

Getting real with Sandra

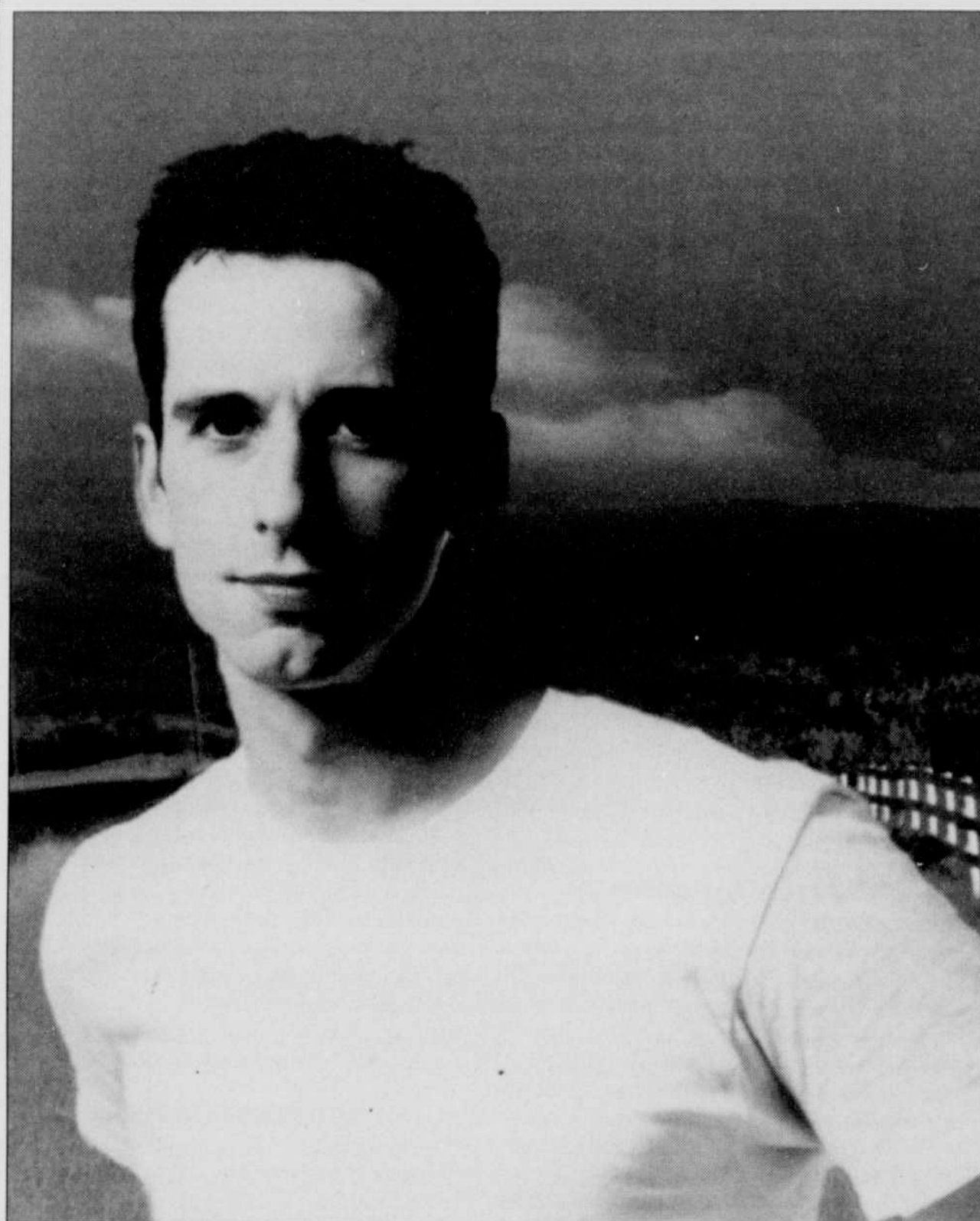
Comedy's baddest bad girl on hot dates, Howard Dean, momhood and more

by Meg Daly

Sandra Bernhard has a reputation, and it isn't pretty. People don't know quite how to categorize the actress/vocalist/comedian/provocateur/mom who will perform live at the Roseland on Feb. 12 and 13. She is an outspoken, independent, tell-it-like-it-is woman—which is to say she's a big threat to anyone hugging tightly to the status quo. She says her goal is not to shock, but rather to wake people up to some of the uncomfortable realities around us. And what some may not realize is that what drives her is a deep compassion for the world and a huge generosity of spirit.

I spoke to Bernhard on the phone recently while she was in New York. She was warm and, of course, funny—not at all the intimidating diva I imagined her to be. Though she's happily in love right now, she wouldn't say a peep about her partner, not even to name a gender. Here she offers some succinct Valentine's Day advice, as well as thoughts on President Bush, Howard Dean, *The L Word*, being a working mom and more.

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Please don't kill yourself

And other tips for Valentine's Day and beyond from America's favorite sex columnist

by Jim Radosta

Listen to Dan Savage. He knows what he's talking about. The Seattle-based gay sexpert's "Savage Love" column runs Thursdays in *The Portland Mercury*, and an all-queer version, "Savage Love 2.0," can be found at PlanetOut.com. He also has written the books *The Kid*, a touching account of how he and his partner adopted a baby boy born to a Portland street youth, and *Skipping Towards Gomorrah*, a salute to sin that established him as the counterculture Ann Coulter. He's now a frequent fixture as a talking head on VH1's *I Love the '80s* series.

Savage is also a notorious mischief maker. In 2000 he went undercover as a volunteer for Bible banger Gary Bauer's presidential campaign and got in trouble for joking that, while sick with the flu, he licked staplers and other objects in the office so the candidate would fall ill.

His new nemesis is U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., who has equated homosexuality with bestiality. In an effective

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