

# The LCN

Vol. 9, Issue 3

March, 1992

A LOVING COMMITTED NETWORK

## Express

### No One Deserves to Be Abused

by Penny Jo Chessman

On Jan. 1, 1992, the laws governing protective orders, known as domestic violence injunctions, changed and now include lesbians. Previously, only persons who are or were married or related by blood or marriage could obtain a domestic violence injunction. Other people needing protection had to get a repeat violence injunction, which required two instances of violence or threats of violence, and was not as comprehensive an order. The law has been expanded to include any persons who are or were residing in the same dwelling unit, as if a family, and any two persons who have a child in common, regardless of whether they've ever lived together.

This is important to the gay and lesbian community in two ways. First, it provides more extensive protection against abusive partners. Secondly, it

*Continued on page 7*

### AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TO ADOPT GAY/LESBIAN PRISONERS

Washington D.C. Sept. 11, 1991.

International gay and lesbian groups responded positively to a recent decision by Amnesty International to adopt as prisoners of conscience those imprisoned for their homosexuality, including those arrested for homosexual acts. The decision is a major development and victory in the more than 12 year battle to change the global human right's group's policy towards lesbians and gays.

AI made its decision to defend gays and lesbians at its biennial International Council conference in Yokohama, Japan, September 7. The Gay and Lesbian Task Force to Change Amnesty International, a world wide coalition formed this year to pressure the organization, issued the following statement.

"We, as representatives of thousands of gay men and lesbians around the world, would like to thank Amnesty International for taking this long-

needed step. We offer our deepest thanks to AI sections that worked so hard to achieve this victory, especially the USA, Canada, Ireland, and Norway. The task force has faith that AI will implement this important decision immediately."

To implement its decision, the Gay and Lesbian Task Force is calling on AI to: devote money and resources to researching and pursuing cases of gay and lesbian oppression; initiate a major study documenting gay and lesbian oppression throughout the world; organize major publicity campaigns around this issue; and to work in a mutually beneficial manner with existing international gay and lesbian organizations, such as the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, and Queer Planet in the U.S., the International Lesbian & Gay Association (ILGA), with members in 55 countries, and local gay and lesbian groups.

*Excerpted from  
Southern Source, Dec '91.*

*LOOKING FOR A GREAT TIME!?!*

**6TH ANNUAL  
LCN CAMPOUT**

**March 27-28-29  
WEKIVA FALLS RESORT**

Yes! It's time for our annual campout. We are planning to have the campout at Wekiva again this year.

The last few years we averaged 35-50 Lesbians pitching their tents and having one of the best times of their lives.

Friday evening we go out and set up house for the weekend and then gather around the campfire for singing and guitar playing by all of our talented campfire girls. Saturday and Sunday is filled with canoe rides, volleyball, campfire cooking, fishing, swimming and, once again, wonderful campfire entertainment.

To get to Wekiva Falls take I-4 East to the Sanford exit 51. (Hwy 46). Go west (left) on 46 approximately 5 miles. Turn left at the 1st road past the bridge. Stay on this road to the entrance. We will be in the primitive section.

Pets and alcohol are permitted. There are hot showers in the bath house, canoe rentals and a convenience store on the property. Don't forget your guitars. The cost this year is \$14.00 per night for 2 people per campsite. First come, first serve, so get there Friday night. If you don't plan on camping you are more than welcome to come out and join us anytime during the weekend.

**If you need more details, please call Cathy or Lucy at 291-3791.**



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## Classifieds

**For Sale:** 1986 Collectors Ovation white electric Guitar with Holmes amplifier and hardshell case. \$400.00/OBO call 291-3791.

**Home Repairs & Improvements:** Ceramic tile, Painting, etc. Call 869-0089 or 291-4839.

**No. Carolina Vacation Home:** Available to rent May-Oct. Sleeps 6, \$350/wk, \$250/weekend. Hiking, white water rafting. Secluded, beautiful. Kathy or Lynn, 904-332-8831.

**Sapphic Sisters:** Lesbian Personal Ads, with "Lifestyle Symbols." Nationwide, incl. FL. Free information; SASE to: Matchmakers, PO Box 9974-LCN, Colorado Springs, CO 80932.

**Looking For:** Professional petite white female seeks feminine female ages 25-45 for friendship or possible relationship. Send note, phone # to: PO Box 430416, Kissimmee, Fl. 34743.

**Cottage For Rent:** At the Pagoda, a lesbian community on beach in St. Augustine. June - Dec. One bedroom, queen-size waterbed, A/C, heat, ceiling fans, furnished. Wanted 1 lesbian, non-smoker, no dogs. Rent negotiable. Call Barbara or Valentine 904-829-9709.

**For Sale:** 14 ft Lowe Boat, with 15HP Evinrude Engine, Magic tilt trailer, canvas boat cover & accesories. \$1000.00/OBO Call 291-3791.

**Roommate Wanted:** Pine Hills area, large house with pool. Must like cats. Call Debbie, 295-1406.

**Volunteer Needed:** Someone to run our freshly-printed copies of the LCN Express thru the folding machine at Pronto Press (near Mills and Colonial). Obviously need be done but once a month, during working hours; only takes about an hour. Please call Becky, 282-6569.

## PARENTS' GROUPS

by Diane

It's a cold, wet, dark Saturday morning and I'm sitting in my car. I'm groggy. Let's take inventory - I'm up, I'm dressed (sneak a peak to make sure), I'm parked in the GLCS parking lot, my son is in the back seat (he's the one singing "It's A Small World" at 90 decibels). Everything checks - I'm ready for the GLPCI (Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition Internat'l) Adopt-A-Highway cleanup day.

Other groggy-eyed people are arriving, sipping their coffee, complaining about the weather. Looks like a small crew today. Evil thoughts for those folks who peaked at the weather and went back to bed.

We organize as best we can - it's early, it's Saturday, it's cold and wet (did I mention that?) - one person to watch the kids, one to drive the refreshment car, one to pick up the filled bags. The rest of us split into small teams of trash-pickers.

*Continued, Page*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear LCN Readers, In response to the request from Pagoda for donations, I'd like to share my view so other women are aware of what they may be supporting. As a long time Pagoda supporter, I (and many others) ceased support in the summer of '90 when Pagoda amended its by-laws and ceased being open to all women. They now exclude women who do not conform to their current ideas of political correctness, including but not limited to: women who have body piercings (body parts unspecified-residents determine what is acceptable); women whose sexual proclivities range beyond their accepted "norms" (again, undefined/to be determined by residents). They do not welcome women whose appearance some residents find objectionable. It is no longer run by the supporters but by the resident with their own exclusionary rules. If you become a supporter sight unseen, you may not be able to use the facilities once you arrive. Please be aware of what you are supporting.

*Sincerely, Cathleen Burns*

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## ▼ Local Events and Projects ▼

**LCN Express Folding Party:** See you at Key Largo, Monday, March 30 at 7:00 pm. Brilliant conversation, manual dexterity training, plenty laughs! (And thanks to the Feb. folding crew.)

**ORLANDO PRIDE:** Help make it happen for Pride Week, June 13 - 20th, 1992. Meetings every 2nd and 4th Monday at GLCS, 750 W. Colonial. Orlando Pride, Inc.'s 24-hour message number is 236-9480.

**Readers Co-op:** Our February pot-luck was hot-stuff (Jan makes some terrific chili). We exchanged books, ideas, and pleasantries-- and planned for our next get-together.

Join us Sat., March 7, 7:00pm in Deltona at Sara's place. (Give her a call for directions: 860-0294.) Bring your books and some light snacks. Some of us will venture out for dancing in Daytona afterwards, so the courageous and outrageous should bring high-heeled sneakers along, too.

**Act Out Theatre's** next production is *Bill Batchelor Road*, a one-act comedy about a haven for young soldiers invaded by one Rev. Lawson. Friday and Saturday at 8pm, March 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, & 28 at the Phoenix.

Casting for an upcoming act from *Torch Song Trilogy* calls for a female jazz singer; auditions March 8, 6-9pm. And they have several lesbian-themed plays in the works for this Spring. Auditions for *Bar Dykes*, a one-act play by Merrill (Harris) Mushroom, are Sunday, April 12 at 7:00pm at the Phoenix, 7124 Aloma Ave.

April 11th.

### It's Auction Time!

Relish over Womyn-oriented vacations, gifts, art objects, home improvement and personal items (to say nothing of the 100 or more wonderful wimmin bidding anxiously around you). The lucky ones will take home treasures and talents that are generously donated by womyn and men throughout the United States-- some real bargains.

If you've missed the auction in the past, you've missed the fun. LCN has been in existence for 8 years. The auction is our largest fundraiser; it enables us to mail out over 1000 newsletters each month, produce concerts, fund Pride Week festivities, and help fund other important functions throughout the year.

The auction will be held at the **College Park Women's Center** which is located behind Honda Motorcycle on Edgewater Dr. The doors open at 6:30 pm; the auction starts at 7:00. Call Cathy or Lucy at 291-3791 for more info or to volunteer or donate.

Details are in the making, so if you get a call for help, whether it be for donations, your donated time, or just an invitation to the fun, always remember ... you make it all happen!

*In Sisterhood,  
Frogger A.K.A. Cathy*

**Womyn's Discussion Group:** Every Wednesday at 7:30pm a womyn's rap/support group is held at GLCS. Sessions tend to be free-flowing in format, with topics chosen on site. Call 407-425-GLCS for more information.

**Parents Groups:** (Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition International, Central Florida Chapter) provides support and family-oriented activities.

**March 13-** Rap group for adults only, 7:30pm at GLCS

**March 21-** Social support meeting children welcome

**March 28-** Family picnic  
For more info, call the 24-hour hotline: 420-2191.

*Parents Groups,  
continued from page 2*

Tommy, Sharon, and I head off down Highway 50. There's a lot of traffic today, but I'm glad we're not on I-4 like that other gay group. There's plenty of interesting trash to pick up as usual. Sharon and I let Tommy flex his Y-chromosome and carry all the heavy stuff. He's lugging around enough car parts to build a Yugo. He refuses to pick up the condoms, though, so I have to find a stick (to pick them up with, not to beat him.)

Sharon saves my life a couple of times by pointing out that I'm in the middle of a lane on Highway 50. (I'm just not a morning person.) We take a refreshment break and shed a few layers of clothing since the sun is coming out. Looks like it might turn into a nice day. We continue our leisurely trash-picking, leaving full trash bags in our wake. We talk and laugh a lot - trash-picking can be strangely hilarious.

The end is in sight and it's not yet noon. We pile up all the full trash bags and head off to a picnic at Langford Park. Ah, nothing better than sitting on a blanket on the grass on a warm, sunny Saturday afternoon.



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## In Good Health

by Suzanne Paszkowski, CNM

Before AIDS was discovered, herpes was the sexually transmitted disease that received the most attention in the press. Although not as much is written about it these days, it remains a significant health problem for women. It is important for lesbians as well as straight women to understand the transmission and prevention of this disease.

Herpes is caused by the herpes simplex virus (HSV). There are two types of this virus: HSV-1 occurs 95% of the time on the mucous membranes of the mouth (cold-sores, fever blisters, etc) and 5% of the time on the mucous membranes of genitals. HSV-2 occurs 95% of the time on the genitals and 5% on the mouth. A culture must be done during an outbreak in order to tell which of the viruses is present.

Genital herpes results in small blisters appearing on the vulva, vagina, anus or cervix. The blisters then break open and become shallow sores that may ooze or bleed. They are usually extremely painful. Symptoms usually appear from within a few days to three weeks after exposure to the virus, although some people do not have symptoms until much later. The first outbreak is usually the worst, often causing fever, headache or muscle aches, fatigue, swelling of the lymph nodes in the groin, vaginal discharge, itching or painful urination.

Since herpes is caused by a virus, infections can recur at any time. The virus lies dormant in the nerve cells and can flare up when a woman is under stress, is ill or run down, or in response to hormone changes (during menstruation, ovulation or pregnancy). Usually, each outbreak of

herpes heals faster and is less severe than previous ones, and the length of time between outbreaks usually increases. Some women may only have one outbreak. The blisters generally occur in the same locations each time, along particular nerve pathways, and a woman may notice "prodromal sensation" (an itching or tingling feeling) that warns her she is about to have a outbreak.

The most likely way to get genital herpes is by direct contact with someone who has an active infection. This can be by unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. It can also be spread from mouth to genitals by the fingers. A person may be infectious from the time that prodromal symptoms appear until all the sores have completely healed.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for herpes. Health care providers sometimes prescribe a drug called Zovirax (acyclovir) to help prevent or shorten outbreaks. Most treatment, however, is directed toward relief of symptoms: ice pack or sitz baths, aloe vera or comfrey compresses, and keeping the genital area clean and dry. It is also thought that taking 500 mg of lysine, an amino acid (available over the counter), every day may help prevent outbreaks. There is evidence that women who have HSV-2 may have an increased risk for cervical cancer. It is recommended that these women have Pap smears done every six months, instead of once a year.

*Suzanne Paszkowski is a Certified Nurse-Midwife working in a private nurse-midwifery practice in Orlando. She provides well-women GYN care as well as pregnancy and childbirth services for women in the Central Florida area.*

## SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Help Professor Anita Hill!

Leonard E. Sullivan, (OK-R) seeking to have Professor Hill removed from her tenured position at the University of Oklahoma. In his letter to University president Richard Van Horn, Sullivan said, "We can't afford to have a high profile professor on campus that millions of Americans, according to polls and national talk shows, believe is a fantasizing liar." Please write and state your opinion to:

President Van Horn, University of Oklahoma, 300 Timberdell Rd., Norman, OK 73019

Representative Leonard Sullivan, House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Professor Anita Hill School of Law University of Oklahoma, 300 Timberdell Rd., Norman, OK 73019

## Women's Events in Florida

**March 12-15, Tampa:** Southeastern Women's Studies Conference, Celebrating Feminisms & the Diversity of Women, USF Campus

**March 22, Miami:** *Something Special*, 3rd Annual Lesbian "Bizarre." For more info, send SASE to 7762 NW14th Ct., Miami, FL 33147

**April 21-26, St. Augustine:** Celebration for lesbians over 60. For more info, send name, address, birthdate to Rainbow, 2854 Coastal Highway, St. Augustine, FL 32095.

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## Arts & Letters

A national competition is now underway for the 4-color design of a logo for the upcoming

1993

### March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, & Bi Equal Rights.

Entries are due March 31. To receive a flyer with all the information, call Becky, 282-6569.

**LESBIAN WRITERS FUND:** the Astrea National Lesbian Action Foundation's Writers Fund is now accepting entries for their annual awards in fiction and poetry. Send for guidelines by **March 13, 1992**. Lesbian Writers Fund, Astrea Foundation, 666 Broadway, Suite 520, New York, NY 10012.

**Naiad Press**, turns nineteen years old-- with 24 new books and a movie planned. Director Tim Hunter (*River's Edge*) together with independent producer Edward Pressman (*Das Boot, Reversal of Fortune, Wall Street*) are going to make a movie version of **Murder at the Nightwood Bar**, based on the book of the same name by Katherine V. Forrest. Filming will begin in August, 1992. Starring as Kate Delafield will be Kelly Lynch (Curly Sue, Drugstore Cowboy) with James Gammon (Revenge, Major League) starring as Kate's partner Ed Taylor.

## BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL GUILD FORMING

This is an exciting time, Orlando! We are working to establish the City Beautiful's first organization to promote, network and empower gay and lesbian businesses and professionals in the Greater Orlando area. Major cities such as Atlanta and even Tampa have had such organizations for years now, and their gay and lesbian communities have been greatly enhanced by them.

The Guild will be comprised of companies and individuals involved in business and professional pursuits in Greater Orlando's Gay and Lesbian Community, as well as businesses and professionals promoting or welcoming gays and lesbians.

The Guild will seek to: \* promote the business interests of Guild members by bringing together gay businesses and professional men and women as an acknowledged economic and political force. \* provide a network and forum for the exchange of ideas and information within the community. \* focus the energies of gay and lesbian businesses and professionals to enrich the professional and personal lives of Guild members, as well as to support community activities and causes.

Complete and return this questionnaire, and join our first meeting: **Mar. 12, 6:30pm, Joy MCC, 2351 S. Ferncreek Ave.** Be part of Orlando's gay and lesbian history in the making.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Profession \_\_\_\_\_ Type of business \_\_\_\_\_

May we contact you by:  mail  telephone

[Which goal(s) would you most like to see the Guild achieve:  Networking  Discounts  Political force  Charity activities/fundraising  Social functions  Business development/education  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to:  become a member  attend monthly meetings  help organize

*Mail this to The Centerfold, P.O. Box 533446, Orlando, FL 32853-3446 or bring it to the March 12 meeting. Membership list and information provided here is confidential. Membership in The Guild should not be construed as an indication of sexual orientation or preference.*



## 4th Gulf Coast Women's Festival

South of Jackson, MS

April 15-19, 1992

PERFORMERS: Diane Lindsay, Justina & Joyce, GCWF Choir, Pam Hall, Jamie Anderson, Lynn Thomas, Zoe Lewis, Carol & Bren, Colleen Kendall, Marla BB, Zanne, Sue Fink, Judith Kate Friedman; AUTHOR: Bonnie Morris; STORYTELLER: Louise Kessel, ACTRESS: Judith Sloan; WOMYN'S SPIRITUALITY: Denzil Sol & Moon Raven (Jo Wofford); 30+ WORKSHOPS; CRAFTSWOMEN; NETWORKING: Over 40s, Womyn of Color, Womyn with Disabilities, Rainbow Political Area, Harmony Haven, Gyrfest, Womyn in Recovery; SOUTHERN FOOD; DANCING; ASL Interpreted; CHILDCARE (boys 3-8); PASSOVER CELEBRATION; ACCESSIBILITY

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\$15,001-\$20,000	\$165	\$180	\$145	\$160	\$125	\$140	\$95	\$110
\$20,001-\$25,000	\$170	\$185	\$150	\$165	\$130	\$145	\$100	\$115
\$25,001-\$30,000	\$175	\$190	\$155	\$170	\$135	\$150	\$105	\$120
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**THE MADNESS OF LADY BRIGHT**  
*reviewed by Rita Boo*

The play, *The Madness of Lady Bright*, by Langford Wilson, broke the barriers of gay and lesbian theater when it opened on off-off Broadway many years ago. It was produced recently in Orlando by Act Out Theatre.

The actors, Herb Kelly, Debbie Barretta and Michael Helle did a wonderful job with their characters, bringing to life the heart and the soul of Lady Bright. My major concern is with the direction. One of the powers of the director is interpretation, and the decisions to make a play relevant by bringing it into the present, giving characters life. *The Madness of Lady Bright* is based on the loneliness and aging of a gay man. Like Lady Bright we all talk to ourselves at times, yell at old loves, question motives, wish to change the past. Creating characters out of those conversations takes a talented hand, but one must question the motives of giving those ghosts actual physical beings. The movement, the dialogue, the physical fondling of "girl" and "boy" detracted from the main character. It is this theater goer's opinion that too much attention was paid to the superfluous and not enough to the real.

*The Madness of Lady Bright* is not madness at all, just the internal conversations of a lonely individual. Making the character "mad" may have gone a step too far.

**Oppression Breeds Censorship**  
*by Hook*

During a recent discussion on the topic of censorship, I was visited by the thought that the general populace of this country is under the impression that what we label "censorship" is a negative activity. This fallacy may be well intentioned (after all, we are Americans, we can do whatever we want...), but I find it intriguing that some activities are deserving of this label and some are not.

For example, our society does not allow one to perform a myriad of verbal and physical actions based on the theory that it may bring harm to oneself or others. These activities are known as crimes and are punishable by law if proven. The controversy seems to come in where perceptions differ as to what exactly is or may be harmful to

any member of society. Who can be the judge of this?

In my very strong opinion, the KKK and strip clubs are examples of harmful facets of our society, yet they can legally organize, assemble, and propagate their beliefs. To stop them would be considered a violation of their Constitutional rights (censorship?)... but not 2 Live Crew, an example of a group which has been censored. This is not just a racial issue; it is sexual, emotional, and absolutely essential to the betterment of our race (the Human one).

How can our government (we, the people, as I heard it before) stop one negative activity yet let another exist and prosper? What is known as censorship should really be the attempt to abolish negative/harmful activities, thus suffocating long overdue White-Straight-Male-Holier-than-thou-Caveman-Supremist ideologies and theories about our peoples.

On an individual basis, if it promotes a negative view toward anyone else, ban it yourself. Unfortunately, we do not seem to be able to live in a "laissez-faire" system. I would love to see the day when there would be no need for censorship of any kind, but if we each take the responsibility for sweeping oppression off our own doorsteps, we are one attitude closer to forgetting the censorship argument.

I hope the community will support the Act Out Theatre and that we will see plays that address all facets of lesbian and gay life.

[Act Out Theatre, a gay and lesbian group, is looking for actors, technicians, and supporters. If you want more information about it, call 677-5407, or write PO Box 1626, Goldenrod, FL 32733-1626.]

*Rita is a graduate from the State University of New York. She holds a degree in Theater with an emphasis in directing.*

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## International Women's Day, March 8

by Stacia Lewis

This year, many women's communities throughout the world are celebrating International Women's Day with the theme, **500 Years of Resistance...Through Women's Eyes**. The theme is a response to the patriotic fervor surrounding the 500th anniversary of the "discovery," or invasion, of America-- depending upon whose point of view you take. Had the women living in the Americas known more about the culture of Columbus, would they have tied up his ship or would they have tied him to the mast and shipped him back home?

International Women's Day can be our opportunity to make the world remember what actually happened to those women in 1492...to Black women in 1592...to women healers and midwives in 1692...to Mexican women in 1792...and to Japanese, Chinese, and Filipina women in 1892.

It can also be an opportunity to honor and draw from the courage and groundwork these women laid in naming and resisting violence, exploitation, and demoralization.

**No One Deserves to Be Abused**  
*continued from page 1*  
recognizes gay and lesbian couples as family in a legal sense.

If your partner is physically abusive or threatens physical abuse to you, and you live in Orange County, you can come to **Room 248 of the old Courthouse (65 E. Central, Orlando)** Monday through Friday to obtain an injunction to either remove your partner from the residence or order them to stay away from the residence or order them to stay away, if they no longer live with you. The office phone numbers are **836-2001** and **836-2044**.

We can help you with information and counseling even if you haven't lived with your abuser or if you live in a different county. Our office is extremely nonjudgmental, that is, it is safe to be who you are and not change pronouns when you talk about your abuser.

**No one deserves to be abused.** Call us if you need help. In emergencies, call the Spouse Abuse hotline, **886-2856**, 24 hours a day. All our counselors have nonjudgmental attitudes, and help is available.

## Love Is Not Supposed To Hurt

I don't want to think that a woman would hurt a woman; hands that loved me soft could meet my jaw hard as steel.  
I don't want to think about this at all, can't believe the blood that throbs from my temple or her tears as she realizes what she has done and tries to make it better with her kiss.  
She's tried before, and it's not better. It gets worse each time she controls me with her power.  
I suspect this power covers fear.  
If I am totally under her control; if she can own me, she does not have to fear losing me.  
I wonder; if she could find herself, would she need to hold me prisoner to keep from losing me?  
I don't know, but I do know my job is to take care of me, and when I have left, whether she finds herself or not; to remember the steel as well as the softness.  
I reclaim my own power as I realize kisses do not excuse bruises, and love is not supposed to hurt.

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# She Speaks Out

by *Patty Sheehan*

Mike Tyson is guilty of rape. While this comes as no surprise to me, it does raise a troubling dilemma. I can't help but think about the similarities in this trial and the William Kennedy Smith trial. And I'm very puzzled by the different outcomes.

When I first heard of Smith's acquittal, I angrily accepted the fact that he'd bought his freedom. But Tyson also had ample financial resources. Tyson's lawyer used the same strategy as Smith's: that the woman had wanted sex and was spurned later. Both attorneys attacked the victims' reputations, a practice so deplorable it ought to be banned from all future rape trials. Both men insisted upon their innocence in the media with righteous indignation. But Mike Tyson is heading for jail, while Smith heads for a medical internship. Why?

There are some major differences in the victims' backgrounds, but that is irrelevant. A victim is a victim, period. Think of how ludicrous it would be if every victim of every crime were subjected to the vile treatment of rape victims. No one would ever want to come forward if their every past action were to be brought out in a criminal proceeding. Victims shouldn't have to prove their innocence. It's unfortunate that in the American legal system, criminals have more rights than their victims.

The other major difference was the defendants' education and cultural background. William Kennedy Smith was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and was taught with which

hand to retrieve it. He answered every question in court like he was supposed to. He wore cheap sports jackets to court and wore a pitiful look on his face. He was a rich kid with all the advantages, who didn't come across as one. Mike Tyson was born an underprivileged black youth. His opportunity came in boxing. He made a lot of money with his fists. But money doesn't buy common sense, and Tyson didn't have much as he came strolling into court to sign autographs dressed in expensive suits. There is a lot to be said for perceptions and image in a trial proceeding. This is unfortunate, as appearance has very little to do with one's guilt or innocence. Tyson looked like a swaggering bully.

I was worried about how a "not guilty" verdict in the Tyson trial would affect women coming forward to press charges when they are raped, especially on the heels of the Smith verdict. But this message is almost as bad as if Tyson were found not guilty. The issue here seems to be not whether a crime is committed, but whether the jury likes the defendant or not. In my opinion, both were guilty; both should have been sentenced to a prison term.

The verdicts are in, and it's just another indication of how unjust our judicial system is.

*Patty Sheehan is an artist and writer. A former political activist, Patty has turned in her picket sign for a word processor. Rather than change the world, she's content now to perhaps change a few perceptions or inspire some creative debate in the LCN Express.*

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# LCN Express

## Publication Information

LCN Express is a monthly publication for and by the Lesbian community of Orlando and the Central Florida area. We invite readers to submit articles, items of interest and announcements about women's groups and organizations. We welcome poems, political articles, social concerns, short stories, community questions and notices for upcoming events. **Deadline for submission of ads and articles is now the 15th of each month.**

Editorial length will be limited to 250 words and a phone number must accompany every article. Anonymity is acceptable, but a phone number is mandatory. Articles should be typed/neatly printed or preferably submitted on diskette, with word processing program specified.

Editorial policy is as follows: The views expressed in the LCN Express are not necessarily those of the LCN, the newsletter or its editors. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit all contributions for clarity, conciseness and length following consultation with the author, if possible.

It is, however, strongly recommended that caution be exercised to address an opinion, not to assault the author of an article/letter (or anyone else for that matter). *Thanks!*

*The LCN Express Editorial Staff: Barb Fallon, Cathy McElhinney, Jackie, JeanetteBaudouy, Becky Acuna, & Rachel Gardiner.*

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