

BAGMAL NEWSLETTER

BOSTON ASIAN GAY MEN AND LESBIANS

February 1988

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1
Interview: William Loc

Page 2
Calendar of Events

Page 3
Letter to the Editor

STAFF for this Issue

S. H. Chua

All rights reserved
© BAGMAL 1988
Boston Asian Gay Men and Lesbians
c/o Glad Day Bookshop
673 Boylston Street
Boston MA 02116
(617)-267-3010

The BAGMAL Newsletter is published monthly except during the summer, when a bi-monthly schedule may be in effect. Subscription is \$10/year. One free sample issue will be sent upon request, after which payment is expected. Subscriptions will be exchanged with other organizations. The Newsletter staff encourages submissions from its readers. All contributions not accepted will be returned provided a SASE is enclosed.

WILLIAM LOC: ODYSSEY OF A GAY TEEN *An Interview by SH*



(The median age in BAGMAL is continually dropping as more and more teenagers and high-schoolers find the courage to come out to join our community. William exemplifies many of the new generation who from an early age are not afraid to say: "I am young, gay, Asian and proud". Here he shares his life story with us.)

*When did you come out?
When did you know you were gay?*

Well I know I was gay my whole life. I lived in Thailand for three years and I had sex with a lot of people when I was 12 years old. Originally I was born in Vietnam and we moved to China then to Hong Kong then to Thailand. My mother moved to Thailand for business - to sell gold.

How did you meet these people you had sex with?

I think they are straight. But they like me to play with them. I lived in Thailand in a very small town - like these were the village people.

(continued page 2)

CALENDAR

March 5 Saturday 1 p.m.

Asian Lesbian Rap Meeting at Jeniffer Matias'. 176 President Lane #111 Quincy Ma 02169 (info: 472-8391). Asian lesbians only.

March 11 Friday 8 p.m.

Boston premiere of Pan Asian Repertory Theatre's production of *Yellow Fever*, described as a deadly parody and private eye mystery, guaranteed to "keep you howling till the mystery is solved". At The Strand Theatre 543 Columbia Road in Dorchester. (info:282-8000). Tickets are \$13.50 and \$10.00. Shuttle buses run from MBTA Red Line Andrew Station.

March 13 Sunday 1 p.m.

Potluck and Second Quarterly BAGMAL Planning Meeting at Vickie Lew's 11 Price Rd. Apt 6 Allston Ma 02134 (info: 787-4213). Agenda: 1) East Coast Asian Lesbian Conference in Summer. 2) North American Gay and Lesbian Asian Conference in Toronto in Summer. We will discuss our role and involvement in the two conferences. Fundraising, transportation subsidy, etc. 3) Boston Pride March in June 4) Preparations for BAGMAL Community Open House 5) Social activities for the next 3 months. To add other agenda items call Jack Lo (547-8647). All Asian members are encouraged to attend.

March 20 Sunday 6 p.m.

Potluck and Slide Show: Asian Lesbians Past and Present at Karin's 182 Highland Ave. #5 Somerville. (625-0670) This slide show produced by Asian Lesbians of the East Coast of New York (ALOE) is a global survey of Asian lesbianism. Geographical areas include India, Japan, China and others. There are five sections to the program: 1) Sex segregation sisterhood, 2) Dildo, 3) Goddess and Woman Warrior 4) Political activist, feminist and writer 5) Asian lesbians in the United States. The show runs 30-45 minutes. It has been shown once before in Boston and is being brought back by BAGMAL due to popular demand. (Directions: Red Line to Davis Square, exit onto Highland Ave., walk up Highland Ave. about 10-15 minutes. Landmark: after Little Sisters of the Poor - a nursing home.) Donations: \$3 to benefit East Coast Asian Lesbian Retreat/Conference in summer 1988. For more information call Jack Lo 547-8647.



Yellow Fever from Pan Asian Repertory Theatre (March 11)

William: from page 1

Are these older people?

They are older. Twenty-five, twenty-six.

What sort of sex did you have with them?

Like jerking off. I jerk them off. They jerk me off.

These were married people, single? You think they are basically straight.

Single. They act very straight.

Did you feel guilty at all about doing this? Or you thought it was just fun?

No. At that time I did not know there's a word for gay. Four years ago when I came to United States I know what's the name for gay. And I had a lover for two years. I don't really live with him but I stay with him sometimes.

You must have been very young. How old were you then?

I was 14.

How old was your lover?

About 28.

This was when you first came to this country. You came to Boston, directly from Thailand.

We moved to Bangkok for two or three months. I met a lot of people there.

You were very young. How did you go around meeting people when you were in Bangkok?

Like my father's friend. We are a rich family so we know a lot of people.

You didn't go out on the streets or to the gay areas.

(continued on Page 4)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

INTER- VERSUS INTRA-RACISM

In recent newsletter articles by Ken Lin, Andrew Li, and Johnny Low, many pertinent points have been raised concerning racism. However, the main issue is beginning to be clouded over.

I agree with many points made by Ken Lin in his article "Barking Up the Wrong Tree". However Andrew Li's original article concerning interracial prejudice at the march on Washington was a separate issue than Ken speaks of. Solutions to an intra-racial problem will not help solve an interracial problem between Asians and Whites.

As a white American I often see intra-racial (Asian to Asian) prejudice amongst members of the gay Asian community. The "I'm better than you are" attitude that some Asians have because they slept with a particular white man seems prevalent among the younger, or at least more immature Asian members. The more mature Asians I know don't need to assert their superiority to their friends by parading their white friends and lovers before their other Asian friends. This particular Asian attitude that Ken points out however is not an Asian attitude at all. It's a general attitude of poor self-worth or self-esteem that most of us experience when we're growing up and maturing. As a freshman high school student I felt superior to my peers by hanging out with the older Junior students, or by driving my friends to a high school football game in my father's Cadillac. As we get older we develop

self-worth and need not depend on such things to like ourselves or to be liked by others.

The point I'm trying to make is that the existing white prejudices against Asians, as unfortunate as it is will not be cleared up by Asians cleaning up their own intra-racial prejudices.

*the existing white prejudices against Asians.....
....will not be cleared up by Asians cleaning up their own intra-racial prejudices.*

An Asian who feels the white culture is better than his has his own personal battle to contend with and resolve. But that self-assessment has no effect on how the white person views the Asian community.

I have no prejudice against the black community because some lighter blacks, who may pass as white, feel superior to darker blacks. Although the intra-racial Asian problem does exist, cleaning up your own house won't affect the way whites perceive you. Inter-racial racism must be fought on a larger national level, a smaller community level and a smaller still gay Asian community level.

So please don't confuse the issue. I feel intra-racial prejudice is a separate issue from prejudice of one race against another. Though both are

serious problems to be dealt with they must be dealt with separately.

After having read Andrew Li's March on Washington article I wondered whether to continue attending BAGMAL social functions. I felt the article was as anti-white as the issues pointed to by Andrew were anti-Asian. If the majority of Asian members had a similar attitude to that of Andrew's, where did I fit in attending a BAGMAL party? Was I just a token white at an Asian social affair?

"The white person who wants to demonstrate support for Asians must do so on our terms." Quote Andrew Li, *Jan '88 newsletter*. Thank you Johnny Low for making me realize that Andrew's terms are not necessarily the Asian majority's terms.

As a white American Jew I have also experienced prejudices. As Andrew states, because I am white I am fortunate to be able to sit back and hide from much of the prejudice around me. I do not have to deal with prejudice on a daily basis for my survival. However we all experience prejudice to some extent. Blacks and Asians deal with it constantly, but I as a Jew, as well as the Irish, Italians, anyone has dealt with it and can identify with the hurt experienced by being judged by what we look like or are labeled rather than by who we

(continued on page 8)

William: from page 2

I didn't know then. I didn't know anything about the gay areas.

How did you meet your lover in Boston?

Well at first I didn't know that he's gay. He's the owner of a boys' club in Chinatown. He's gonna be a priest. He doesn't want to have sex anymore. He's gonna be celibate.

Is he Chinese?

He's white. He loves Asian boys. He doesn't like any Caucasian at all.

So he has sex with other boys too at the club?

Yes. I broke up with him because I found out that he has sex with other boys.

How did he approach you or did you approach him when you met?

At first I didn't know. I'm with my friend and we just walk around like touching dick and this and that. And then my friend left. I was there alone. And he asked me to his room. And he take out his dick and he said, "Play with my dick". Like that.. And...like he teach me a lot about gay sex.

What's this club like?

They have pool table, weight lifting..

I stayed with him 14 till 16. After I broke up with him I had a broken heart and I tried suicide. I took a lot of sleeping pills. I slept on my bed and the saliva came out of my mouth. My father thought I took drugs and he pushed me out the door. Lucky my generous sister she called the ambulance and I got saved at that time. From that

time on I start to forget it. I said: "Oh gay life, it sucks. It's just like animal life." I start to go to New York and use people's money. Use other old men's money.

But how did you meet them?

Well I go to *Ali Baba* all the time. I meet them there. I meet like one person and we go to party and I meet another, another. And I know the owner of the gay bar. I know one owner - he owns two gay bars, one in New York, another in New Jersey and he's very rich. His name is B. G.

And then my friend left. I was there alone. And he asked me to his room. And he take out his.....

So you went with these older men in New York for money?

I know I use them but I stayed with them. And they live in the beautiful house and I can have anything I want.

But what did your family think of this? They didn't mind your going down to New York on your own?

That's why I quit school for a year. I was in 8th grade. That's why I am late a year now. Well at first my family - they think I change. They thought I was in the Mafia.

You stayed in New York for how long?

For about eight months. Cos I ordered the magazine and they told me all about the gay life in New York like Christopher Street and Gay Street.

Which magazine?

Mandate. I read one article. It was very impressive.

How did you find the Ali Baba or all these places.

I met the people and the people told me. I go to the gay street and there's a lot of restaurants, bars. I met one person and I asked them all about New York and they told me. And then I go to *Ali Baba* and there I met all the people.

You were very brave deciding to go to New York all by yourself.

At that time I tried to give up everything in my life. I said, I can't live in this world anymore. I told my family I got to move to New York now because Boston is not my home anymore. They feel very afraid. He said, "Write us a letter and call us how you are". I was very, very lucky that I met B.G. and he lets me stay in his house. And I made a lot of money when I come back.

You made a lot of money from these older men that you were around.

They have a bar and I hang around there and I serve like beer, drinks. And he paid me everything that I need, anything I want, all my clothes.

Did you have sex with a lot of these older men?

Not the older men but B.G.'s workers. All of his workers want me. And they take me. The next day they got fired.

You decided you wanted to move back to Boston after 8 months?

Cos I miss my family a lot. At that time nothing can replace my parents. I decide to move back and they welcome me. I decided

(continued on next page)

William: from page 4

to go back to school too and study hard because I learn a lot from B.G. He said that no matter what you got to go to college. I know you can do it because I can tell you are a very intelligent boy and hard worker.

Wasn't he sad that you wanted to move back to Boston?

Yes. He wrote me a lot of letter. I feel very guilty. I don't write to him but he always write to me. I really want to go down to New York to see him but my boyfriend is here.

Does your family know you are gay?

Very obviously I am. But I don't think they know. Because they are all the way back. Maybe my brother knows. I have two older brothers, two older sisters and two younger brothers. My brother found the *Boston Area Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY)* telephone for me. At the gay march in the summer - he works near the *Stop & Shop*. When he walk up Government Center the people gave him that paper. And he just make fun of me or something. He said: "Brother, this is the telephone for you". I said: "Oh thank you I don't need that". But I memorised that number very quickly and I rip that paper and throw that in the trash can. And I just call that number very suddenly. And I met a lot of gay young people.

When was this? You had never heard of BAGLY before?

Not at all. That was like two years ago. When I stayed with my first lover he never let me out. He's always in closet. He doesn't know anything about gay life, gay community.

But when you were in New York?

I learnt a lot from them. That's why I always think it's unfair for me. I learnt it too early and I have broken heart. Like glass. And I grow very mature early. Like mostly the people don't like my outside but my inside is really impressive.

That was the first time you got in touch with a gay organization?

Yes. This was after I came back from New York.

How often do you go to BAGLY?

Every Wednesday. I always go there on and off. I started going last 2 years.

What do you think of BAGLY?

BAGLY is very helpful for the young people. The young people cannot go to bar and they organize activities like they have a party. I make a lot of friends.

Are you the only Asian boy there?

No. I see a few but they are very arrogant. They are not friendly at all.

Are they college kids?

Yes. One goes to Harvard. He is studying law. The other goes to Harvard or MIT.

What about the white kids. Do you make friends with them?

Well they like me. But I don't really like them. I don't know why. I make friends with a lot of blacks. I think that they feel minority also. So we stick together.

Let's talk about your school. Your school is East Boston High. How do you get along with your classmates?

They treat me very nice. I don't think they know I am gay but I hang around with girls all the

time and I talk about boys, this and that. If they don't know I am gay they are stupid. And I hang all the men's picture on my locker door.

But no one has treated you badly because of this. Who are your good friends there? The girls?

All the girls. They support me all the time. I was in their school for four years but no one called me "faggot".

How about being Asian. Is there any kind of racial thing?

They don't. Maybe my school work is very good and they ask me for help all the time. I'm not smart but I act very smart.

Are there a lot of Asian kids in your school now?

Three years ago not really. I'm the only Asian in the school. Now they have more Cambodian and Vietnamese who are there. I make friends with some Vietnamese and I found out they are gay also and I help them out. I met two Asian gay kids.

What about white kids? Do you know any gay ones?

I do know them but they don't open themselves.

How did you find out the Vietnamese kids were gay?

One of them, K he's very obviously. The way he walk and the way he talk. And I asked him: "Are you gay?" and he denied it. "No I'm not. I have girlfriend." This and that. But I keep asking him and keep asking him. I said: "I'm gay. I go to gay bar, I kiss men and I make love with men." And he said: "Me too. I have sex with men also".

K has to act very straight. He cannot hang on his wall like guys' pictures. And he likes to

continued on next page

William: from page 5

drag so he always buy woman's clothes. In his room. His father found out. Like I put my ad in *Stars* magazine. A lot of people wrote to me. So I give him one and that guy send him a naked picture. His father found out and he got kicked out. He lives in his friend's house, then his mother begged him to go back.

That's terrible when you are so young and so dependent on your family.

Well I get ready for everything already. Like I make money and I save money. If they kick me out I have money to support myself. If they don't want me

lot. But he just wants to have sex. He still write to me.

Do you recommend people putting in ads? You think that is a good way to meet people?

I think so. Because... Like if you go to bar you start first to talk to people. You don't know if the people like you or not. If you put your ad in, the people like you - then they must be very discrete and sincere.

How many letters do you write before you meet? People send photos too?

Yes. They send photos. Because my ad I state, "photo reply only."

How many letters do you ex-

So this is how you met S. S responded to your ad and you are now good friends?

Yes. We met August Moon Day. He lived in the closet for 3 years he lived in the United States and he didn't have sex. He was back in Indiana. He wrote to me. He said he's lonely and he doesn't have any friends. So I wrote him a letter. I said: "if you meet me you won't be lonely." And now he come out very openly.

That was the only ad you ran?

I ran two. One in *Inches* magazine. All the old men respond to me. Because I stated in my ad - I said I like dancing, I like

my type is dark-haired people. Like blonde guys don't turn me on at all. They turn me off. And white skin they turn me off.

why I want them?

When did you put this ad in Stars Magazine?

I put it in last summer. It ran 4 or 5 months.

How many people responded to your ad?

A lot. About 30 or something.

How many people did you write back to?

I have a big selection. So I choose all the cute ones. Like my type is dark-haired people. Like blonde guys don't turn me on at all. They turn me off. And white skin they turn me off. So I wrote to one Brazilian guy in Maine and one Italian guy in New Hampshire and one Italian guy in Rhode Island. I like the second one the best. He looked like professional model.

You've met them all already.

I've had sex with them. The first one is the Brazilian - I like him a

change before you decide to meet?

I don't exchange. I call them. 'Cos I'm a lazy writer. They have their phone number in their letters. If they don't have phone numbers I write back to them.

Where do you meet? Here in Boston?

Here in Boston. Then they drive me back to where they came from. But the Brazilian guy stay here in a motel - the Howard Johnson's.

You said some Asians wrote to you from the ads?

Two. Only two Asians. S and another one D. But I called him once but he's in the closet - very, very deep inside. I called him and he said: "Don't call me because my brother might know." So I don't call him and he hasn't called me for so long so how can I communicate? He's about 25 and lives in Brighton.

modeling. And they said you're cute, you have awesome face, you can model for me and how much you expect. That is very phoney. I didn't write back to them. I don't know why I waste my money running the ad. But the *Star s-* a lot of young people.

Do you specify in your ad what you are looking for?

I said I'm looking for white and Asian for friendship or relationship.

Do you specify age?

I do. I said 18 - 25 only. But a lot of people older than that write to me. But they're good-looking also so I take them.

Do you specify what sort of body type. Do you specify height, weight?

You mean myself. I did put how tall I am. But not for what I'm looking for. I specify white and Asian but one black guy wrote to

(continued on next page)

William: from page 6

me. He is now my boyfriend.

You met him through the ad?

He wrote to me and I called him. Very fortunately the next week is the March in D.C. so I went. He was very concerned about me and he tried to get me some place to stay in Washington D.C. but he cannot. Because he live in Maryland. And I called him and I said - I called his friend because he gave me his friend's number - I said, if you see R. tell him that I'm going to be in *Badlands* - this a gay bar in Washington D.C. And I met him there.

Why did you decide to be lovers with him? You had so many other people to choose from?

I don't know. He is not the person I'm looking for. But I found him in my life so I keep him.

Do you get along well together?

No, not really. We are in two different worlds. I never date blacks before and I don't know what they like. Now I understand him a lot and we get along pretty well.

Is he good sex?

He is. I'm the body type. I like the face ...but the face not really turn me on but if they have body I take him.

What sort of sex do you like?

Only safe sex.

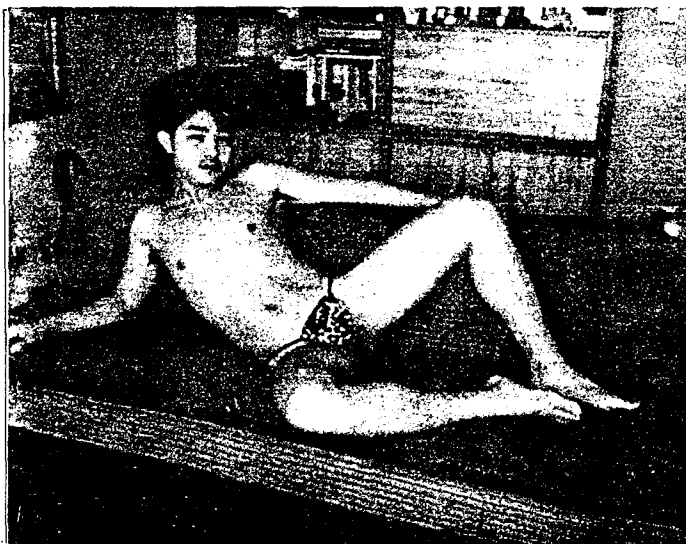
You are very aware of safe sex. Do you think that a lot of your friends - the younger crowd - are very aware of practising safe

sex?

They do. S is very educated. He found out everything before he come out of the closet.

You said you like dark people, Italians. Have you had sex with a lot of Asian people? You said you had sex with all those people in Thailand. But since coming to the United States?

I remember two years ago I went to model school. I model for the Asian people. And this Asian guy he's gay. He date me and we end up have sex together. I went



over to his house after the fashion show. And he turned on the gay movie - the movie was called *Asian Knights*. And we end up have sex. But I have no feeling. But if I have sex with like Italian I have very different feeling. I know one Jewish guy. He lives in North End. He looks very much like Italian and he has great body. He works out at the *Metropolitan Gym* for 10 years. I was crazy about him. When I broke up with him I tried suicide also.

You should stop that. That's terrible.

Now I learn a lot. Because I met the lawyer I work with - she's

lesbian. And my teacher in high school, he's gay. Two of my teachers are gay - one in history and one in record keeping. I met him in the movie theater. A year before - I didn't know he's gay - I took a whole bunch of pictures, like all the banana pictures, like the clothes-off pictures my ex-lover took of me. I showed it to the girl in my school. And he said, "let me see it". And I said, "No this not for men, for girl only". I tried to act very straight. And he looked at them and he looked at me. And the next year I have him again. I went to see the movie, *The Lord of Desire* I went with one of my boyfriends. He wrote to me also. He lives in North Quincy. And he's very goodlooking. He looks like Dolph Lundgren.

But Dolph Lundgren is blonde. You said you don't like blondes.

He 's blonde. And G and S crazy about him. He's not my type at all. I try to get him for G and S but he says he likes me only.

So that's where you met your teacher. In the cinema.

Yea. But the next day we didn't say anything. Because I'm not sure you know. I thought he just went in the wrong theater and saw that movie. And the next time I saw him it was at *Napoleon's*. And he grabbed me. And I said, "Oh, Mr. G. what are you doing here?" And he said: "What are **you** doing here. Are you going to go back to school tomorrow". I said: "Maybe. If I'm not too tired." And we talked, talked. And when I see him in school he talked a lot

(continued on next page)

William: from page 7

about that also.

So you said these people counselled you. Your lesbian lawyer friend?

Like I work in one place - a grocery store in the North End. All the people are gay. And they want me so bad. I worked with them for one year then I found out they are gay. Then I change my job to the law firm. Then I found out that the lawyer I work with she's lesbian.

You get along well with her?

Very well. She's very concerned about me. Like whenever I have bad feeling in my heart, I share with her. I have no one to share. Like most of my friends go to work. She's very concerned about me. She said if your boyfriend treat you anything bad just call on me. I'll sue the shit out of them.

Just like a lawyer. What are your plans for the future? You are still with R.? Are you people monogamous?

I try. I love R a lot. We go out 5 months now. He works very hard. He come over to my house sometimes because I have no time to go to his place.

Your family doesn't care?

My mother likes him a lot. Cos he's very nice, very straight person. And my father likes him also. My whole family likes him.

A lot of Chinese people are prejudiced against black people.

At first my mother does. But I explain everything to her. R cares a lot about my younger brother. He took him to Washington D. C. and show him around. And my mother said why do you let R take him to

D.C? Well I said, well mother you got to know that you have a child but you never give love to children. Like us. You never care about us. You just care about your business and money you have. It's very embarass for us to go out and tell the people I lived in Thailand and I never go to any famous place. And she feel kind of encouraging. She likes R.

You are going to college soon?

I will. Because I'm the top 20 students in my high school. And I have 5 years' full scholarship at Northeastern. This is my last year in high school.

It looks like you're all set.

But I hate school. I don't like anything at all. I like something fun - I like to party. I don't think we have that long a life to enjoy it. Like I want to me a hairdresser but I know hairdresser cannot make much money.

Maybe you'll find something you like in college.

I've decided to take business accounting. Because my father has a restaurant.

Do you want to say something about BAGMAL?

I think BAGMAL is great. Because before I hang around with the Caucasian. They always look down on us. I have that feeling. But when I go about BAGMAL the people are very nice to me. I can really share the feeling. I really hope this organization grow bigger, bigger. ■

Letter: from page 3

really are within ourselves. To say that whites have not felt or suffered prejudices and therefore can not understand anti-racism prejudice excludes me from supporting your cause. Were whites excluded from marching in the civil rights marches of the 60's?

The more whites that marched hand in hand with the blacks gave greater strength and meaning to their cause. If only Asians had marched in Washington with the gay Asian contingent, the poorer and weaker would have been their anti-discriminatory statement.

To fight racism against Asians you must seek the support all all races, not just within yourselves.

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul S. Krugman

ANNOUNCEMENT

Subscriptions

Some of your subscriptions have run out. If you receive a notice from us please send in your payment promptly. We have increased our subscription rate to \$10 a year in order to bring you higher quality print and half-tones in the newsletter. This is still less than \$1 an issue. Please continue to support your newsletter.

Submissions

We continue to look forward to your letters and articles. If possible please submit your copy typewritten and double-spaced. We are also looking for original artwork and photographs. Please provide instructions on how to return originals to you.