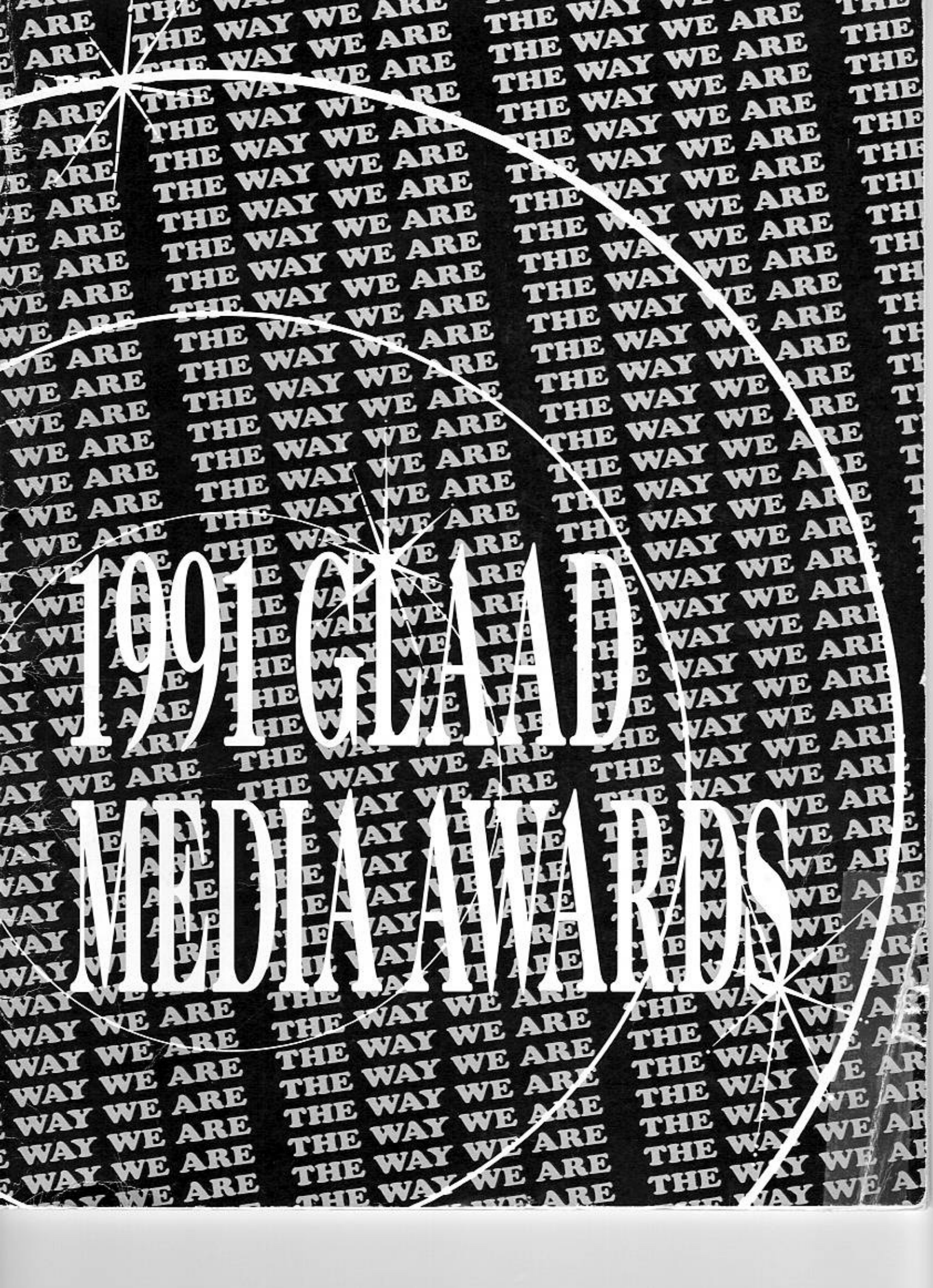

1991 GLAAD
MEDIA AWARDS
THE WAY WE ARE

WHEN YOU
IMPROVE THE
RECEPTION
FOR SOME
OF US, YOU
IMPROVE THE
RECEPTION
FOR ALL
OF US.

WE APPLAUD
LA LAW,
LIFESTORIES
AND ALL OF
TONIGHT'S
HONOREES.

NBC

WELCOME TO THE 1991 GLAAD MEDIA AWARDS

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1991, BEVERLY HILTON HOTEL

CO-PRESIDENTS' WELCOME



CO-PRESIDENT
JEHAN AGRAMA



CO-PRESIDENT
PETER NARDI

Welcome to the 1991 GLAAD Media Awards. Tonight we publicly congratulate the dedicated people in the media who this past year demonstrated creativity and courage by portraying lesbian and gay lives in positive and diverse ways. Their commitment to ending homophobia and defamation against lesbians and gay men is evident in their work and justly celebrated this evening. This event, however, is more than a celebration of positive lesbian and gay images in the media. It is also a commemoration of the emergence of the Los Angeles chapter of GLAAD in a few short years as a major voice in the gay and lesbian community. Through the dedication of our members who write those responsible for how we are depicted in the media, as well as through our ongoing meetings with media outlets, GLAAD has become an integral part of our community's effort to create a society free from defamation and discrimination.

Tonight's event is an award to all of us, signifying how quickly we have made our presence known, how strong our feelings are and how powerfully we can effect change. GLAAD is here celebrating the work all of us have done to end defamation, not just to celebrate the work of those who deservedly receive their awards tonight.

In these last few years, GLAAD's goals have become well known: to counter stereotypes and misinformation about lesbians and gay men and to promote the fullest possible understanding of the diversity of lesbian and gay lives. Your attendance tonight is a tribute to these goals and a sign of support for our efforts to continue our work forcefully. As we honor the outstanding portrayals of gay men and lesbians in film, television, music and print, know that you share in these awards for your active participation in making our goals a reality.

We thank you for your involvement and look forward to another year of continued commitment and activism. We invite you to celebrate with us this evening in our united efforts to encourage a balanced portrayal of our lives in the media and to put an end to defamation and discrimination against lesbians and gay men. The applause tonight is also for you!

Jehan Agrama and Peter Nardi

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S WELCOME



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RICHARD JENNINGS

As GLAAD/LA's Executive Director, I am extremely proud of the dedicated work and amazing accomplishments of GLAAD's talented volunteers and supporters. What GLAAD has achieved through their efforts in a short period of time has exceeded my dreams: credibility with the media and other community organizations, creation of a vital information network to monitor and respond to media attacks on lesbians and gay men, and heightened attention to the damaging effect on society of media stereotypes and misinformation. When one realizes that much of this work was accomplished with very little funding, in the face of well-financed efforts by the religious right to eliminate positive gay and lesbian programming, GLAAD's accomplishments are nothing short of miraculous. That is why the event in which we are joined tonight is, on top of everything else, a joyous culmination and celebration of a truly important achievement on the part of the entire lesbian and gay community in Southern California.

Thanks to the men and women of GLAAD in Los Angeles and elsewhere, our community now has a strong and effective voice with which to counter the misinformation and ignorance which too often has led to hurtful portrayals and inaccurate coverage. Through GLAAD's media watchdog efforts, lesbians and gay men have taken charge of the way we are portrayed and reported in the media. By becoming an active part of the process by which news is reported and entertainment created, GLAAD and its principles of accuracy and fairness promise to benefit not only lesbians and gay men, but our entire society, which depends on the media to inform, move and transform us.

On behalf of everyone whose efforts have helped shape GLAAD into a potent force for enlightenment and change in our world, I applaud all who have joined us for the first bicoastal gay and lesbian national media awards presentation. My special thanks and congratulations go to Michael Shere and the other volunteers responsible for producing this event, and to our Media Award winners for helping to set an illustrious example that we hope others in the media will soon follow.

Richard Jennings

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ABOUT GLAAD AND THE 1991 GLAAD MEDIA AWARDS

GLAAD/LA PROFILE

Founded in 1985, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is dedicated to countering stereotypes and misinformation about lesbians and gay men, and to promoting the fullest possible understanding of the breadth and diversity of lesbian and gay lives. GLAAD pursues these goals by organizing grassroots responses to public expressions of bigotry and by working with the media to promote accurate coverage of issues that concern the lesbian and gay community. The nationwide GLAAD network includes chapters in over a dozen cities.

The Los Angeles chapter of GLAAD (GLAAD/LA), incorporated in October 1988, was the first local chapter formed after the group began in New York City. Like the other chapters, GLAAD/LA deals with defamation by local news and other media. In addition, on behalf of the national GLAAD movement, GLAAD/LA bears primary responsibility for the national entertainment industry based in Southern California.

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THE 1991 GLAAD MEDIA AWARDS

The GLAAD Media Awards honor outstanding portrayals of lesbians and gay men in film, television and the recording industry, and accurate and enlightening coverage of the lesbian and gay community by the news and print media. This year's award ceremonies are bicoastal, with GLAAD/New York hosting a simultaneous presentation to East Coast-based awardees at Windows on the World in New York City.

Our honorees this evening were determined jointly by GLAAD nominations committees in Los Angeles and New York, based on nominations submitted by our members nationwide, as well as by members of the news media and the entertainment industry.

MEDIA AWARD RECIPIENTS

SPECIAL AWARD

The Late Stephen F. Kolzak

VISIBILITY AWARDS

Dr. Virginia Uribe

Randy Shilts

TELEVISION AWARDS

"Doctor, Doctor"
OUTSTANDING COMEDY SERIES

"L.A. Law"
OUTSTANDING DRAMATIC SERIES

"Designing Women" episode: "Suzanne Goes Looking for a Friend"
OUTSTANDING COMEDY EPISODE

"Lifestories" episode: "Steve Burdick"
OUTSTANDING DRAMATIC EPISODE

"Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit"
OUTSTANDING TELEVISION FEATURE

ABC's "World News Tonight"
OUTSTANDING NATIONAL NEWS COVERAGE*

MOTION PICTURE AWARDS

"Longtime Companion"
OUTSTANDING FEATURE FILM

"The Handmaid's Tale"
OUTSTANDING FEATURE FILM

PRINT AWARDS

Howard Rosenberg
Los Angeles Times
OUTSTANDING NATIONALLY SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

Richard Cohen
Washington Post
OUTSTANDING NATIONAL NEWS COLUMNIST*

Melinda Voss, Editor, "Gay Iowa: The Untold Story"
Des Moines Register
OUTSTANDING NEWSPAPER SERIES*

USA Today
OUTSTANDING NATIONAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE*

Alvin F. Poussaint, MD
"An Honest Look at Black Gay Men and Lesbians"
Ebony
OUTSTANDING FEATURE ARTICLE*

William Henry III
Time
OUTSTANDING FEATURE WRITER*

Jane Gross
The New York Times
OUTSTANDING NATIONAL NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Victor Zonana
Los Angeles Times
OUTSTANDING LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE

Robin Podolsky and Doug Sadownick
LA Weekly
OUTSTANDING WEEKLY NEWS COVERAGE

RADIO AWARDS

National Public Radio
OUTSTANDING NATIONAL RADIO COVERAGE*

KPFK-FM
OUTSTANDING LOCAL RADIO COVERAGE

THEATER

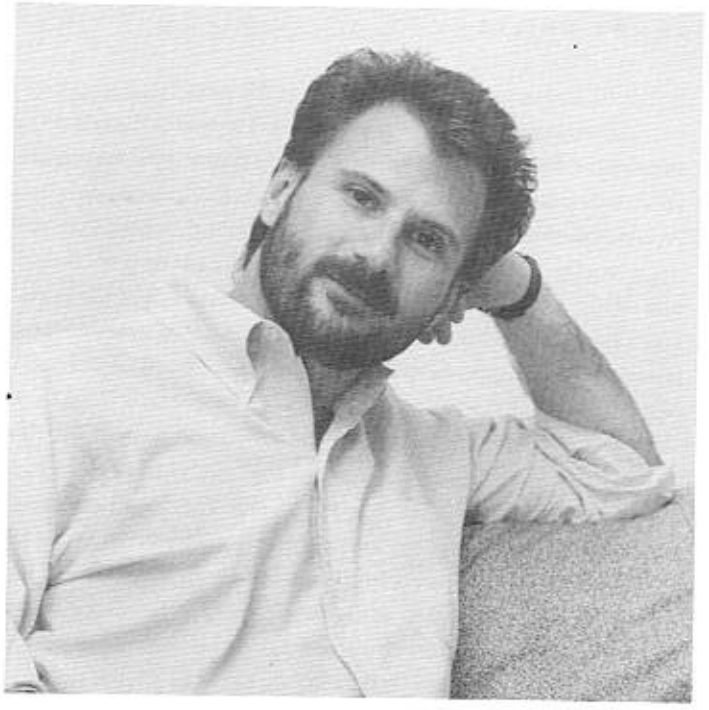
Celebration Theatre
OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO LESBIAN AND GAY THEATER

MUSIC

"Two Nice Girls"
OUTSTANDING RECORDINGS FEATURING POSITIVE IMAGES

(denotes awards being presented at concurrent ceremony in New York City)*

TRIBUTES TO THE 1991 GLAAD MEDIA AWARD WINNERS



STEPHEN F. KOLZAK
1953-1990

"It's not OK to be gay in Hollywood. Gay men experience the increase in homophobia that is the result of the AIDS epidemic just as much in Hollywood as elsewhere. . . . Gay people and lesbian people are the guests of a hostile host community."

—Stephen Kolzak, in the Oct. 22, 1988, issue of TV Guide

In no small way the work of Stephen Kolzak impacted the life of every American. In his dozen years of work he achieved a powerful and envied position in the world of television. A 1976 Harvard graduate, he rose quickly in Hollywood to find and develop many of today's hottest stars. At one point, 17 series were concurrently airing that Stephen played a role in casting, including "Cheers," "Who's the Boss?" "Starsky & Hutch," "The Jeffersons," "The Facts of Life" and "Married . . . With Children." A staggering accomplishment for anyone, let alone a man battling AIDS. He never stopped fighting. He fought homophobia and AIDS-phobia at every turn. He was always upfront.

Tonight's tribute to Stephen would have made him proud. A pride not of ego but in knowing that his efforts in every arena helped make people aware. In the last three years of his young life, after resigning as a senior vice-president of talent and casting at Columbia Pictures Television, Stephen focused his indignation on the virus that has taken so many other young lives. Whether it was attending ACT UP zaps with his lover, Paul, or struggling with the loss of those in his own support group, Stephen stayed true to course, focused.

Stephen was among Hollywood's first executives to come out of the closet, disclosing in a groundbreaking 1988 *TV Guide* article about homophobia and discrimination in Hollywood that he was gay and that he had AIDS. He appeared on local television programs around the country and was a panelist for a seminar for studio heads on AIDS in the workplace. Twice Stephen engaged in civil disobedience. Once he was arrested at the FDA in a protest demanding trial release of new and hopeful drugs. The other arrest was at the March on Washington in October 1987.

Determined to make a statement of consequence, Stephen joined over 500 other gays and lesbians on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court and was arrested for trespassing. The purpose was to protest the Supreme Court's ruling against the gay community in *Bowers v. Hardwick*. And of all of those arrested, who should appear in the banner photo in *USA Today*? Stephen, naturally—defiant, proud and grinning from ear-to-ear, wearing a headband emblazoned "PWA." He was never one to do things halfway.

Tonight GLAAD inaugurates the Stephen F. Kolzak Award, to be presented annually to an openly gay or lesbian individual in the entertainment industry for outstanding work in combating homophobia and media stereotypes. In so doing, we pledge to Stephen that his legacy of courage and commitment will live on, serving as a model for all of us.

—David Reid



DR. VIRGINIA URIBE

Dear Gina:

I don't know if I've ever told you this, but the first time I saw you was on television in my living room several years ago. Someone had brought a cassette about Project 10. I could not believe that there was a counseling program for lesbian and gay students to help them improve their self esteem and stay in school and off drugs, and that it was only a few blocks away from my home. You had been teaching science at Fairfax High for close to 30 years and had founded this program in 1984 as a response to the increased incidents of harrassment of gay students. Not only were you articulate, intelligent, compassionate and dedicated, but you were also a grandma and a LESBIAN. I was filled with awe.

Role models are rare enough these days and visible gay and lesbian ones are even scarcer. I had been looking for them in books, film, newspapers; trying to find someone to identify with, who understood how I felt and who cared enough to be open. I had not been part of the gay community, having created a safe cocoon of my own. Seeing you on television that day opened a door for me. It gave me such courage to see you being so strong and open. It filled me with hope knowing there was someone out there who was actively challenging the myths and stereotypes. You made me want to join you.

By appearing on national talk shows and news programs and by lecturing across the country, you have made all of us your students. Your presence has been a beacon and your vision an inspiration. Our community is blessed to have you and I am honored to know you and to be working with you for a common cause.

—Jehan Agrama



RANDY SHILTS

Randy Shilts has profoundly affected my life as a gay activist. Like so many young people growing up in small towns in the late 70's and early 80's, I felt alone and isolated, and determined early in my life to work for the end of discrimination against lesbians and gays. Reading was one of my only outlets, and finding authors to feed my insatiable appetite for knowledge became a major preoccupation. It was natural then, that when *And the Band Played On* came out, I bought it instantly and read it. I had always been affected by books about the oppression of lesbians and gays, but Shilts's book was different.

At first, it made me angry; so angry, in fact, that I had to put it down — many times. Then, I was saddened. Every time another wonderful person died, their lives so poignantly rendered, I cried. I also had feelings of despair. How could we continue in the face of so much impossibility? But by the time I finished the book, I felt empowered. Encountering the emotions the book made me face, I realized that only through facing the true facts, acknowledging the frustration, and resolving to continue struggling for equality could I become the person I wanted to be. My determination to be a part of the movement was powerfully reinforced.

Randy Shilts's influence, however, doesn't stop with *And the Band Played On*. Through his undaunted efforts to document the AIDS epidemic from its beginning, he has gained nationwide exposure. The national media has recognized his impressive credentials and acknowledged his expertise, leading to numerous appearances on national television shows, including "60 Minutes" and "Nightline." And he continues work on his latest book, *Conduct Unbecoming: Politics, Prejudice and Homosexuality in the U.S. Military*, scheduled for publication in 1992.

It is through Randy Shilts's exceptionally articulate voice that much of America is coming to learn about gays and lesbians, including the youth who are the future of this movement. Thank you, Mr. Shilts, and please, keep up the good work.

—Chris Fowler



"DOCTOR, DOCTOR"

"Doctor, Doctor" was the only current series with an on-going gay character on television this past season. Tony Carreiro's character, Richard Stratford, shows Hollywood how a gay character can be comfortably and creatively integrated into a weekly comedy series. "Doctor, Doctor" has done it with style, wit and a great deal of affection.

In the episode in which Richard had to confront his father about his homosexuality, the feelings, the actions and the poignancy were authentic. We related to that show on a very deep and heartfelt level. Show after show, we have been treated to events of recognition and reality that provided so much more than laughs. We see ourselves.

Every Thursday night—until the show's recent hiatus—we could look forward to comedic hi-jinks performed by an incredibly talented cast backed up by some of the best writing and sensibilities in Hollywood. I know we all look forward to the series returning to CBS in the near future.

—Dr. Sylvia Rhue



"L.A. LAW"

In this homogenized era where intolerance is the drink of choice, few primetime television shows have the courage to venture into the realm of the "controversial" and fewer still are heroic enough to enter the militarized zone of gay and lesbian issues without relying on stereotypes and pat answers. And then there is "L.A. Law."

There is nothing like it on the air. For the past five years, it has consistently explored our issues in a thorough, sensitive and intelligent manner. In several powerful episodes this season, dealing with AIDS, gay marriages and outing, "L.A. Law" has continued its tradition of excellence. Especially impressive is that the producers and writers seem to understand that these issues are intertwined and that, in exploring them, they must confront a variety of other concerns like gay teen suicide, gay bashing, government neglect and a community under siege. Questions lead to other questions. Like life. Our lives.

Insightful, thought-provoking and unflinching, these episodes have sympathetically rendered our struggle to an audience of millions.

—Robert Scheps



"DESIGNING WOMEN"

"Designing Women" brings together a mix of talent and social consciousness that keeps the show high on the list of favorites for the general population and for lesbians and gay men in particular. It is the story of five people who are family and friends, working together and making their way in a patriarchal world, with a decidedly feminist sensibility.

In "Suzanne Goes Looking For a Friend," we saw issues of the closet, homophobia, friendships, and misunderstandings all come together in one of the funniest shows ever produced. This episode showed that there is more than enough material produced by homophobic attitudes to make people laugh and learn at the same time. When Suzanne mistakes her friend's "coming out" as her emergence into society at a debutante ball, the humorous confusions about her life bring the audience to a fuller understanding of what it means to be a lesbian in today's world.

"Designing Women" has the winning formula and we salute the talent, the creativity and the work of producers Harry Thomason and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, the writers, directors and the outstanding cast: Delta Burke, Dixie Carter, Annie Potts, Jean Smart and Meshach Taylor.

—Dr. Sylvia Rhue



D.W. MOFFIT AS 'STEVE BURDICK'

"LIFESTORIES"

As the parents of a 28-year-old gay man, we responded to the "Steve Burdick" episode of "Lifestories" in a very special way. We felt the pain of a news anchorman's struggle to face the world as he really is and we experienced the barriers put in his way by his employers, his father, self-righteous political leaders, and those with narrow religious attitudes. Watching his lover die from AIDS, and confronting his own vulnerability, Steve finally came to terms with himself. With the exception of Barbara, the news director, everyone in station management was opposed to letting Steve acknowledge his homosexuality.

We felt the pain of someone living in that kind of isolation. Hiding from his colleagues, from his parents and from his TV audience, Steve could not get medical help without feeling threatened. When the death of his lover pushed him beyond his ability to keep it all inside, he spontaneously "came out" during a newscast. With the strong support of Barbara, he was able to continue on the air, although station management remained intimidated by the "Koppelmeyer 'Family Values'" folks.

The emotions evoked in both of us included anger at the indifference and ignorance of influential people in the guise of moral values; sadness, to see someone having to hide one's real self; and happiness, knowing that our son would not have to confront rejecting parents. The message is that gay men and lesbians, their families and their friends, are not alone. We can counteract fear and ignorance with courage and perseverance. The TV audience's response to Steve is what kept him on the air, and this is an important message for GLAAD supporters.

—Lois and Arnold Newdorf

"ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT"

"It is not possible to change anything until you understand the substance you wish to change. Of course people mutilate and modify, but these are fallen powers, and to change something you do not understand is the true nature of evil."

—Jeanette Winterson, Oranges are Not the Only Fruit

I was slightly anxious and skeptical when I went to see last year's Out On Film screening of "Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit," based on the autobiographical novel by Jeanette Winterson and directed by Beeban Kidron.

Not having read the book, all I knew from the program was that it would be 160 minutes (too long), transferred from television to the big screen (sound problems), and British (difficult dialects). It was sold out, they promised it was going to be "a powerful and thoroughly engaging lesbian film," and I had a ticket. With the scarcity of films by and about lesbians I was not going to quibble, but I was going to go alone; I had been disillusioned too many times before.

It was one hundred and sixty minutes of pure bliss. I felt completely drawn into Jess's story of growing up in a strict evangelical household and turning, against all odds, into a strong-willed, intelligent, powerful lesbian with a wonderful sense of humor and warmth.

There were no apologies, no cheap shots, no shame. Just a proud celebration of life, growing up and trusting that one knows what is right for oneself. I wish I had brought someone along to enjoy the pleasure.

—Dvora Fried



MARK LAMOS AND BRUCE DAVISON IN "LONGTIME COMPANION"

"LONGTIME COMPANION"

One could distinctly hear a collective sigh of relief when "Longtime Companion" came out. Finally, a film about AIDS. For their plucky determination and fair amount of nerve, all those who worked on getting the film out deserve our thanks and recognition. Emerging as a first from the independent sector of Hollywood, "Longtime Companion" is truly a landmark.

As one who came of age in New York in the late '70's and early '80's, I felt the film's characters speak to me of a bygone era. That group of gay male Manhattanites, brimming with social and economic ease, somehow represented a theretofore unheard of acceptance. I was neither Willy, the quiet and terrified gym instructor, nor was I Fuzzy, the entertainment attorney who gradually progresses toward AIDS activism. What did ring true for me, however, was how the fine ensemble acting portrayed the ten-year history of the epidemic from its early stages on, bringing to life some of the range in personal and emotional devastation that the disease has left with us.

Charting new terrain for a somewhat wide-spread audience, "Longtime Companion" also seems to open up new possibilities for the media's depiction of AIDS. As director of the Los Angeles International Gay & Lesbian Film & Video Festival, I have noticed a distinct increase in independent productions dealing with the epidemic and a pitiful lack of Hollywood pictures ready to take on this difficult subject over the last couple of years.

"Longtime Companion" is then truly a breakthrough. And that special status will continue to have resonance when the full range of PWAs and their stories are brought to the screen. Prisoners, people of color, IV drug users, women, children, lesbian, gay and non-gay, all have a multitude of AIDS experiences that seek the light of our TV or movie screens. Quietly yet powerfully, the pioneers of "Longtime Companion" have broken ground for those stories yet to come.

—Larry Horne



ELIZABETH McGOVERN AS "MOIRA"

"THE HANDMAID'S TALE"

"Once upon a time in the recent future, a country went wrong."

The armed fist of a fascist patriarchy has debased human sexuality to the sole function of reproduction, affixing the value of a woman to her ability to bear children. Herded by their own sisters, fertile women are distributed to the upper echelon to serve as surrogate breeders for infertile wives. Amidst the sheep who succumb to the new order stands a maverick. She is Moira: a lesbian arrested for "gender treachery."

Moira is an empowering image for lesbians. She has the courage to go against her oppressors and maintain her lesbianism. She has the strength and fortitude to survive the wrath of a society gone awry and the wisdom to remain levelheaded and calm in spite of the surrounding insanity. Her compassion leads her to protect those who are weaker, and her cunning leads her towards freedom. I was impassioned by Elizabeth McGovern's portrayal and impressed by Margaret Atwood's positive creation of her. What a relief and a pleasure it was to see a lesbian depicted in a way that made me proud to have her as a sister.

—Bergen Williams



HOWARD ROSENBERG

1990 was a big year for stories concerning gays and lesbians on television: ABC pulled from its summer reruns an episode of "thirtysomething" that included two gay characters in a bedroom scene; Burger King, under attack from Donald Wildmon's CLeaR-TV, took out an ad trumpeting the company's support for "traditional family values"; and NBC pulled from its schedule a moving episode of "Lifestories," about a gay newscaster with AIDS, seemingly due to fear that it might, in turn, provoke the wrath of the religious right. Big stories all.

And, interestingly, all were first reported by Howard Rosenberg.

Rosenberg's sensitive and accurate reporting raises questions about what is right and wrong, as well as potentially dangerous, in current television programming. A former Pulitzer prize winner, Rosenberg is a highly respected commentator on the entertainment industry, as well as an eminently readable columnist. While his articles appear locally in the *Los Angeles Times*, his insightful analyses are syndicated in newspapers across the nation, including the *Washington Post*.

When it comes to issues affecting the lesbian and gay community, Rosenberg is particularly vocal in his beliefs. Concerning ABC's refusal to rerun the "thirtysomething" episode, he commented that ABC was, "in bed with the narrow-minded ignoramuses who believe that this plausible, intelligent and sensitive depiction of gays makes 'thirtysomething' dirtysomething." These are the insightful and understanding words of a friend and supporter. When that friend happens also to be a highly esteemed journalist and opinion leader, we are all the more proud and grateful.

—Chris Fowler



PHOTOGRAPH: JON GILBERT FOX

VICTOR ZONANA

Victor Zonana brought depth and humanity to the *Los Angeles Times'* coverage of AIDS. With stories examining such delicate issues as the "survivor's guilt" experienced by HIV-negative gay men and striking profiles of key figures such as AIDS activists Michael Callen and Martin Delaney, Zonana added a dimension that got beyond simple statistics and evoked the human toll of the epidemic. He was able to broaden his AIDS assignment to write about such gay and lesbian institutions as GLAAD, the OUT/Write Conference and various civil rights and political groups.

But Zonana is more than simply a good reporter working on a powerful story. He originated the beat itself, proposing to *Times* editor Shelby Coffey III in 1988 that he be detached from his regular duties as a San Francisco-based business writer to cover the epidemic that was devastating his community. In doing so, Zonana not only led the way in improving the AIDS coverage of one of the nation's top newspapers, he also inspired lesbian and gay journalists at the *Times*—at a time when no reporters or editors there were out of the closet—to become more open.

Zonana, 37, had joined the *Times* in 1985 as a business writer following 10 years as a reporter at the *Wall Street Journal*, where he worked in the Philadelphia and San Francisco bureaus. In February of this year, after spending more than two years covering AIDS, he returned to business writing and was assigned to the *Times'* bureau in New York. He is currently a member of the steering committee of the new National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association.

—Deborah Bergman

JANE GROSS

Jane Gross, one of *The New York Times'* leading lights, has long demonstrated a commitment to fair and accurate coverage of the lesbian and gay movement. Last year Ms. Gross wrote a moving series of investigative articles on the military's exclusion of gay men and lesbians, including: "For Gay Soldiers and Sailors, Lives of Secrecy and Despair" (April 10, 1990); "ROTC Under Siege for Ousting Homosexuals" (May 6, 1990); and "Navy Is Urged to Root Out Lesbians Despite Abilities" (Sept. 2, 1990).

Her reporting informs America about injustices many would prefer to ignore.

—Steve Miller, GLAAD/NY

TWO NICE GIRLS

Openly lesbian and gay recording artists are, unfortunately, a rare breed. Rarer still are those who are not only talented and out, but who also deal with being gay in their lyrics. That's why I love the women of "Two Nice Girls"—Gretchen Phillips, Kathy Korniloff, Pam Barger and Meg Hentges. They are strong musicians, talented singers and clever writers who, to top it all off, are completely out and proud of it.

The group's biggest hit so far is the satirical anthem "I Spent My Last $10.00 (on Birth Control & Beer)," the refrain to which is "life was so much simpler when I was sober and queer." This country & western-flavored tune—first released in '89, followed by a live version on last year's "Like a Version"—somehow manages to turn heterosexism on its head with an infectious chorus and breathtaking lightheartness. Among the lyrics: "When I was a young girl/ Like normal girls do/I looked to a woman's love/To help get me through/I never needed any more/Than a feminine touch/I hated the thought of kissing a man/It really was too much." My single favorite line: "There're certain thrills/That lesbian love/Simply cannot supply/Like paying for abortions/From sperm gone awry."

The group is equally humorous and pointed in interviews, as in the following recent statement by Gretchen Phillips: "The goal, obviously, is to become a famous lesbian band that never compromises what we want to say and how we want to play. I am not going to change—I want the world to change. Love is love is love, so don't tell me how to live." There is certainly no compromise in the lyrics to a cut on their latest CD, "chloe liked olivia"—it's called "The Queer Song."

Although the media is my current work, music is my passion. I think the music these "girls" make—in a diverse range of styles, featuring varied instrumentation and impeccable vocal harmonies—is fabulous. And, as a politico, I am completely in awe of those who can say it with wit and music.

—Richard Jennings

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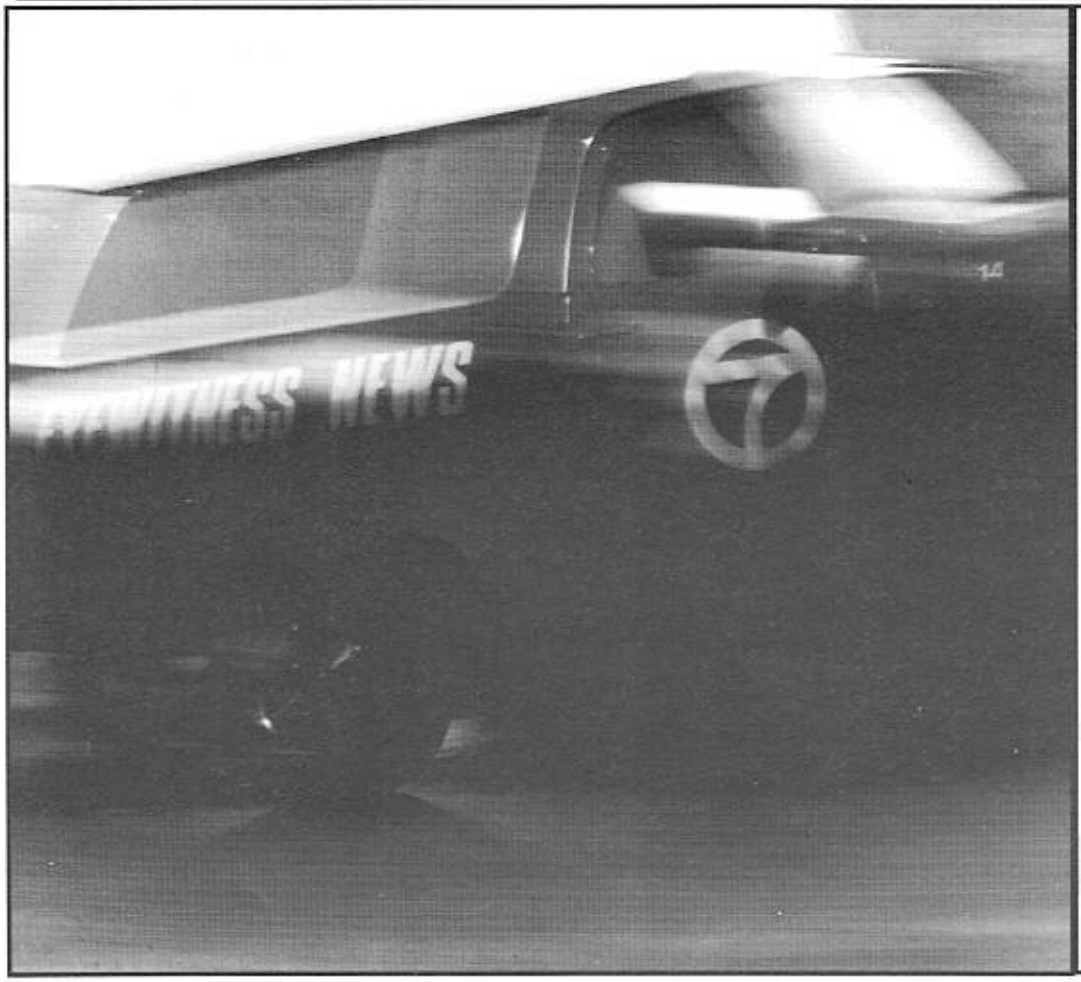
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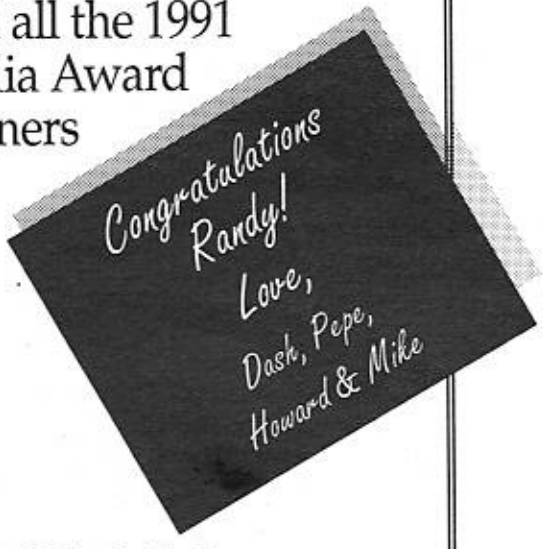
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