

TWENTY-THIRD AVENUE B·O·O·K·S

1015 NW 23rd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97210, (503) 224-5097

Monday-Friday 9:30 - 8 pm □ Saturday 10 am - 8 pm □ Sunday 11 am - 4 pm



You are cordially invited to join Cascade AIDS Project in a celebration of the season. On December twenty-third, from two to seven Bill and Ted (our gracious hosts) will open the doors to their home for a Holiday Party that's not to be missed. Food and entertainment will be provided, all are welcome.

Please call if you have questions or need directions, 223-5907 x117. The event will take place at 1416 N. Failing in Portland, on the corner of Interstate and Failing. Bus accessible on number 5 Interstate.

"A novel pervaded by love, loss, connections and loyalty. A novel written in needlepoint, about lesbians and gay men as sister and brother, as family."

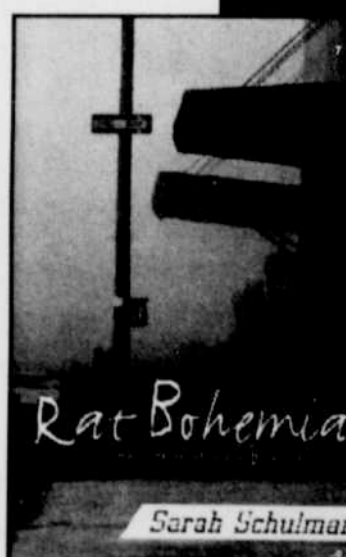
Katherine Forrest on *The Love Songs of Phoenix Bay* by Nisa Donnelly

The Love Songs of Phoenix Bay



Nisa Donnelly

ST. MARTINS PRESS



In *Rat Bohemia*, Sarah Schulman traces the particular and devastating ways that gay people are abandoned by their families and the creative and courageous ways in which gay men and lesbians lead their lives, despite this loss.

Sarah Schulman

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All that glitters

Errors and lifeless writing mar the appeal of Untold Millions—but the survey data are enlightening

by Darcey Spears

There are several positions you might be in with your business after you've read *Untold Millions: Positioning Your Business for the Gay and Lesbian Consumer Revolution*. Holding your arms wide open to rake in cash from gay and lesbian buyers is not one of them. More than likely, you'll be unwittingly holding something else wide open.

Lukenbill wrote *Untold Millions* to exploit a

Books

growing interest in the gay male segment of the buying public. In the last few years, as lesbians and gay men have grown in visibility, so has the entrenched stereotype of two white gay men earning above-average pay and spending it freely. Visions of leaps in market share based on homosexual purchases danced before the eyes of marketers,

and suddenly queers became worthy of advertising dollars. Lukenbill, looking to ride the tide, persuaded Yankelovich Partners Inc. to use its existing long-term consumer survey, the Yankelovich MONITOR, to gather information on gay and lesbian customers.

Sadly, the incomprehensible mishmash Lukenbill makes of the results wipes out any hope of understanding the gay and lesbian consumer. His analysis is sloppy and his writing is overwrought. In addition, the book is loaded with typos and word errors that undermine any shred of confidence the reader might be clinging to after slogging through the first chapter.

And, as is common for men writing about the gay and lesbian community, women are an afterthought. His references to lesbians are often bizarre; for example, in one paragraph he describes a stereotype of gay men and lesbians as "prissy"—not an adjective usually associated with dykes. In fact, it looks like he just instructed his word processor to add the words "and lesbian" to any phrase containing the word "gay," with unintentionally hilarious results.

Even aside from these quibbles, Lukenbill is incapable of coming up with any concrete ideas, strategies or even recommendations for companies who have decided to aim product advertising at the gay and lesbian community. Well, except to tell readers that lesbians won't appreciate the use of nearly naked ladies in ads directed to dykes. (Hey, who says?)

It's a shame Lukenbill so thoroughly deadens a reader's senses before they get to the survey results, because that picture of gay and lesbian life is fascinating. Since the Yankelovich MONITOR uses a cross section of people, rather than a specific sample of people grouped around a gay product (like a newspaper readership or a catalogue mailing list), the information can be considered more applicable to the general public.

In other words, if a gay and lesbian newspaper surveyed its readers, the results would tell you how many have income above \$25,000. The Yankelovich MONITOR was able to broaden the

survey base enough to tell you how many gay men and lesbians have income above \$25,000, whether they read the paper or not. The biggest benefit to this approach is that suburban dykes, older gay men and lesbians, and other usually uncounted members of the community are included in the statistics.

And some of the statistics are indeed mind-blowing. Or at least stereotype-blowing. For example, of the gay and lesbian respondents, 42 percent marked themselves as married. What on earth does that mean? Married, as in having a straight husband or wife? Or married, as in participating in a lifelong committed relationship with a same-sex partner? There's no way to tell, but speculating about either interpretation is interesting.

In discussing the statistics on income, Lukenbill most blatantly displays his inexperience. While he shows a chart of gay and lesbian single-person income and household income compared to heterosexual income, he does not break the information

UNTOLD MILLIONS



Grant Lukenbill

down into the more useful categories of income for single gay men, single lesbians, gay male households, and lesbian households. He simply presents a mean annual income figure that we are supposed to accept as representative of the gay and lesbian community, a figure that is slightly less than the mean annual income of the heterosexual community. Given the pay disparities between men and women, this figure can't possibly be interpreted accurately in a lump sum, because the significantly lower income rates for women will skew it beyond acceptability.

In a blow to East and West

Coasters, the MONITOR sur-

veys shows that the highest percentage of the lesbian and gay community lives in North Central states—not New York or San Francisco. And Latina/os make up the largest section of lesbians and gay men of color; at 13 percent, they come in higher than African Americans at 11 percent. A whopping 67 percent of lesbians and gay men are parents, with the majority being women whose older children do not live at home.

Lukenbill also makes a big deal out of the finding that while more lesbians and gay men than heterosexuals consider themselves liberal thinkers (28 percent gay, 17 percent straight), a startlingly high percentage identify themselves as Republicans (27 percent gay, 26 percent straight). He seems to think this is a good thing.

All these years we've been thinking that the basic queer is a white male Democrat earning a five-figure income and living in San Francisco with his partner, and now it looks like a more accurate picture would be of a Republican Latina just breaking even with her partner and two children in Kansas!

Lukenbill's inept writing can't stifle the liveliness of the picture painted by the findings of the Yankelovich MONITOR. If you get the book, read the dust jacket for all the strategic analysis provided in the book—then stick to the fourth chapter for a fascinating peek into our often shuttered community.

Untold Millions by Grant Lukenbill.
HarperCollins, 1995; \$25 cloth.