

Publish or perish

What will become of the gay press?

Dear Marco:

As of now, San Francisco Frontiers is no longer publishing due to the economic turndown. We are very disheartened about this turn of events, given the void it will leave in this community. The Southern California edition, however, will continue every other week.

Sincerely,
Marcus Wonacott
Senior Editor
SF Frontiers

Another one bites the dust. And in San Francisco, where even the straight people are kind of queer.

What is happening to the gay press? At a time when queer content is at an all-time high in the mainstream media, gay papers are going down faster than Anna Nicole Smith at an AARP convention.

At least I assume they're going out of business; otherwise, I'm sure more editors would return my calls. Those who do tell me they're still suffering from Manic Recession.

Damn this whole economy thing. It's really putting a damper on my plans to be a gay icon.

At this rate, it'll be decades before I finally open a restaurant or design a line of sportswear for Target. It's just not fair that the world has to wait for The Marco Macro-Mini for Men.

Personally I find it extremely irritating that the country's financial future hinges on whether Alan Greenspan pops out of his office and sees his shadow. I can't wait that long—and neither can the queer press.

What's more, gay papers bear the added burden of trying to be all things to all people in the community, which often results in pleasing no one. Perhaps one way of injecting new life into the industry would be to focus on niche markets.

Since there are currently five publications called *Out*, four named *Outlook*, plus three *Outwards* and two *Outlines*, here are some exciting new magazine concepts to consider:

- **Outboard:** For Gay Men Who Love Seamen
- **Outdo:** The Journal of Gay Hairdressers ("This week's issue: Lesbians and Mulletts—Will the Madness Never End?")
- **Outhouse:** For Men Who Have Sex at Rest Stops
- **Outlast:** The Journal for Aging Divas ("Take the quiz: Which is older? The Pyramids at Giza or Cher?")
- **Outnumbered:** The Magazine for Heterosexual Figure Skaters and Flight Attendants
- **Outskirts:** For Rural Drag Queens Only ("This week's issue: Gingham—It's the New Lamé!")
- **Outsized:** The Magazine for the Anatomically Optimistic
- **Outstretched:** The Bottom's Resource Guide ("This month: 15 Sphincter Stretches!")

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC

by Marc Acito



Of course, with sales of *Martha Stewart Living* and *Rosie* down, maybe I should start my own vanity mag. The title? That's easy: *Outwit*.

Until that happy day, however, disciples of "The Gospel According to Marc" will have to rely on their local gay papers. Starting from the left coast, this column now regularly appears in 12 cities: Portland; Sacramento, San Diego and Palm Springs, Calif.; Kansas City, Mo.; Nashville, Tenn.; Chicago; Pittsburgh; Long Island, N.Y.; Rehoboth Beach, Del.; Washington, D.C.; and Tampa, Fla. If you connect the dots on a map (which is the kind of useless endeavor in which I regularly indulge), it looks like a big bow tie.

Clearly, the editors and publishers of these papers are brilliant people of the most discriminating taste. (Note to self: When your novel

gets made into a movie, be sure to send them a charming knickknack with the movie's logo on it.) As far as I can see, the papers in the rest of the country are suffering economically for one main reason: They don't run my column.

If they did, circulation would increase, ad sales would skyrocket, gay papers would once again thrive, and the economy would recover. "But surely, Marco," you say, "you don't

expect your little column to revitalize an entire industry?"

Of course I do. And that's where you come in, dear reader.

Here's a fun game: Think about all the clever, funny people you know across the country who are missing out on all this wit and wisdom. Isn't it time you e-mailed them? You really should keep in touch more often, anyway. It's not nice to have sex with people and forget about them afterward. (How do you think I assembled my mailing list?) Insist that they immediately write an outraged letter to their local gay paper demanding that it carry "The Gospel According to Marc."

Do it now, while you're thinking about it. I'll wait. Just put down your coffee, go to your computer and e-mail every person you've ever blown—I mean known. The entire future of the queer press depends on it!

Then you can take pride in knowing you'll be coming to the aid of a gay-run industry that desperately needs your support.

Oh, and it wouldn't hurt my career, either.

And that, my friends, is *The Gospel According to Marc*. ☐

MARC ACITO can't wait to quit his day job so he can write full time. He can be reached at marcacito@attbi.com.



ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN MOORE

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