

The Trial of a Queer-Basher: Our Collective Nightmare

By Carl Wittman

DURHAM, NC — On a sunny Sunday afternoon in April, 1981, one man died and three others were beaten at a swimming hole on the Little River north of here. Days later two men and two women were charged with murder, assault and armed robbery. The prime assailant, Chris Richardson, was tried on those charges last week.

The trial of Chris Richardson has been a major event for the gay community in central North Carolina. Last spring, when he murdered Ron Antonevitch, a 46-year-old handicapped man and assaulted three other men on a queer-beating rampage, it was the catalyst of major demonstrations and rallies and the drawing together of the gay and lesbian communities in Durham and nearby Chapel Hill and Raleigh. North Carolina's first Gay Pride March was largely inspired by the beatings. The events this spring and the pending charges have weighed on us — a bad dream not easily forgotten.

The trial itself has brought back to life not just the awful details but the network of communication we formed in the spring and the sense of the importance of the event. Everyone is mindful of the Dan White trial in San Francisco and of the Klan trials in Greensboro.

So we watched carefully as the trial took shape. It is strange to be rooting for the State. The State, which outlaws homosexuality. The State, which has arrested dozens of gay men recently on the streets of the state capital, entrapping them to "unnatural acts." The State, which finds that lesbians are not fit to mother their children.

But we are with the State on this one. The District Attorney cares about prosecuting the crime and, after more than one meeting with gay activists, knows that this trial matters to us. We all agree that an acquittal or a slap on the wrist would mean "open season" on queers. He was, it seems, outraged by the incident and earlier he had declared he would go for the death penalty.

The pretrial motions have been completed. The most important was a change of venue motion made by the defense. It was predicated on the view that so much publicity had occurred in Durham County that a fair jury could not be found. The motion was denied, much to our relief: not only would it have been inconvenient to commute some distance to the trial, but it undoubtedly would have been moved to a rural and far more conservative county.

There were major negotiations concerning plea bargaining. Osbahr, the other prime assailant, and two others in the gang, were permitted to plead guilty to lesser charges in exchange for their testimony at Richardson's trial.

And finally, the D.A. decided to pursue a second-degree murder charge against Richardson, not the first-degree charge he had originally sought. So capital punishment ceased to be an issue in the case. Again we sighed with relief.

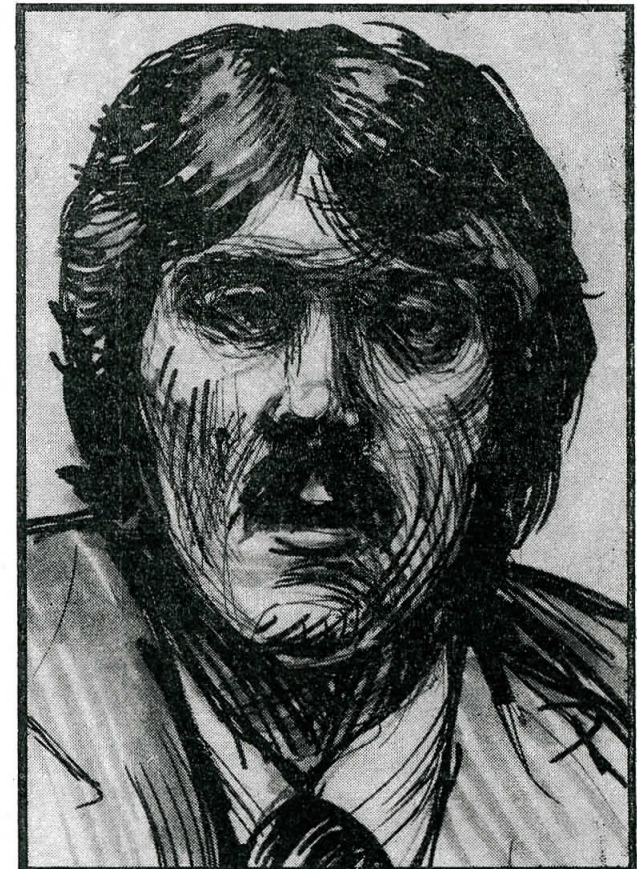
ligence, civic interests, earnestness, good memory. One wonders what all the huff was in high school about civics. I remember being told about good citizenship: read the papers, discuss current events, make informed opinions, volunteer your time and thought to civic concerns. Not here; in the name of "blind justice" and an "unprejudiced jury," we find that the defense (and the judge as well) rejects jurors if they have read about the case much, if they remember too much of what they read, if they have talked about it at the time, and, worst of all, if they have formed an opinion about it. There is an equation between having an opinion and being prejudiced.

Besides Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Love, who else is on this jury, after a day and a half of culling? Two black men. Mr. Jackson is a school janitor, and is as invisible on the jury box as he must be in the school corridors. Mr. Freeman is a counselor at the local black state university. The D.A. likes these middle-class black jurors: they've fought hard to get up in the world, and they don't want crime — they vote for convictions. Let us hope that Mr. Freeman is more hostile to second-degree murder than to homosexuality, also a crime here in North Carolina.

Of the eight whites, five are women: a young sour-faced secretary at Duke Law School, who slouches throughout the trial; an older woman, sitting very upright, who now keeps books for her husband's construction firms, but was a legal secretary back in the 60s; the physical therapist who claims no opinions on the case, but dresses more comfortably and with less make-up than the others; the housewife with a kind and intelligent face; and finally, the furniture store bookkeeper, who's had us all worried — but during the detailing of the murder, she was fighting back the tears. All are married, none has said much to characterize herself.

Three white men complete the jury: a family man who often takes his kids to the Little River for picnics; a heavy young man who has inherited some kind of family business, but has always wanted to be a policeman; and a retired construction worker who remembers the case and said, "See how foolish it is, people doing them things."

Altogether, it isn't an unrepresentative jury in terms of age, class, race. Any one of them, save Mrs. Kennedy, might be seen on Saturday afternoon at the Northgate Shopping Mall. No single people, no intellectuals, no non-conformists. All five prospective jurors who mentioned that homosexuality played a role in the case were removed. Mrs. Harris came closest to being a "sympathetic liberal" — but in a pang of conscience, she spoke up a day after she'd been seated, and told the judge, "I remember more of this case than I did yesterday, and I think he's probably guilty of something." She was excused, by the judge, for cause.



The defendant, Chris Richardson.

absent from the trial record. Some prospective jurors remembered that the people at the river were homosexuals. The defense attorney "slips" once in his summation and mentions that "disgusting acts" provoked his client's righteous indignation. And the epithets noted above have been quoted freely by witnesses to the beatings. For us, there has never been any doubt about the central theme of the case: queer-bashing, clear and simple.

But nobody wants to talk about it.

Not the defense; perhaps it is in bad taste these days to be rabidly anti-homosexual, at least in a public courtroom. Even at the Jerry Falwell Rally in nearby Raleigh last month, they all testified about loving homosexuals and caring for their civil rights, as long as they weren't blatant. Perhaps it would look bad to the jury if the murder looked too rabid. A persuasive defense strategy might even have been to keep homosexuality hovering in the background. Why, indeed, would these picnickers have gone on this rampage of violence, if they had not been provoked by the unnameable, the unthinkable?

Not the D.A.; off the record, the D.A. sees the case as the convergence of a number of independent factors, homosexual-

And so, last week, the trial opened. "Motion denied," says Judge Martin emphatically. Robert Brown is the attorney for the man on trial and he has asked for two additional peremptory challenges. He's used up all of his six challenges, knocking off the most outspoken, intelligent jurors. Mrs. Perry had candidly recalled, "There were supposedly some homosexuals on the Little River; someone intimidated them; hit them, put 'em in the water. It's too bad something like that has happened." She was challenged by Brown. Mr. McRae thought that if homosexuality had caused one group to approach the other, "then homosexuality has a part in this case." He too was dismissed by Brown. Mr. Besser didn't remember details, but strongly felt it was "a terrible thing to do." He was challenged by Brown.

But Mr. Brown has run out of challenges. He's stuck now with two jurors he'd like to get off the jury. He tries again, "Your Honor, I move that Mrs. Love and Mrs. Kennedy be removed for cause."

"Motion denied."

Mrs. Love is a black woman who has worked in a dry-cleaning establishment all her life and is retired now. She's like the old women that were the backbone of the civil rights movement: simple, honest, sensitive. You'd think after all these years of work, all these years of injustice, women like her would be worn out, bitter. But no, there's a capacity for justice which seems more developed than anywhere else I've ever seen. It was embarrassing when Brown was interrogating her in the jury selection: middle-class black professional, with contempt for the wisdom of Mrs. Love, described to me once as "motherwit."

He tried for 15 minutes to foul her up. She said that the case had "upset me a lot," "couldn't sleep." She had pondered a lot: "Who had done a thing like that?" She wondered if they were black or white. Yes, she felt the same way now. Brown suggested she wouldn't be able to put her feelings aside in considering the facts as presented. She said, "Yes." "Yes, what?" "Yes, I could be fair." "But you were upset?" "Yes. I feel the same way now." "So you couldn't put aside your feelings?" "I can be fair."

Brown was as irked by Mrs. Kennedy, the other black woman on the jury. She is probably the richest, and perhaps the best educated, person in the courtroom. Her husband is president of North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the pride of Durham's black bourgeoisie. In contrast to Mrs. Love, who said she had "tried to keep up with the case," Mrs. Kennedy saw it on TV back in April and had avoided reading about in the papers. "I felt like I'd not be interested in it." When pressed, she became a bit short and concluded the exchange by saying that it just was not a priority for her. She's a registered nurse, has taught college, is active in the NAACP and the YWCA. The tension bristled between her and Mr. Brown at one point, when he asked her, "Do you have trouble with . . . ?" Taking exception to his idiomatic TV slang, she said, "Could you please rephrase that question?"

Brown has consistently removed prospective jurors for intel-

Race complicates everything in America, even things which aren't primarily about race. From the first day of the trial, the racial sub-text is buzzing in my ear. Here we have a white queer-basher being represented by a court-appointed black lawyer. A white lawyer represents the State. In the early days of the trial, the comparison was embarrassing. It felt so clear that this was a white institution, set up by white men's rules, and this poorly educated young black lawyer was simply unequipped to cope. He was boring, he forgot salient facts, he seemed to have no sense of strategy.

Assisting Mr. Brown, however, was his reputable law partner, Micky Michaux. He recently made headlines locally, when in his last days as Federal District Attorney, he recommended that the Justice Department prosecute the exonerated Greensboro Klansmen on federal charges. Michaux is reputed to be running for Congress next year, and a black like Michaux would increase North Carolina's liberal congressional delegation from zero to one. But it is hard to imagine voting for a lawyer defending queer-bashers — would Michaux defend Klansmen, too?

As the trial proceeds, however, Michaux stops attending and Brown transforms himself, looking less and less like a dumb bunny and more like a weasel. On the third day of the trial, he begins his defense. He doesn't limit himself merely to finding the cracks in the D.A.'s case, but instead fabricates an incredible Rube Goldberg story, painting the queer-bashers as sweet-tempered picnickers, bullied into self-defense by these indecent queers.

Brown's first witness is Osbahr's wife, who is young and epileptic; the D.A. has chosen not to call her. But Brown has her up at the witness stand. "Are you weak?" "Yes." "Would you like a few minutes to compose yourself?" She staggers from the stand and has a seizure, falling to the floor. The jury is dismissed from the room and the D.A. hisses loudly to Brown, "I hope you are pleased with yourself."

It is Richardson's rehearsed story, however, that reveals Brown's total contempt for the truth. Richardson was born yesterday — just out to enjoy the sun. "Naked men all over those rocks," he observes. Didn't expect naked men to be there. He describes the beatings of Penny and then DeMarais and Jones as if they were little altercations, more confusing than anything else. Richardson wants to leave, but the homosexuals shake their private parts at the girls. He's confused, but thinks, "Why should we leave, we haven't done anything wrong." The final twist is the encounter with Antonevitch: instead of the blood, the brutal beating, the queer-hating epithets, instead we have Antonevitch reaching for his gun, and poor Richardson thinking, "I'm going to die. Oh my god, we are going to be shot." This story is Brown's lowest hour.

"A bunch of queers." "I'm going to get your motherfucking asses, you faggots." "I'm going to kill your motherfucking queer ass." "Do you want to die, you motherfucking faggots?" It's not as if explicit references to homosexuality are

ity being only one of them. He hears us when we tell him that queer-beating is an increasingly fashionable sport and that it has some correlation with more respectable homophobia (Fallowell, Anita Bryant, Helms). But he's chosen to make his case on the simple facts: some people were beaten, here are their assailants. He thinks that the case is so strong that whatever anti-homosexual bias the jurors might have will be insignificant. Surely not worth inquiring about.

Not the gay witnesses; of the numerous gay men at the river that day, four are testifying. Three of them were assaulted. All of them are following the D.A.'s game plan, and neither he nor the defense attorney asks them why they were assaulted, or indeed even if they are homosexuals.

The closest we come to some honesty about homosexuality is the testimony of Mark and Darrel: yes, they live together now; yes, they came to the river that day, together; one of them carried the Scrabble game and dufflebag; the other a cooler and blankets. "Did you come to the courthouse together?" intones the defense attorney in his insinuating way. "Did you talk about it (the case) last night?" What in heaven's name is inside Brown's small smutty mind — is he fascinated with the thought that these men not only do awful things in bed, but actually look each other in the eyes afterwards and talk about other things? How shameful. In his tone of voice, Brown implies that there is something suspenseful and even conspiratorial in two men living together, talking together, admitting as much.

What do the jurors see? What do they know? What do they think? I wish for a moment that Mark would break loose from the D.A. and tell the jury about gay culture, tell them the things that are obvious to us.

For in our minds, there's no doubt about it: these men on the witness stand are gay. They look gay, act gay. It's not that nobody else takes a Scrabble set or a pillow to the swimming hole. It's not that nobody else wears New Orleans sunglasses. But somehow the rest of the courtroom is a bit surprised — and we aren't — when Mark says he didn't return the volley of abuse. When he hides behind a tree to protect himself instead of slugging it out, we aren't surprised. When Darrel demonstrates to the courtroom exactly how Richardson wielded the club, it's clear he was never on the high school team.

The defense attorney wants to know exactly how many of the men at the beach Darrel knew. Well, Judge, Darrel had a knowledge of all the gay men there, in a way that you or Mr. Brown or the D.A. wouldn't know about. Darrel was new in town, but it was no coincidence that he was at the gay swimming hole. He was there because he was gay, and he was assaulted because he was gay.

We talk at the lunch break about self-defense. What gay person doesn't wonder, hearing the details of the attack, *what would I have done?* We are not a violent people, but what about protecting ourselves? There was one gay man there that afternoon who didn't run away as the rampage of beating continued. He threw rocks at Richardson, shouting, "Fight me instead" as Richardson prepared to club the helpless, cornered, handicapped Antonevitch. And someone else apparently ran to

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a car to get a gun, firing warning shots into the air.

Might there have been a way to prevent the violence? What changes in our community would be required for the dozen or so men there to have protected each other? Disturbing questions we ponder over lunch, after seeing the assailants safely in captivity, disarmed and mute. How might each of us have reacted, *in situ* with clubs and all?

North Carolina is Christian country. The Bible thumpers and the Moral Majority, churches at every streetcorner, who is your minister? But even on the progressive side, Christianity is far more present than in the North, the West, anywhere I've ever lived. the MCC, the liberal church, God is on Our Side. And in this ugly set of events, Christian symbolism asserts itself in my Godless mind. *Agnus Dei*, I keep thinking, Lamb of God. Here is this picture of innocence: Antonevitch, married to a good and simple woman, taking care of both her and their hydrocephalic child, sitting at the river near what are presumably his people. Forty-six years old, heart patient, on medication, reading a book. Within minutes he is asked if he wants to die and is clubbed and held under the water. The blood-soaked pool three days later is bright red, still. At the hospital before he went into a coma, he moaned over and over, "Oh, God, oh, God, I'm dying, somebody help me." Over and over. At the river, a witness 25 yards away heard him plead for his life, saying, "What did I do to you?"

Richardson had told Antonevitch: "If you don't want to die, you'd better cross the river." With his heart condition, he couldn't swim. Cross the river, Antonevitch.

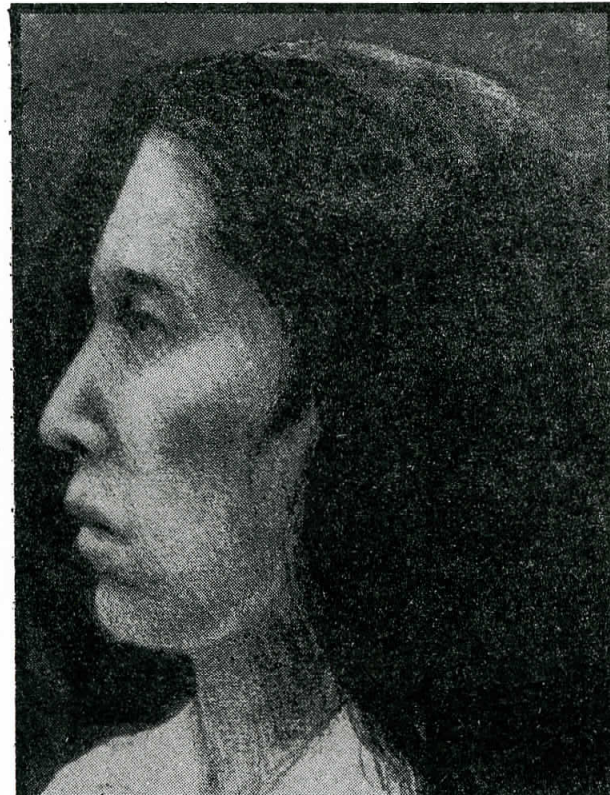
The D.A. is examining Robert Teague, one of the gang of people who tailed along behind Richardson. Teague is young, slow-witted, he'll say anything to get out of trouble, get this interrogation over with. "Yes, sir. Yes, sir." He sits there, contrite, just as he must have done in the vice-principal's office, saying, "Yes, I did it, I'm sorry." Perhaps it is that humiliation that he is revenging when he suggests that the gang sneak up on the queers from behind, as he learned in basic training.

But the D.A. pushes Teague, time and time again. "And THEN what happened?" "And THEN what happened?" "And THEN what happened?" Each time more awful things come out of Teague's mouth, until Antonevitch, with blood "from head to toe," is hauled off to the emergency ward. It is our collective nightmare. If we had gay fairy tales, this would be a recurrent theme, popular because it puts into words, and thus diminishes, the power of the image.

The last to talk with Antonevitch is now on the witness stand, in the person of Deputy Lawrence. Well over six feet tall and 200 pounds, black as night and innocent as night, he describes Antonevitch at the hospital, moaning, "Oh, God, oh, God, I'm dying, somebody help me." Deputy Lawrence looks like an angel on the stand, the angel announcing death. He tells the story the way the narrator does in Bach's St. Matthew's Passion: calmly but with the wisdom that comes after



Mrs. Love.



Ms. Morgan.



During Teague's long and bloody testimony, tears of pity and fear pour quietly down my face. I stifle the crying so that I won't be thrown out of the courtroom. Mrs. Carden in the jury box is crying, I think. And the stenographer, a big dykey woman with an upswept bun, who has a cheery familiarity with Margaret, the black court-watcher and kibbitzer — why, she's stopped, is taking off her glasses. It is lunchtime, and everyone files from the courtroom in stony silence.

But there are other times during the trial when my feelings pour to the surface, and not just pain, either. Every time the D.A. asks another witness, "And that man with the club, is he here in this room?" and the witness points directly into Richardson's face, I am exultant. Sure I know that Chris Richardson is a little flunkey, he learned his hatred from someone, he's probably a closet case, he's working-class and the Trilateral Commission or somebody higher up is really the guilty party . . . but the truth is, he clubbed Antonevitch. There is a time to say, "That is what happened, he did it." In Chinese villages, there were "speak bitterness" meetings and an old woman said, "He, that one there, he raped me." This process is important; before this happens, nothing more can happen.

But this is no court of liberation. Brown instead summarizes the defense's case. He is arguing "reasonable doubt." He notes there was no blood on the club. They had a dog along, if they were aggressors, why didn't they let it loose? He notes contradictions about the number of times the assailant clubbed Antonevitch. He suggests that perhaps Antonevitch died from hitting his head on the rock. It is depressing, listening to this summary. We could imagine the jury being swayed by it. There is some amount of doubt about everything and with no challenge to their preconceptions about homosexuality, who knows what they might dream up in the jury room as the reason why Richardson went around clubbing them? What if they find Richardson not guilty, or guilty only of involuntary manslaughter, like a suburban mom who accidentally hits a child in front of the neighborhood school with her station wagon? How quickly can we get a demonstration together?

And where, in all of this, is justice? Who will speak to the real problems? What is to be done with people like Chris Richardson, who beats his wife, threatens to kill Osbahr, and has defaced the swimming hole forever? What is to be done about homophobia, about scapegoating?

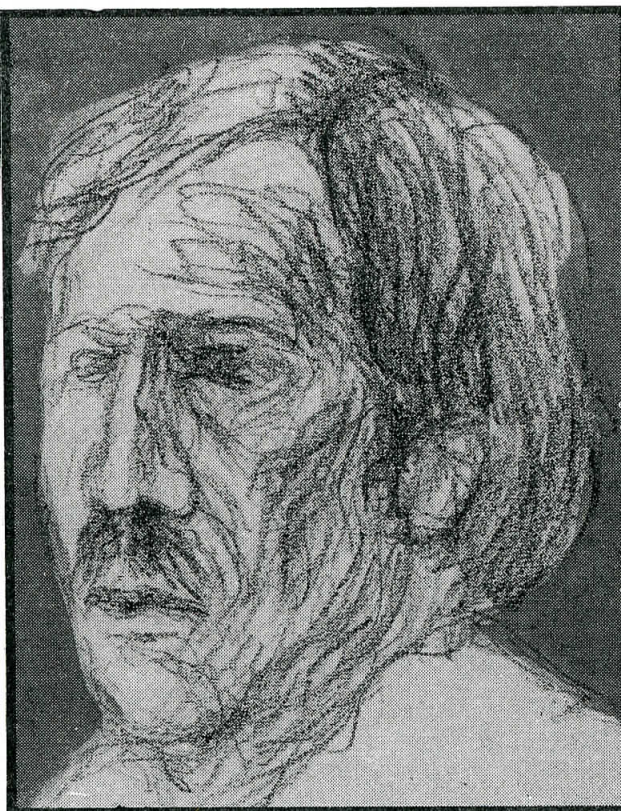
At the end of each court session the old bailiff incants, "Oyez, oyez, oyez, God save the State and this Honorable Court." Indeed, what has been preserved is the exciting drama between lawyers, a drama which resembles the truth only when it is in someone's interests. Only the State and the Court are augmented by this process.



On the sixth day, the jury is sent to make a decision. Chris Richardson is found guilty and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison.



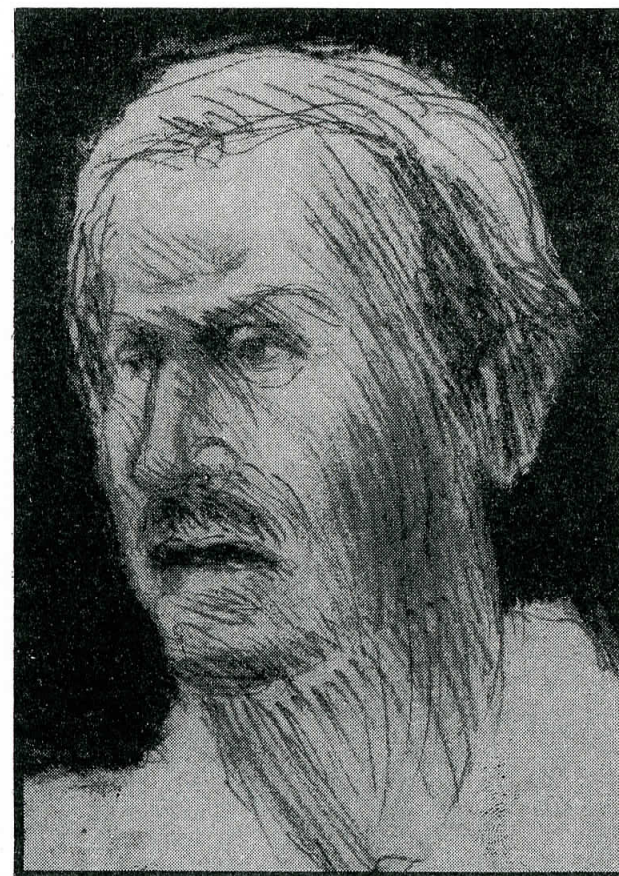
Juror



Mr. Rudd.



Mrs. Buckley.



Robert Ludwick.

All drawings are by Allan Troxler.

Durham Bashers Convicted

By Jil Clark

DURHAM, NC — Two of the four assailants arrested in connection with the murder of an allegedly gay man and the robbery and beating of two others on the Little River on April 12 have been found guilty and have been sentenced (see GCN, Vol. 8, No. 40).

Chris Richardson was sentenced on Oct. 6 to 25 years to life in prison for second degree murder in connection with the death of Ron Antonevich. Richardson will be eligible for parole in twenty years, according to District Attorney Dan Edwards.

*See related article,
page 6.*

Guy Charles Osbahr, Richardson's cousin, testified for the prosecution in exchange for a lesser plea and was found guilty on Oct. 5 of involuntary manslaughter. He was given a seven-to-ten-year prison term, which will be served concurrently with a sentence he was already serving for larceny. Osbahr was on parole from a Georgia prison last spring when Antonevich was murdered.

Richardson was also sentenced to seven years imprisonment for armed robbery of Mark DeMarais, one of the sunbathers attacked, and seven years for assault with a deadly weapon, a branch three feet long and three inches thick. Richardson will serve these sentences concurrently with his murder sentence.

Richardson was also charged with attempting to kill Osbahr while the two men and their spouses were camping together this summer. Angry that Osbahr had "turned state's witness," Richardson threatened to kill him,

chased him through the woods and shot at him with a rifle.

Two counts of assault with a deadly weapon against Osbahr were dropped in plea bargaining. The district attorney has also guaranteed Osbahr protection from Richardson. The two will never be incarcerated in the same prison.

The other two assailants, Wendy Richardson, Chris Richardson's wife, and Diane Reddish, who married Osbahr this summer, were not put on trial, said the district attorney, because of a "lack of evidence."

"There was no lack of evidence," said Allen Troxler, a local gay activist who attended most of the week-long trial which began on Sept. 29. "These women were obviously accessories. The court's prejudice obviously got in the way."

Troxler added, however, that "very few people were willing or able to testify. Most that were at the scene had fled, therefore they couldn't testify. Others, I suppose, didn't want to be public [about being gay]."

Asked why he thinks Edwards charged Richardson with less than first-degree murder, Troxler said, "I think the D.A. was very concerned about getting a conviction, especially in the wake of Greensboro [where Ku Klux Klan members who allegedly murdered four members of the Communist Workers Party at a rally last year were found innocent]; he's aware of the difficulty of getting a conviction for first-degree murder... because in North Carolina the penalty is death."

Troxler continued, "Although juries you get [for first-degree murder trials] are more conviction-prone, those juries tend to be less empathetic with gay people. Even with jurors who are into the death penalty, it is hard to get a conviction for queer bashing."

What was the rationale behind charging Osbahr with involuntary manslaughter? The coroner's report said that Antonevich died from a blow on the head. Osbahr

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be restricted on the sole grounds of the homosexual tendencies of one of the parents.

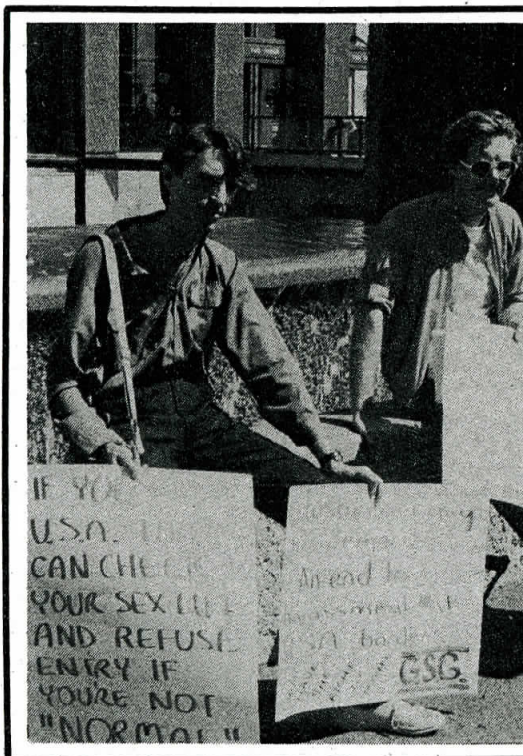
• To ask prison and other public authorities to be vigilant against the risk of rape, violence, and sexual offenses against homosexuals in prisons.

The assembly declined, however, to modify Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights by adding "sexual preference" to the list of guaranteed rights after its legal affairs com-

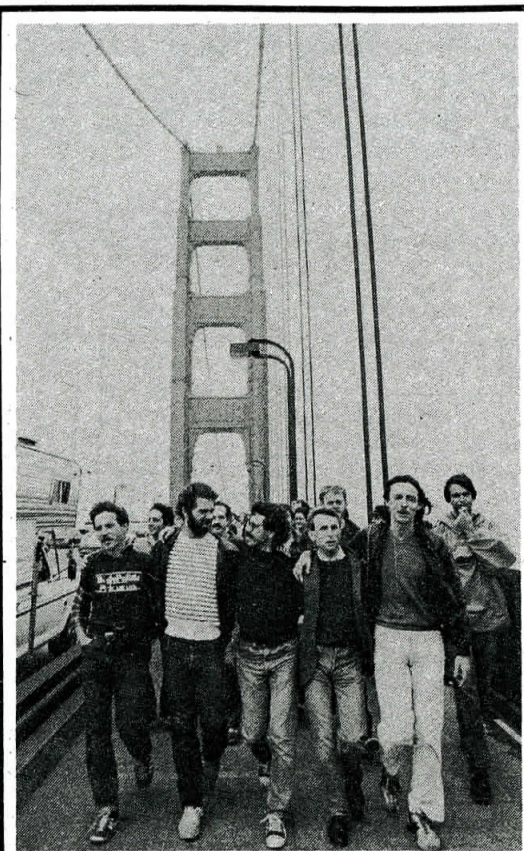
mund Lynch, a member of the IGA in Dublin, Ireland. "It's a good thing."

Lynch also expressed the hope that similar recommendations would now be approved by the European Parliament, an organ of the European Economic Community whose representatives are elected by popular vote in member countries. Such a vote by the European Parliament would carry even greater weight, Lynch said.

—filed from Boston



"We Just Want Our Rights": Over 40 demonstrators at the U.S. Consulate in Sydney, Australia, on Friday, Sept. 25 protested the U.S. immigration policy excluding lesbians and gay men from this country (see GCN, Vol. 9, No. 12). As part of the demonstration, the Sydney Gay Liberation Choir sang "We Just Want Our Rights." A letter of protest was delivered to the Consulate by the Gay Solidarity Group on behalf of 19 other organizations.



"INS Is a Fascist Mess": More than 150 gay and lesbian demonstrators marched across the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco on Sunday, Sept. 27 to protest this country's immigration policy (see GCN, Vol. 9, No. 12).

financial and managerial difficulties for at least a year. On November 4, 1980 the paper filed for a "Chapter 11" bankruptcy, a procedure which allows a financially-troubled corporation a temporary period of insulation from debts to try to set its affairs in order. At that time, the *Sentinel* owed more than \$120,000 to various creditors, including approximately \$40,000 to the Internal Revenue Service for back taxes and penalties.

But Charles Lee Morris, publisher of the *Sentinel* and sole shareholder in the corporation which owns it, evidently couldn't bring the paper out of its troubles.

little bit more in accounts receivable than they expected to."

But several other sources, including former *Sentinel* employees and others involved in gay journalism, told *GCN* that the paper died because of poor management.

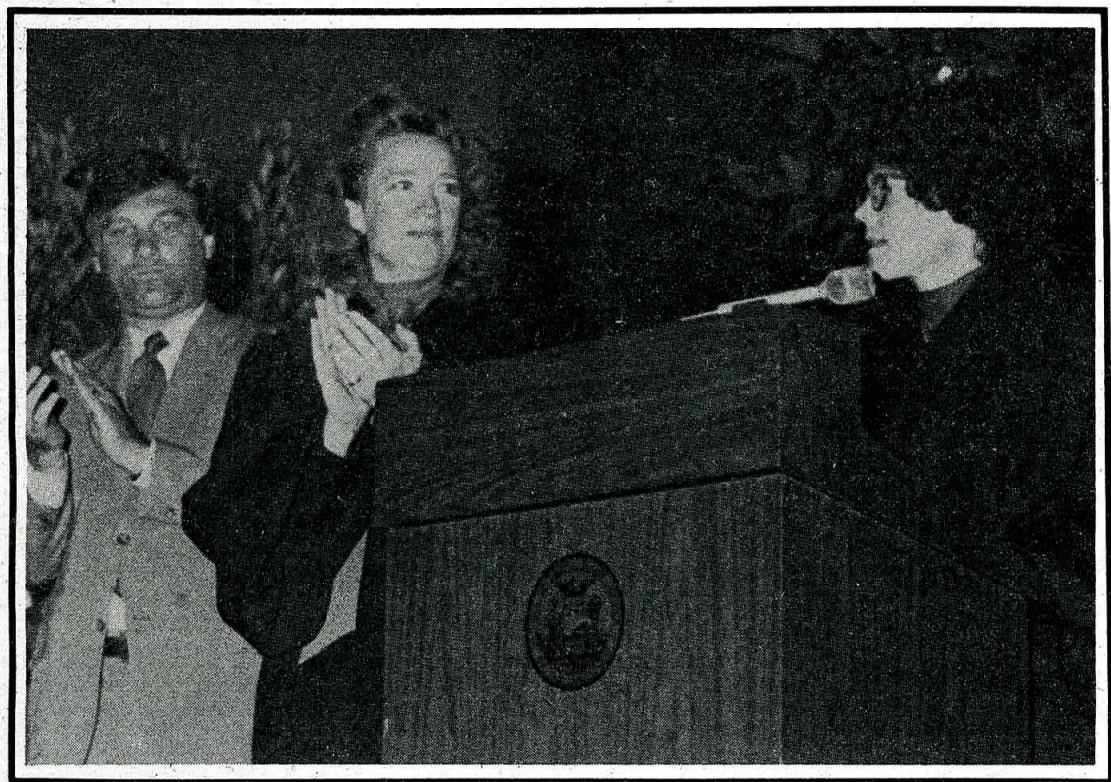
"He had nine employees and he drew a heavy salary himself," said Paul Hardman, publisher of the *San Francisco Voice*. "There's just so much income, and so much revenue."

Hardman has himself expressed interest in purchasing the *Sentinel*. Dick Pabich, a partner in a San Francisco advertising agency, has also reportedly made a bid for the

a part of the corporate assets. But the paper's creditors claim that this agreement was improperly executed, and that the name is actually one of the paper's most valuable remaining assets. The creditors seek to sell the name in order to regain some of their lost money.

Morris has failed on several occasions to appear in court, citing chronic illnesses which have required hospitalization. A trial has been set for October 8, however, at which Morris must appear to represent his case.

— filed from Boston



A first: Mary Morgan, prominent lesbian and gay rights attorney, during the recent ceremony at which she was sworn in as the nation's first openly lesbian judge. With her are John Molinari, president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and Rose Bird, Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court. Governor Edmund Brown on Aug. 26 announced the appointment of Morgan to the San Francisco Municipal Court (see *GCN*, Vol. 9, No. 8).

Rink

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cal groups. GRNL Legislative Assistant Susan Green says the defeat is not an indication of insufficient work by the lesbian and gay organizations. "I really feel good about the effort we put into it," she commented.

"What happened," Green told *GCN*, "was that a lot of [legislators] just lost their spines. They were really scared that Moral Majority was going to pressure them right out of the next election."

Green added that there was no clear pattern to the vote since other issues, particularly the question of DC home rule, were involved. A number of DC City Council decisions not involving criminal law have recently been vetoed by Congress.

Max Miller, an aide to Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA), who led the fight against the congressional veto, said the vote was an example of the "paternalistic repression" Congress exercises over the District. "The animus underlying the vote," he told *GCN*, "was a combination of transient fear of the Moral Majority on the one hand and a cheap shot against the black resident majority in the District."

The congressional Black Caucus was unanimously opposed to the congressional veto of the City Council decision, a position Green attributes to support for both lesbian and gay rights and DC home rule.

Miller charged Rep. Philip Crane (R-IL), who initiated and led the fight within Congress against the law reform, with "verbal hypocrisy" in his arguments and most observers agree that the Moral Majority's claims about the effect of the changes were inaccurate. "They distorted the effect of the law to such an extent," Green said, "that you could hardly recognize it."

A full-page advertisement in the

September 21 *Moral Majority Report*, which has a circulation of over one million, claimed incorrectly, for example, that the measure would legalize seduction of a child by a teacher, would repeal the statute against sex in public and would decriminalize sex with animals.

A mailing by Christian Voice of Pasadena, California, claimed the reform would "remove any criminal penalties for perverted and sinful sexual acts."

— filed from Boston

Durham

Continued from page 1

testified that he shoved Antonevich in the face and that Antonevich lost his balance, fell and cracked his head on a rock.

Troxler said that sexual and political issues were not addressed in the trial. None of the jurors could utter the word "homosexual" during jury selection, Troxler said, "so I suspect they maintained this silence in the jury room, too. So it doesn't feel to me like we [lesbians and gay men] have been on trial here."

There remains some doubt here about whether Antonevich was gay. He was sunbathing that afternoon along the section of the Little River that is known to all to be frequented by gay people; some gay men here have said that they had seen him in gay male establishments in the area. Nevertheless, his wife and some family friends maintain that he was straight.

Said Troxler, "The D.A. said after the trial that the most tragic thing of all was that this man was totally innocent. That's like the response of some people in Paris last year to the bombing of a synagogue there. To them the real tragedy was that the explosion killed innocent passers-by — as well as Jews."

—filed from Boston