

Harrigan and Baker Challenge the State

continued from front page

Peter: I don't think we have anything to lose as a gay and lesbian community. I only think we have things to gain by going through a process like this.

OITM: Was it a difficult decision to take this on?

Stan: I think we had differing reactions. I grew up in a family where there was a lot of political and social action. So to me, taking on a cause felt fairly normal. On the other hand, we both needed to weigh the response we'd get in our workplaces and from our families. But it felt like a natural thing and like the right thing to do, as though it had really come our way, almost by fate, and I think we both feel like our coming together has elements of fate as well. There was an awful lot to think about it. I wouldn't call it a difficult process, but it was a complex process.

OITM: What is your role in the case?

Peter: We're the faces, the neighbors, the citizens. Part of our job is to let people into our lives to the extent that we're comfortable with that so they'll see the value and the averageness of us, sort of a wonderful averageness. So maybe they'll recognize patterns or elements of our relationship that they have in theirs.

Stan: In a way, I think we belong to the community in a different way. I really want to honor that, but I also want to protect my own time and space....Already in the last week since the [July 23] press conference, we've done a variety of interviews, gone to P-town to speak at a fundraiser, talked to you. I think our role is to be available as speakers

and as faces and as mouth-pieces for this.

Peter: So often, when people hear about gay people, it's about Andrew Cunanan or Jeffrey Dahmer, or they're seeing the extremes in the community. They're not seeing the typical parts of the community, so I think that's part of what we bring to it.

OITM: That's a fine line too — the whole question of what obligation we have to present a "normal" image. What if the interviewers came and you did have slings on the ceiling or dressed in drag?

Stan: I think that's a ticklish area, and I want to make it very clear that I see this as adding to diversity, not putting a strait jacket around anybody in the GLBT community, how they act or what they have to do. What I think it does do is that it provides an anchor that people in the straight community can see us from, that I think will increase their ability to see the whole rainbow.

OITM: How do you respond to some of the criticisms within the GLBTQ community of the marriage debate — for example, that we should be looking at relationships, at domestic partnership, not at marriage?

Stan: For me it's an issue of choice. We're creating a choice and dramatically pointing out an inequality in our society. Plus, I think domestic partnership has been a good movement, but it's still separate but equal. Back in the struggle for integration, when schools were segregated, one of the solutions that was put forth was "separate but equal." I think separate but equal is not equal. I think it is saying stay in your place. So I think that true marriage, legal marriage, is equal.

Peter: I think that everything that every group in the gay and lesbian community is working toward has some kind of connection or base in acceptance and respect. There are lots of

different ways society can say "we accept you." Marriage is one of them. But I think even though different people and different groups in the community are working toward different goals, anything that reduces homophobia and increases our recognition and our safety is a worthy thing.

OITM: Do you think the issue is different for male couples than for female couples, given that some of the criticism is on marriage as a patriarchal institution?

Peter: I don't know. I can't speak for women. The two other couples in the suit are women. I know that it's important for them to pursue the same legal issues.

Stan: I think that there were many more women who wanted to be part of the suit than men.

Peter: The President and a lot of the leaders of the [Freedom to Marry] Task Force are women. So I know that there are lots of women who directly support the idea and this particular case.

Stan: I also think there are other patriarchal institutions around. I think voting is a patriarchal institution.

OITM: How do you mean that?

Stan: I think that voting was something that originally only men got to do; most politicians are male; most of the people in our political power structure are male. Outside of some anarchists, I don't hear people saying we shouldn't be changing voting to become a more equal thing that includes all races and all sexes and that produces a political system that is more equal. In the same way, I don't see marriage as a static thing. Marriage is ever-evolving. It used to be that when men married women, women lost their rights. That got challenged; that's been

MEET THE PLAINTIFFS, p10

Legal / financial services

BETH ROBINSON LANGROCK SPERRY & WOOL

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
15 SOUTH PLEASANT STREET
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT
05753

Burlington Office:
275 College Street
Burlington, Vermont 05402
802-864-0217

Area Code: 802
Telephone: 388-6356
FAX#: 388-6149

BLACKWOOD AND KRAYNAK P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Eileen M. Blackwood
Pamela Kraynak

• Employment law
• Education law
• Wills, Relationship Contracts
• Commercial & Residential Real Estate
• Small Business

131 Main Street
P.O. Box 875
Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 863-2517

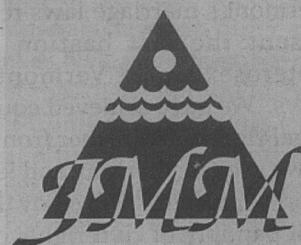
SUSAN M. MURRAY

LANGROCK SPERRY & WOOL

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
15 SOUTH PLEASANT STREET
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT
05753

BURLINGTON OFFICE:
275 COLLEGE STREET
BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05402
802-864-0217

AREA CODE: 802
TELEPHONE: 388-6356
HOME PHONE: 877-3165
FAX #: 388-6149



Julie M. Miller
Certified Public Accountant

Tax & Accounting Services

Browns Trace Building
P.O. Box 910
Richmond, VT 05477

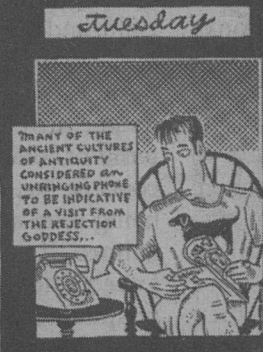
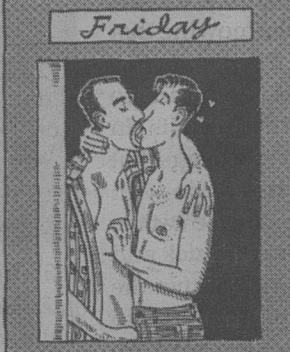
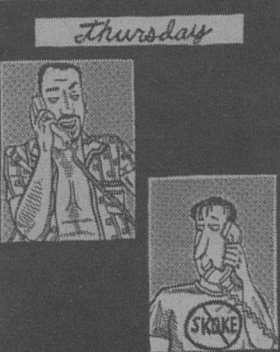
802-434-6466 TEL
802-434-6465 FAX

Support the businesses
who support us.

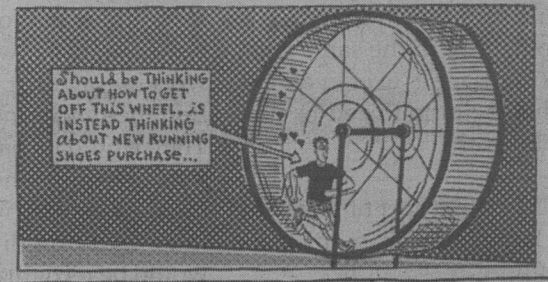
The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green

BY ERIC ORNER

Rejection Ain't Pretty



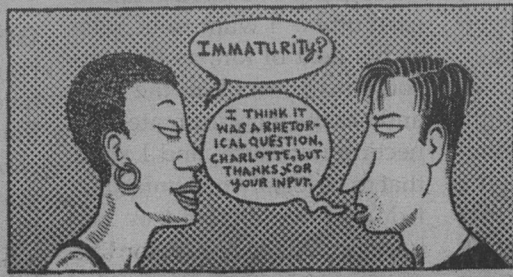
...DESPITE YOUR KNOWING *way* BETTER, here YOU ARE BACK ON THE I-LIKE-HIM-BETTER-THAN-HE-LIKES-ME GERBIL WHEEL...



... AND DESPITE ALL OF YOUR INTELLECTUALIZING, THE SUPPORT OF YOUR FRIENDS AND THE EXPLANATION OF ZOLNA, YOUR THERAPIST, IT STILL HURTS..



WHAT IS IT ABOUT YOU THAT MAKES YOU IGNORE EVERYTHING LAID AT YOUR FEET, MAKES YOU COVET ONLY WHAT'S UNAVAILABLE?



MAYBE YOU'LL BUY A GUITAR, SCRIBBLE DOWN ALL THE PATHETIC, TEAR-JERKING THOUGHTS YOU'VE BEEN THINKING, AND MOVE TO NASHVILLE TO RECORD COUNTRY WESTERN CDs..

