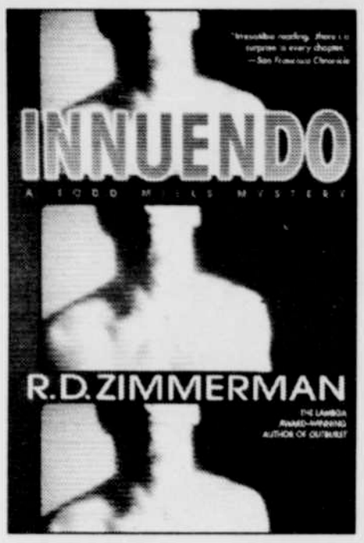
Dashing through the store Continued from Page 43



INNUENDO
by R.D. Zimmerman. Dell Books, 2000; $11.95 softcover.

I haven't always been a fan of murder mysteries. I have trouble with willing suspension of disbelief and find too many murders tiresome.

This time, however, Lambda Award winner R.D. Zimmerman hooked me. His murder mystery, set in Minneapolis, contains all the right ingredients: movie stars, reporters, lots of cops and a fistful of believable gay characters.

Todd Mills, an out television reporter, and his partner, Steve Rawlins, an equally out police detective, become enmeshed in the brutal murder of a young gay boy as Rawlins is called to the murder scene. It's brutal, as any murder scene surely is, but the case for Rawlins is doubly troubling. Having just met the boy a few nights previously, after speaking at a center for gay youth, he feels personally involved. Just how involved is only one of several twists in this novel.

"Todd realized that no matter how desperate he was to know, he wasn't going to ask, not about young Andrew. No, if this relationship was going to work, Rawlins was going to have to come to Todd and tell him.

"Todd clung to him, kissing him pathetically on the cheek, the ear, the neck and realizing finally what was going on here. This was a test. A test Rawlins didn't even know he was taking but one that he was, at this point, most certainly failing."

While Rawlins is investigating, Mills is doing live remotes. Inevitably, their careers intersect as they attempt to navigate not only the investigation but also a relationship under pressure.

At the center of the investigation is closeted actor Tim Chase. Several clues lead to Chase, but Mills has issues, like an exclusive with the actor, who is in town shooting a film. Zimmerman smartly teases us with several hints about just who this actor might be in real life.

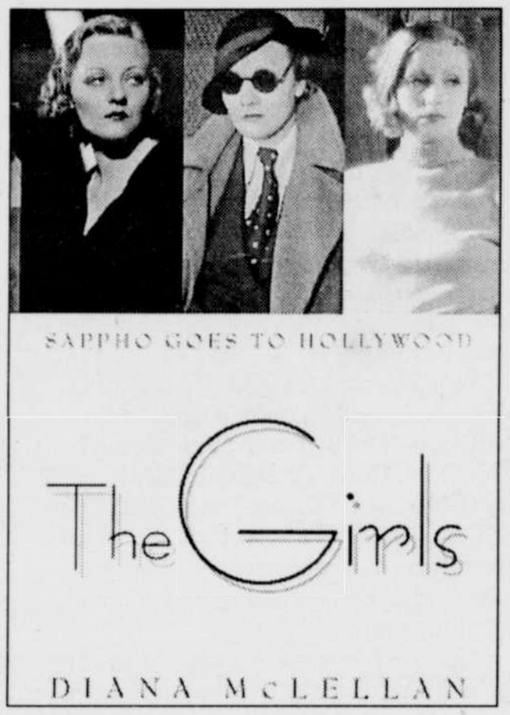
As the novel develops, Mills dances around his involvement with Chase while trying to figure out his own personal life. I liked the way Zimmerman weaves the mysteries of day-to-day gay life (apartment shuttling, financial concerns, monogamy, issues of trust) with the ins and outs of the murder investigation (anonymous phone tips, forensic evidence, the ultra-secret life of major celebs).

Zimmerman has almost a dozen Todd Mills gay mysteries under his belt. *Innuendo* is his lucky 13th.

The characters feel authentic and don't suffer from handsome-perfect-male syndrome. His story is believable, and the writing moves at a fast clip, making you want to hang in there with people you and I easily could know.

I made a note early on as I read *Innuendo*, "Not much suspense—we know who did it from the start." Turns out I was wrong; I didn't figure it out until the end—exactly what a good mystery novel should do.

—Richard Bray



THE GIRLS: SAPPHO GOES TO HOLLYWOOD
by Diana McLellan. St. Martin's Press, 2000; $26.95 hardcover.

Just the kind of juicy history we gals love, *The Girls* lifts the veil on the private lives of early Hollywood's most powerful and uninhibited goddesses—Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Tallulah Bankhead—and the women who loved them.

Why did Garbo and Dietrich deny knowing each other to the bitter end? How did Garbo worshipper Bankhead see Dietrich's career?

The Girls explores these questions and more, dishing up a rich stew of film history, politics, sexuality, psychology and the cult of stardom. Wonderful photos top off this absorbing read.

—Catherine Sameh

TRICK
New Line DVD

This frothy film almost could be called a "no-date movie," as its two leading characters spend the entire film trying to find a place to have their one-night stand.

Gabe (Christian Campbell) is neurotic yet cute as the lost-in-love romantic who has an annoyingly oversexed heterosexual roommate and a fag hag best friend (a hilarious Tori Spelling). The object of his affection is Mark (J.P. Pitoc), a stud who has more going on than just muscles and looks.

This is the kind of concept film that works great for gay audiences, and its witty humor crosses all gender lines. The DVD features a crisp widescreen print plus a trailer and cast/crew filmographies.

—Andy Mangels

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17 1:00P 5:00P		19 7:30P	20 7:30P	21 7:30P	22 7:30P	23 2:00P 7:30P
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