

## South Side bank, leasing agent settle with HBHC

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, representing Howard Brown Health Center, has announced a settlement of a discrimination complaint against a South Side bank and its leasing agent. HBHC told the Commission on Human Relations that it was repeatedly thwarted in its attempts to lease space because of anti-gay and anti-HIV bias.

HBHC will receive an undisclosed sum to settle the case.

The complaint alleged that HBHC spoke with Aegis in attempts to rent space in the Hyde Park Bank Building, for its Harambee Center. The complaint alleged Aegis refused to go forward with negotiations, fearing HBHC's services were "problematic" and could drive away present and future tenants. Aegis countered that they did offer space and that HBHC did not follow up. They settled to avoid costly litigation.

## World AIDS Day

There are dozens of World AIDS Day events Dec. 1—see the calendar for a listing.

A nationwide program, "The Black Church Speaks! AIDS: Be Knowledgeable," will be broadcast on satellite from New York. In Chicago, the event is 5 p.m., St. James United Methodist Church, 4611 S. Ellis. The New York-based event will feature Dr. Joycelyn Elders, Rev. Jeremiah Wright, senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, and gospel by Vanessa Bell Armstrong.

## Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa was created in 1966, by Dr. Maulana Karenga. Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26 thru January 1. Adodi will have a Kwanzaa celebration on Dec. 26, call (312) 458-9584. The seven principles are called *Nguzo Saba*. Each day of Kwanzaa one principle is celebrated.

The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa are:

1. Umoja - which means Unity
2. Kujichagulia - Self-Determination.
3. Ujima - Collective Work and Responsibility.
4. Ujamaa - Co-operative Economics.
5. Nia - Purpose.
6. Kuumba - Creativity.
7. Imani -Faithful.

## Imani Umoja Gospel explosion

Imani Umoja of Sinai Family Health Centers, and Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, present Gospel Explosion! Dec. 11 at the Graham Taylor Chapel, 5757 S. University, and it's free.

Genesis Connection "GEE CEE," a Christian eight-member male vocal ensemble, performs. Call [REDACTED]

## Trans attacked

An African American trans youth, who had been attacked by two assailants with a broken bottle, was further demeaned by an officer from the Oakland, Calif., police department who responded to the incident, says the Human Rights Campaign.

According to several reports, the young African American transgender woman was assaulted Nov. 13. Following the attack, the officer implied the victim and her friends were partially responsible for the attack because they were standing on the wrong corner. He proceeded to complain about the paperwork he had to complete regarding the attack. The following evening, more than 1,500 people marched in front of the Oakland Police Dept. in response to the officer's treatment. The march took place during the 12th Creating Change Conference, an event sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

## WORLD REPORT Zimbabwean gays seek protection

Members of the group Gays



Chef Tania's "Feed A Family" was at Bernice's Twilight Zone. From left: Rev. Bobbi Housley, Chef Tania and Brenda, usher at Church of the Open Door. Photo by Jean Young

and Lesbians of Zimbabwe testified before the nation's Constitutional Commission Oct. 24 seeking a ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation in the country's new constitution.

Some commissioners shouted "Satanists!" as the GALZ members spoke but Commission Chairman Justice Chidyusiku ruled that gays were allowed to make their presentation.

"What I want to say is that it is possible to be Black, gay and Zimbabwean," testified Chesterfield Samba, 24. "People should stop equating us with Satanists as I heard some of you shouting. A sexual orientation clause should be included in the constitution not to make us a special group but as acknowledgement [that] we are discriminated against and live in fear of being victimized by society."

## U.S. denounces Museveni

The U.S. State Department Oct. 15 denounced Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's Sept. 27 announcement that the nation's homosexuals will be arrested for "abominable acts."

Museveni said: "I have told the CID [Criminal Investigations Department] to look for homosexuals, lock them up and charge them. Even the Holy Bible spells it out clearly that God created Adam and Eve as wife and husband, but not men to marry fellow men."

In a written statement, State Dept. Deputy Spokesman James Foley said: "The United States views with deep concern and

consternation the reported comments by [Museveni] ... threatening the arrest of homosexuals based on Ugandan legislation barring homosexual activity. We would view the arrest and imprisonment of persons based on their sexual orientation as a serious human rights violation."

## Brit gays attempt to arrest Mugabe

Gay protesters stopped the motorcade of anti-gay Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe Oct. 30 in London and attempted to make a citizens' arrest charging him with acts of torture. Mugabe had just left St. James Court Hotel en route to a shopping outing at Harrods when his cavalcade was surrounded by members of the street-activist group OutRage!. OutRage! leader Peter Tatchell opened the door of Mugabe's car, grabbed him by the arm, and informed him he was under arrest.

After some minutes—during which Tatchell lectured Mugabe—police arrived and arrested three of the protesters: Tatchell, Chris Morris and Alastair Williams. "We were attempting to arrest Mugabe under Section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 which allows for the arrest in Britain of any person who commits an act of torture anywhere in the world, as defined in the UN Convention Against Torture 1984," said OutRage!'s John Hunt.

*A defense fund is being launched. Send to OutRage!, P.O. Box 17816, London SW14 8WT.]*

—World report by Rex Wockner

# Leather Scene

by Cain Berlinger

It is difficult to judge any literary heroine into another era with the same criteria that we would judge a female character written for the nineties. In Elizabeth Nunez's novel, *Beyond the Limbo Silence* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1998) the lead character, Sara, is one of those heroines.

Receiving a scholarship to an all-girls Catholic School takes Sara from Trinidad to America. Thinking she has left her adolescent problems behind her, she is soon confronted with problems of an adult nature. Among those themes is the assimilation of Black immigrants into white American culture, and people of the same race do not always share the same ideals, history and sensibilities. I agree with Nunez's assessment that we are the product of our cultures, and sometime it is all we have to hold onto to define and sustain ourselves.

The 1960s were a difficult time for America and more so for immigrants. Communications and travel were different than now, and the world was much bigger in scope and perception. Sara attempts to escape loneliness and alienation by daydreaming of her homeland, looking for symbols, anything familiar which would help her make sense of her new experiences and emotions. Like many immigrants, her past prevents her somewhat from fully integrating into the society in which she must now live, distracting her from simple enjoyments.

It is not until late in the novel that Sara begins to think in the present and to let go of the past, something she must do if she is to survive. It is established early on that Sara is a survivor, on the receiving end of a lot of heavenly intervention. When Sara first arrives in Wisconsin, the locale of her new school, she is met by two other scholarship students. One is Angela, an East Indian, and the African girl Courtney. While the three girls share similar complexions and circumstances, each has found their own way of adapting into a seemingly hostile environment—the differences in each girl's culture soon becomes



glaringly apparent, leaving Sara more confused and alienated. Having thought she has found sisters of the skin she is soon shown how wrong she might be. When her world consisted of just Black and white people the lines of separation were more clearly defined for her.

Her relationship with Sam, an African American man with a strong political conscious, is discolored by the different backgrounds and struggles of his people, a struggle different for Sara.

Sara is not necessarily a strong woman, in fact her character is so weak throughout the novel that when she finally does end up in a mental home, it is hardly a surprise. Nevertheless, while adjusting to a new culture, fresh betrayals and lost loves, Sara appears on some levels to remain unaffected by life's ironies, and even through steel-meshed windows she can still be seen holding onto her memories of homeland and customs, to help maintain what is left of her sanity, knowing it will take some time before she truly understands the rivalry between cultures isn't just about skin color, but it's also about ideals.

*Nunez is a professor at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn New York*

## Thy Cup Runneth Over

by Lynnell Stephani Long  
The Future of the  
Trans/Intersex community

I remember when I first came out as Lynnell. After years of living an androgynous lifestyle, I knew I would have to make a decision as to my gender. I came out as Transsexual in 1993 because that's all I was aware of. I knew nothing of an Intersex Community. As I began to visit some of the support groups, I was still uncertain if I belonged in the

Trans community. No one looked like me. Everyone looked Transgendered. In fact I was told by a few of the girls at a particular group that I didn't belong there because I was too cute.

I wasn't sure how I should take a comment like that, so I dismissed it entirely. When my endocrinologist diagnosed me with Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome, and told me I was in fact Intersex, I was relieved. I never felt attached to the Trans Community, but I began to do activism work because that voice wasn't being represented. Years later I still don't feel attached to the Trans Community, yet I continue to do my activism, performance and writing. The difference is, today, I do it for me.

There is only one other Intersex person I know of in Chicago, and she doesn't like to talk about it. So that leaves me back to square one, feeling alone. At a recent Trans Forum, at Horizons, my feelings of feeling alone in the Trans community seemed rationalized. I'm totally over the women-born-women issue. I fought that battle almost two years ago, and it wasn't pretty. I brought up the idea of building up the Trans/Intersex community by forming our own space. Some in the Trans community thought it was a great idea. One person told me the Forum was not the place to mention my idea. He, a gay white male, stated my idea only confirmed what the separatists believed. I begged to differ. There aren't many forums in Chicago where a lot of strong Trans activists gather, I believe it was the perfect opportunity to discuss my proposal.

When I discussed what happened with my girlfriend Racquel, I wondered if I made that comment because I am Intersex. Being Intersex I am a woman-born-woman, and my struggle is different from Transsexuals. I no longer need to fight for women-only space or to belong, I have that space in my heart and in my home. There was one girl that made a comment, she doesn't want to be considered Transgendered forever, in fact she wishes to transition to being a woman and allowed in women-only spaces. More power to you.



Maybe I don't belong in the Trans Community. Maybe I am so unique that I will never feel a part of the Trans community. What do I do? Where do I go? I enjoy being an activist, performance artist, columnist and playwright/director addressing issues in the Trans/Intersex community. But why should I fight someone else's battle? I don't have the problem of passing as a woman. I don't get stared at or talked about. Why should I care if some transie is discriminated against? Why should I care what happens to the Trans community when the Trans community could not give a damn what happens to me? Where was the Trans community when I was discriminated against at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse? Now two years later they hold a forum to address the issue. If I sound bitter it's because I am. I'm bitter and I'm tired of feeling I am in this struggle alone. Where is the Black Trans community?

As we approach the year 2000, I am making decisions that will affect me for the rest of my life. I have been writing for BLACKLINES for over 3 years. I have been an activist in the Trans/Intersex community for over 5 years. I enjoy the work I do because I feel there needs to be a Trans/Intersex voice in the GLBT community.

I think, unless the Trans/Intersex community reconsiders the course it is currently on, we will be having another forum next year discussing the same issues. The Trans/Intersex community needs to have its own Coffeehouse, LesBiGay welcomed. As for my future as a Trans/Intersex activist, I'll pray on it. What shall be shall be.

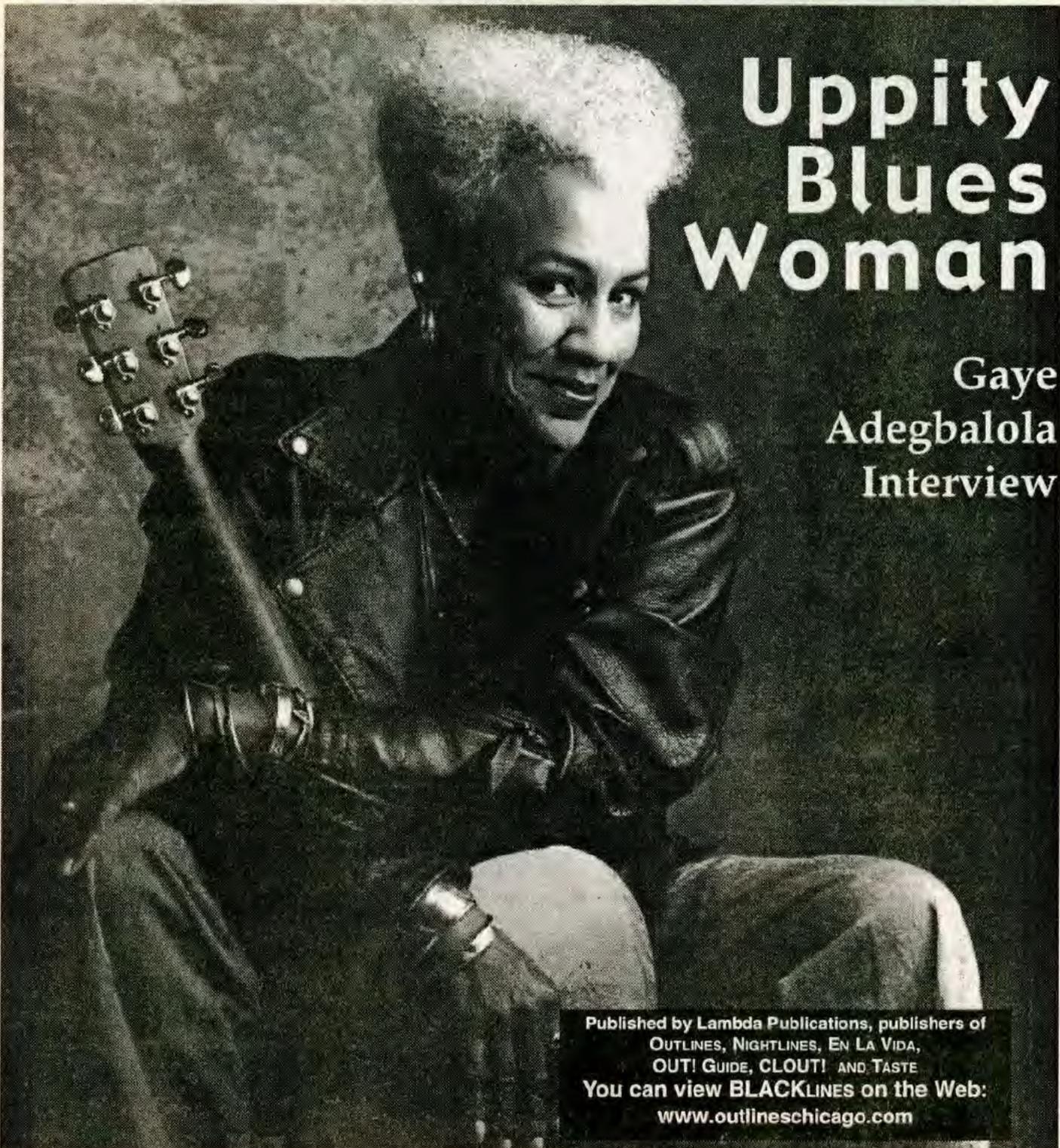
For today I am aware that I am merely a messenger. Goddess' will be done, not mine.

*Lynnell Stephani Long is an Intersex Activist. E-mail her at*

# BLACK

LINES

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## Uppity Blues Woman

Gaye  
Adegbalola  
Interview

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