that HB 2325 grants equal treatment under the law to a sizable minority — to sons and daughters, fathers, and mothers, nieces and nephews, brothers

and sisters.

## Direct action gets results

The stalemate was broken on March 6; Congressman Ron Wyden agreed to meet with representatives of Portland's gay and lesbian community. Wyden's constituency includes what must be the largest concentration of lesbians and gays in Oregon. Wyden represents the Third Congressional District, which stretches from the Willamette River to Eastern Oregon.

It wasn't because of that mass of lesbians and gays in his district which prompted Wyden, after four years, to sit down and talk with some people in our community, though. It was because the Rev. Gary Wilson of MCC Portland, after six months of getting the political runaround, threatened a sit-in in Wyden's Portland office.

Rev. Wilson says that the idea for a meeting with Wyden resulted from MCC's 50 Hours AIDS Vigil which was held last September. "We had ascertained that Congressman Wyden had not spoken to the subject of AIDS; we sought to meet with him," Rev. Wilson said. "But, from September 9 to March 6 he played a stalling game. Our congregation prayed faithfully for months. And then I threatened a sit-in — we got our meeting within a week."

Rev. Wilson says the meeting, which lasted about half an hour, was taken up with trying to gain some commitment from the congressman to look into local problems with AIDS funding. Also high on the gay and lesbian agenda is a commitment that Wyden will sign on as a co-sponsor of the national gay/lesbian rights bill as well as continue his good record on legislation sensitive to our community.

Besides the Rev. Wilson, those meeting with Congressman Wyden were Cathy Siemens, Tom Koberstein, Keeston Lowery, John Baker and Sandra Ford.

## Coors boycott update

Just in case you're buying Coors, Killian's Irish Red, Herman Joseph beers or Colorado Cooler, we thought you might like to know where your money goes. It has been ascertained in Congressional hearings that the John Birch Society receives an annual donation from Joseph Coors, according to the *New York Native*. Also, contributions have been made to Jerry Falwell's Liberty Foundation, America's Future, as well as other right-wing organizations which allegedly funnel millions of dollars to Nicaraguan contras.

The Coors family also sits on various boards, including the Council for National Policy, where Holly and Joseph Coors serve on the Board of Governors with Falwell, Jesse Helms, Herbert and Nelson Hunt, Richard Viguerie, Pat Robertson, and Phyllis Schlafly; Morality in Media, which lists Joseph Coors on the National Planning Board; Pat Robertson's CBN University, which lists Holly Coors on its Board of Regents; and the Heritage Foundation, the Washington think tank which came up with the anti-gay Family Protection Act.

## U.S. Judge upholds textbook censorship

Forty-four textbooks have been banned from Alabama public schools because they

espouse the theory of "secular humanism" in an opinion handed down by US District Judge W. Brevard Hand. The book-banning resulted from a suit filed by a group of religious fundamentalists who say that the absence of religious teaching in textbooks constitutes the teaching of "secular humanism," which they say is a religion.

The American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way have pledged to appeal Judge Hand's decision, and warned that Hand's action could unleash widespread challenges to public education by religious fundamentalists seeking to promote their sectarian views.

The fundamentalist battle against "secular humanism" is not new, but according to John Buchanan, a Baptist minister and former Republican congressman from Alabama who is chairman of People for the American Way, this is the first time in history that a religion has been defined by its adversaries.

"They have taken neutrality about religion and turned it into a religion," Buchanan said.

## PD takes tucks, adds faces

Primary Domain, one of the community's hottest nightspots, will reopen on April 10 after a quick facelift and rearrangement of parts. On hand to show off the new dance floor and sound system is new manager, Shannon Duffy.

Well known in the sports community (she's played softball since adolescence), Shannon brings a wealth of experience and personality to her new job. An alumna of St. Mary's Academy, Shannon grew up in Portland. She says she has always been a good athlete and was BMOC in high school, and ". . . I always knew I was a lesbian; I had a lot of healthy role models all through my teenage years."

One of Shannon's first projects is to transform the Primary Domain's back room into a quieter space. Two sets of double doors now separate the large front room from the smaller back room.

"We want to provide an alternative space," Shannon says. "The back area will be available for meetings; and at other times we'd like to keep it a lower-volume alcohol area." Another plus, and more conducive to intimacy will be week night opening of the back door.

Shannon says that the back space is just about perfect for use as a cabaret,

". . . comedy, dinner theatre, one act plays." It would really be nice to have a space where lesbian and gay performers could showcase their talents.

And speaking of talent, Chris Schlegel aka Donna Delgado, former Dyketone, will be overseeing the revised and expanded menus in both lounge and bar.

## Breaking the chain

Judy Tallwing of Portland was named International Leatherwoman in San Francisco last month. Ms. Tallwing, a native American, broke tradition by appearing in a native American headdress and leather. She also performed an authentic tribal dance as part of her presentation.

Ms. Tallwing won the local Leatherwoman contest at the Primary Domain in February.

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