# Pussies Bite Back: The Story of the Women's Bathhouse Raid

## CHANELLE GALLANT LORALEE GILLIS

Chanelle Gallant (girlaction5@hotmail.com), 28, was born somewhere in Chicoutimi, Quebec, and now resides in Toronto. She has dabbled in video, performance, and writing. In 2002 her performance text "Standing By My Man" was published in Bent on Writing: Contemporary Queer Tales, to the great acclaim of her parents. A truly eager beaver, Chanelle has been an organizing member of the women's bathhouse committee since 2000, and examines the bathhouse in her Master's work in Sociology at York University, still in progress.

Loralee Gillis (lgillis@passport.ca), 33, was born and bred in Peterborough, but now calls Toronto home. She works as a community-based qualitative health researcher. Her Master's research in medical anthropology at York University focuses on the lives and experiences of women living with HIV/AIDS. She is one of the founders of the Toronto Women's Bathhouse. Her greatest claim to fame belongs to her right nipple, which was the very first female nipple to appear on the cover of Xtra (Toronto's Lesbian & Gay biweekly). Other examples of her moonlighting career in soft porn can be found in eye magazine, the Toronto Sun and a variety of safer-sex posters in and around Toronto.

#### December 2001 Introduction

n September 14, 2000 seven officers from the Toronto Police Services raided the Toronto Women's Bathhouse, affectionately known among queer women in Toronto as the Pussy Palace. Although there has been extensive media coverage of the raid, as a committee we have written very little about the events of that evening and what followed. Most of our public communication

torquere: Journal of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Studies Association / Revue de la Société canadienne des études lesbiennes et gaies Vol. 3 (2001) © CLGSA / SCELG has been through press releases, media interviews and statements from our lawyers. This article is an attempt to foster a more open dialogue about the repercussions of the Pussy Palace raid. Both of the authors are members of the Toronto Women's Bathhouse Committee. We aren't speaking for the committee in this article, only providing our observations as two participants closely involved in the process.

The information presented in this article is constrained by two facts. First, immediately after the raid on the Pussy Palace, city councilor Kyle Rae criticized the actions of the Toronto Police Services in the press. Councilor Rae has since been hit with a defamation suit from the officers involved in the raid. Thus, our comments throughout this year and within this article have been carefully chosen in order to minimize the possibility of such action being taken against us. Second, the charges against us have not been resolved. In December 2001 (more than one year after the raid) our lawyer presented his final arguments in court. To date, we have yet to hear whether the charges will be dismissed or go to trial. As a result, anything we write can be used as evidence. These two frames prohibit a completely candid discussion of these issues.

The raid on the Pussy Palace did not just affect the people<sup>1</sup> that were in attendance that night. The Pussy Palace itself changed women's sexual culture in Toronto. It created new possibilities for how women could think about, organize, and enact their sexual desires. Whether or not women attended the Pussy Palace, it existed as an option, as a possibility, as a problem for how women think of themselves as sexual beings.

One of the reasons that we began the Pussy Palace was to address the invisibility of queer women's sexuality. We knew that queer women were having lots of sex, and we knew that we were discouraged from talking about it or doing it in the same explicit public ways that gay boys could. The Pussy Palace has given queer women's pleasure and sexual cultures a higher profile in Toronto. With increased visibility we have also become an object for increased legal and moral regulation. The police raid on the Pussy Palace adds another layer to how we think about ourselves as sexual beings – our

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The Toronto Women's Bathhouse is a trans-positive space. Participants include women, and transsexual and transgendered men and women.

public expressions of sexual desire have been witnessed, monitored and documented by the state. The fantasy of sexual freedom that prevailed at the earlier events was shattered by the presence of five large bio-men, roaming around, staring at our naked bodies.

This article is primarily expository – we want to share the facts, from our perspective, with queers in the academic community. However, we also want to begin to consider the impact that the Pussy Palace and the police raid have had on the sexual culture of women in Toronto and elsewhere.

#### **History of the Pussy Palace**

In the fall of 1998 a handful of queer women activists in Toronto hosted the first Pussy Palace. A small group of us had canvassed men's baths across the city for months, until one finally agreed to let us rent their facilities. We frantically scrambled to find volunteers, organize tickets and advertising, the bar, the DJ, etc. - it was quite an undertaking. None of us were event planners; we were queer, bisexual, and lesbian women who believed in women's right to fuck and saw the need for a place to do it. The original committee was a group of friends who shared a similar radical sexual politics and felt a frustration at the lack of opportunities to put those sexual politics into public practice. There were certainly elements of radical sexual politics in Toronto's queer community prior to the Pussy Palace. The women's leather community in Toronto is very active. Events like Narnia, a queer women's fetish night, have a devout following. And as for semipublic sex, you really could not beat the bathroom stalls at Buddies, a queer theater space in Toronto that featured Viva Vulva every Friday night for several years in the mid nineties. However, the Pussy Palace provided a new organizing force for women interested in casual, kinky and public sex.

Loralee: At the first Pussy Palace we had no clue what to expect. We didn't know whether to expect ten women or one hundred. Much to our surprise, four hundred women stood in the rain for two hours or more to get in. The first Pussy Palace was like a dream. I ran around from 4pm until 7am the next morning. I got no action that night, I just ran from one organizational crisis to another. But I watched four hundred women cruise each other. I listened to women fucking each other through the paper-thin walls. Women walked around naked, lingered in the hot tub, hung off the fire escape. It was a

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glorious feeling to think that we had facilitated all this pleasure. The Pussy Palace is the epitome of female decadence. It is bacchanalian – it gives women the opportunity to escape for several hours of absolute sexual indulgence.

#### **Description of the Pussy Palace**

The Pussy Palace is unlike any other event that we know: for one night women and transfolk run riot in a men's bathhouse. The floors are full of activity from 6 pm till dawn when security finally shuffles the last few smiling attendees out the door into cabs. The first floor contains an outdoor pool, sauna, hot tub, showers and small dance floor and the cash/door. This is where women leave the street and enter into the Pussy Palace. Other floors house dozens of very small rooms with a basic bed and locker. Some of these rooms are available for rent for the evening and most are left open on a first-come-first-served basis (or the other way around, depending on your perspective). There are a host of enormously popular erotic activities organized for participants. Add to this hundreds of women and trans people milling about in what we like to euphemistically call 'various stages of undress,' drinking (when we have a liquor permit), dancing, flirting, and fucking.

The environment is charged with anticipation; it is sexy, playful, tense and carefully planned out as well. The night involves a great deal of coordinated security – bags are checked for substances, all participants are of age of majority, rooms are cleaned after every use, rules and etiquette are provided along with a towel and safer sex supplies. Committee accountability is well established – two committee members are on duty at all times and ultimately responsible for any decisions. Volunteers staff the entire event – from the DJs to the food and drink servers to the cleanup crew and dancers. Moreover, tours of the location, etiquette, and rules are provided for the uninitiated.

In our design of the event and the organization of the night we are effectively transforming queer women's sexual culture in Toronto. The basic culture of the Pussy Palace is traceable to men's bathhouse cultures but the heart of it is a unique amalgamation of egalitarian feminist policies (e.g., equity outreach and recruitment, collective committee structure, nonprofit) with pro-sex and sex worker practices (porn rooms, dancers, massage).

Chanelle: Preraid, the Pussy Palace was a sort of queer sex playground to me. Within a setting that I (mistakenly) believed was relatively safe from harassment, I had thrilling sexual experiences, took risks being bolder than I would otherwise ever be, experimented with pleasure and desire and developed a sense of community and connection with other queer women in Toronto. I lap danced at my first bathhouse and got an addictive first taste of the pleasure of power. I walked away exhilarated, well-fucked, and newly aware of my femme power.

Shamefully, there aren't many safe places in the world to be a slut. Aside from launching thousands of orgasms, the Pussy Palace validates sexualities that do not conform to the middle-class norms of 'private,' marital/sanctified (hetero)sexuality, and are not dependent on men to 'civilize' and legitimize women's bodies. The policies, laws, and norms that make it hard to be a hussy are often the same ones that define and punish single mothers, sex workers, and anyone else visibly defying the bounds of acceptable sexuality. So while the Pussy Palace allows me to delight in my kinky femme bisexuality, it also erodes or at least challenges the stigma against all nonnormative sexualities. The Pussy Palace offers us a physical and discursive space in which to negotiate and make our own sexual choices, above and against the moral and legal restrictions that haunt those choices.

#### September 14, 2000

On September 14, 2000, the Women's Bath House Organizing Committee hosted "2000 Pussies," our fourth bathhouse. That night, it was our second anniversary. In the year preceding this event it had become apparent that the civil relationship between queers in Toronto and the Toronto Police Services had eroded. In June and July 1999, the cops raided the Bijou, a men's bar in Toronto. Nineteen charges of indecency were laid against patrons and the bar was charged with liquor license offences. Eventually all of the criminal charges were dropped. The bar was forced to close down but then reopened without its liquor license. In March and April 2000 the cops raided the men's naked parties at the Barn and charged them with permitting disorderly conduct under the liquor license act. The Barn is still fighting these charges in court.

In Toronto there are about a dozen men's baths. Most of these

establishments run twenty-four hours a day, three hundred sixty-five days a year. All of the baths in Toronto are licensed and regulated by the city. One of the pivotal moments in Canadian lesbian and gay history occurred in the early 1980s when the Toronto Police Services staged raids of the men's baths in Toronto. They entered with axes. broke down doors, charged the occupants with public indecency and published their names in the Toronto papers. At that time there was a massive public outcry from the queer community. Queers took to the street in protest and the cops backed down. All charges were dropped. The crown refused to prosecute the criminal charges. Since that time the police have had a relatively amicable relationship with the baths. Police check in at the baths, but generally they will not enter unless they suspect prostitution or drug trafficking. The police were slowly eroding the détente that had existed with the community since the raids of the 1980s. At some of our previous events, the police had arrived to caution us that neighbors were complaining about noise levels. In turn, we would attempt to quiet things down. Our relationship has been minimal and uneventful.

At 12:45 am on September 15 five hefty and intimidating male officers from 52 Division entered the Pussy Palace. When the woman at the door told them it was an all-women event, they told her that if she did not let them in she could be charged with obstructing justice. The officers split up and proceeded to search every nook and cranny of the space until 2:15am. Although many women were naked or seminaked, we were explicitly prevented from warning participants of the police presence. Many women were deeply angered and emotionally distressed by the police presence. During and immediately after the raid many of the participants left.

Loralee: When the police entered the Palace I was swimming naked in the pool. As the word that men were there rippled through the crowds I watched a palpable change in women's bodies and their demeanor. Naked women grabbed for towels, clothes or anything to hide themselves from these police officers. I ran to my room and donned the bulky track pants and sweatshirt I had worn earlier in the day. After covering myself I went to follow these men and monitor their activities. I watched as two large men conducted the search for some wrongdoing on the premises. Police have insisted that the purpose for the men's presence was a liquor license inspection. I watched these men knock on women's doors, search their rooms, take

their names and addresses, and visually inspect their bodies with an aggressive and penetrating gaze. Later at the trial, I heard the officers that I had followed claim that they calmly walked through the premises counting women to ensure that we were not overcrowded. They claimed that women were friendly and unaffected by their presence.

One of the officers found a sign we had made with brightly colored markers pointing to the Porn Room. This was a room where we played porn on a large screen TV. He tore the sign off the wall and searched frantically for this room. It was brutally ironic to see this man waving around our innocuous little sign and insinuating that we were somehow running a nefarious porn ring – in effect that we posed a danger to those in attendance, not the cops themselves.

#### Activism

Chanelle: Two days after the raid, the committee gathered in my kitchen for eight hours to share our shock, fear, guilt, and anger and then to strategize a response to the raid. To me, the raid on the Pussy Palace was clearly connected to the wide discretionary powers of the police to act against marginalized communities, evidenced in the historical harassment of gay men's sexual spaces (bathhouses, parks, porn bars) and 'community policing' of people of color in Toronto, and the domination of women through the incursion of a nonconsensual sexual gaze. It was with these broader social issues in mind that we began to design our responses.

Within the first two weeks after the raid, we produced a press release and fact sheet that were distributed to media outlets across the city. We organized a public meeting at the 519 Community Centre to provide a forum for community responses to the raid ("the 519," as it is called, primarily serves the gay and lesbian communities of Toronto). We invited several activists to speak with us, including Tim McCaskall who had been an organizer of the response to the original bathhouse raids. Never having been in this situation, none of us knew what to expect. We were stunned by the support for the bathhouse. It was an enormous success from an activist point of view. Hundreds of people packed into the room, expressing their rage at the police action and their desire to take immediate action. What had been a public forum became a spontaneous protest march on police headquarters. We had not anticipated this but quickly decided to endorse and lead the march. Within minutes, march marshals volunteered and were organized, bullhorns located, the media was called and hundreds of us spilled into the streets halting traffic and chanting "Fuck You 52 – Pussies Bite Back!" and "What do we want? Pussy! When do we want it? NOW!" At police headquarters, women staged a "kiss-in," we cheered, chanted, local media arrived to interview us ... and of course, the police arrived. They watched and waited until we dispersed, but made no move to interfere with our action. The raid had forced us into view of the state and many of us were left intimidated and unsettled by this sudden visibility and assessment. In the fashion of queer activists before us, we responded by refusing and reframing that attempt to shame and humiliate us.

Following the 519 meeting, we staged a "Panty Picket" in front of police at 52 Division where we arrived with a show of panties, garters, bras, boas and signs that shouted "Sluts Can't be Shamed." Following in the footsteps of recent reconfigurations of political protest in Canada, our style of activism is flambovant, fun, and unrepentantly pro-sex. Not long after that, we marched in the Toronto Take Back the Night where we may have been the first women in the history of the march to shout from bullhorns "Lesbian! Pornography! Into our Society!" We were delighted to speak to marchers and connect the raid to a broader-based political response to police harassment of women and people of color. This last Toronto Gay Pride (2001), we were chosen by the Pride Committee to lead the Dyke March. After nine long months of legal and fundraising strategizing, this came as a welcome boost to our efforts. The invitation indicated a wide base of support and allowed for a consolidation of political objectives.

#### Publicity

Media responses to the raid have been overwhelmingly supportive of the bathhouse. Toronto television stations and all three Toronto daily newspapers carried reports immediately after the raid and many later printed editorials questioning the motives of the police. City, community, and university radio covered the raid as well and conducted interviews with community and committee members. The alternative weekly newspapers such as Toronto's *Eye Magazine* and the Vancouver-based *Georgia Straight* as well as gay and lesbian media in both Canada and the U.S. came out against the police raid. To date, mainstream media has been in support of the bathhouse –

something quite remarkable given the diversity of media involved in this case. An editorial in the *Globe and Mail*, that most august of Canadian media institutions, chastised the police for their lack of restraint and common sense and stated that the police had "blurred the line" between enforcement and harassment ("Barging In" A14). A *Toronto Star* columnist speculated that the underlying reason for the raid was to demonstrate police resistance to Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino's mandate. "If the Chief had earned any credit in the gay community, and among mushy liberals, the cowboys (police) blasted it to smithereens" (Slinger A2).

#### **Police Relations**

A week after the police raided the Pussy Palace, our committee appeared before the Toronto Police Services Board. We expressed our concerns about the raid and our frustration at the lack of response from the police about the inappropriate and harassing nature of their actions. The Board passed two motions: a) to request a report from the chief of police concerning this matter; and b) to have the public parts of the report sent to our Committee. We waited but no information ever arrived. In January 2001, we made an appointment to make a second deputation at the Toronto Police Services Board.

Loralee: Prior to the date of our deputation a Superintendent from the Toronto Police Services contacted me. He told me that he had noticed our request and encouraged me to cancel the request and speak with him instead. He suggested that he could more effectively deal with our concerns. We agreed to cancel our request and meet with him instead. We had an hour-long meeting in February 2001. He admitted privately that the Toronto Police Service had made a mistake by raiding us and that in fact policing practice in Toronto had changed because of the fallout from the raid. He told me that he would find information about the internal investigation and forward it to me within a week. I called him several times to follow up, but he has never returned my calls, and has never made a public statement confirming the private admissions. That was the last we heard from the police.

#### **Police Liaison Committee**

Before the raid on the Pussy Palace, the chief of the Toronto Police had initiated a process to establish a police liaison committee with the queer community. Despite the grave concerns expressed by many members of the queer community in light of the string of police raids on queer establishments including the Pussy Palace, the working group, which was composed of community members, decided to proceed with forming this committee.

The Women's Bathhouse committee decided not to participate. We felt that the committee was a public relations facade orchestrated by the Toronto Police. While the police publicly indicated that they wanted to build bridges with our community, they remained unapologetic about raiding the Pussy Palace, and still had made no substantive changes in their policing practices. The police liaison committee encouraged us to bring our concerns to the token lesbian constable who had been assigned to them. We refused to do so because her superiors had already disregarded our concerns. The process of creating a liaison committee has allowed the police to ignore our complaints and instead defer them to someone who has no power to change policing practice. It is deeply disturbing that parts of our community saw fit to proceed with this committee immediately after the raid. The police wanted a rubber stamp from our community and they got it. By participating in the Police Liaison committee, Toronto's queer communities lost an important opportunity to demonstrate unified opposition to policing practices. The most compelling bargaining chip we had with the police was refusing to participate in this process. Many in our community worked in vain to stop the forming of this committee and then watched in horror as others happily surrendered this power to the cops.

#### Legal Defense

Soon after we were charged, the committee hired a Toronto lawyer, Frank Addario, to defend the women who were charged. Frank is well known for his defense of Eli Langer and Glad Day bookstore, and for his participation in the Little Sister's trial. Brenda Cossman, a University of Toronto law professor, also acted as our legal advisor. Brenda is known for her critique of the *Bad Attitude* trial, which she argues is increasing evidence of the sexual conservatism inherent in Canada's obscenity legislation.

Understanding the charges laid against us is a little confusing. There were no actual criminal charges laid against us. All the charges were laid under the liquor license act. Each of the two women whose

names appear on the special occasion liquor permit were charged with one count of serving alcohol after hours; one count of failing to provide adequate security; one count of serving outside the licensed area; and finally, three counts of permitting disorderly conduct. At this point we can say no more about these charges other than that they are unjustified and unsupportable.

Between October and December 2001 our case was finally heard in Ontario Provincial court. The basis for our defense was that the constitutional rights of the defendants were violated in the process of collecting evidence on the night of the raid. Our lawyer argued that the right to privacy of the defendants was violated by the presence of the male officers. We are still waiting for the verdict.

#### **Human Rights Complaint**

In March of 2001, six months after the raid, our committee filed a Human Rights Complaint against the Toronto Police Services Board, Chief Fantino and the five male officers who were present at the raid. This is the substance of our complaint: policing is a public service. In Canada, all services must be provided in ways that safeguard the Human Rights that are protected in the Charter. The Human Rights Code guarantees equal treatment regardless of sex or sexual orientation. In our Human Rights complaint, we assert that the police violated our human rights by: a) policing our event in a manner which is not consistent with the way in which other events (like weddings or bar mitzvahs) are policed when they have a special occasion (liquor) license; b) not conducting their liquor license search with female officers; and c) with regard to the chief and the Board specifically, by not providing training for their officers so that they would have some understanding of our community. We have requested monetary damages, an apology from each respondent named in the charges and, finally, an order directing the chief and the Board to institute mandatory cultural competency training around working with the queer/bi/lesbian/trans and gay communities, and in particular, the needs of the women in those communities. The Human Rights Complaint is a lengthy process. We are still waiting to hear whether our complaint has been accepted for review.

#### Fundraising

Fundraising is one of our biggest ongoing concerns. While we consider our early fundraising efforts to have been wildly successful

- we raised almost \$30,000 - those funds have only paid for the preparation of the court case and we estimate that we will require an additional \$30,000 to \$50,000 to carry the case through to its conclusion. Our small committee struggles to manage a complicated legal battle, mount a massive fundraising campaign, respond to media inquiries, and stay connected to other community groups who are fighting police harassment. We are now in need more than ever of new funding sources to maintain this defense.

There was never any question that we would need to resist the charges laid against the two women charged in the raid, only how we would pay for a legal defense of this magnitude. The bathhouse is not an incorporated charity and we have always run on a not-forprofit basis. At the time of the raid, there was very little money available for a significant legal defense of this kind. At our community meeting at the 519, Toronto city councilor Olivia Chow gave a fundraising pitch and to our utter shock, nearly \$10,000 was raised in ten minutes. Our fundraising has crossed the economic boundaries of queer communities – from a \$100 a ticket oyster bash to \$3 buttons with a catwoman graphic, to shaking our cans at the annual Pride weekend celebrations. The fundraising cabarets we held in a Toronto dyke bar probably best reflect the committee's style and approach – raunchy, sexy, funny, and loud.

#### **Pussies Bite Back and the Future**

The September 15 raid plunged us into a completely unanticipated long-term legal battle. While we are dedicated to successfully fighting the charges against the Pussy Palace, a focus on the court case exclusively was draining our excitement and our energy. Planning legal strategies and extensive fundraising activities were not what brought us all together. With our legal strategies in place and fundraising activities launched, we turned our attention back to what we do best – organizing bathhouses. Given that it could be years before all the legal issues were resolved, we decided not to wait any longer for another bathhouse since this would have been akin to effectively shutting the Pussy Palace down. In the spirit of resilience and defiance, we planned another bathhouse and called it Pussies Bite Back as a reminder that the women of the Pussy Palace will not take it lying down (so to speak).

To provide the police with fewer excuses for their "interest" in

our sexy little party, we decided not obtain a liquor license and to completely prohibit alcohol from the event. We tried to strike a balance between protecting ourselves from police investigation and not overregulating the bathhouse to the point where we were cowed by police powers. These acts of defiance are tricky when police have such wide discretionary powers to interpret the law – powers that have grown alarmingly since September 11, 2001. Not everyone is equally affected by the danger of police intervention either – women with children, immigrant women, women with a history in the criminal justice system, prostitutes and closeted women (just to name a few) may face greater consequences if they are discovered in a bathhouse or implicated in a court case related to one. These considerations strongly affected our decisions about Pussies Bite Back.

Like any embattled political organization, we chose our battles carefully by regulating some matters stringently (e.g., laws prohibiting drugs, minors, alcohol) and leaving others to individual interpretation by giving Pussy Palace guests information about laws, ordinances, and regulations and then letting them make their own decisions about their behaviour (e.g., nudity, sexual activity, 'obscenity').

Having the Pussies Bite Back bathhouse scheduled during Toronto's Pride week offered us some comfort, knowing that we would be able to round up thousands and thousands of supporters on short notice in the event of another raid. Thankfully, the bathhouse was a success and there was no police presence that we are aware of. Overall, it was the smoothest and most well coordinated Pussy Palace yet. We are now in the early stages of planning another bathhouse for early in 2002 with plans to develop the fundraising potential of future bathhouses for the legal defense fund.

#### Conclusion

In this article we have provided detailed description of our experience with the Pussy Palace. While these events most directly affect the queer girls in southern Ontario who frequent our events, they have broader implications for all queers and more generally anyone who is concerned about the erosion of civil liberties and the protection of human rights in Canadian society. Immediately after the raid, many of us on the committee were struck by how many people came up to us and said something like "You know my mother lives in the suburbs and she doesn't even know what a bathhouse is, but she is just outraged about what those cops did." People's lack of familiarity with the baths, or even with queer culture generally, did not prevent them from recognizing the indignity of men prowling around a women-only space.

This article has allowed us to express a modicum of the outrage that we feel about the police actions on that night. However, our critique has been blunted and constrained by the fear of reprisals from the police and regulation by the state. We have come full circle in our political efforts. We started the Pussy Palace because we wanted to address the invisibility and silence that surrounded queer women's sexuality in our community. We have certainly achieved a higher degree of visibility, but our ability to articulate a response to the raid must now be framed and limited by the exigencies of our legal battle. We have returned to a place of silence – this time a silence that is actively imposed by the police and supported by the state. This article is an effort to break that silence, to begin to speak candidly about the raid, and to ground that speech on the sexual and political ideals that originally catalyzed the creation of the Pussy Palace.

#### Update – September 2002

A great deal has happened since we wrote this article last December. Here is a brief overview of the major events:

1. First and foremost, we won our legal case! On Thursday January 31, 2002, Justice Peter Hryn dismissed all charges against the members of the Toronto Women's Bathhouse committee. Here are some highlights from his decision:

 $\rightarrow$  He ruled that the organizers and the patrons of the event had a reasonable expectation of privacy vis-à-vis men. He was very critical of the police failure to look for and use female officers.

 $\rightarrow$  He suggested that the actions of the police were analogous to a strip search. He recognized that strip searches were humiliating, degrading, and devastating, particularly for women and minorities.

 $\rightarrow$  He felt that the breach of charter rights was very serious. He stated that the "flagrant and outrageous" charter violations would shock the conscience of the public, that the police actions contradicted fundamental notions of justice, fair play,

and decency, and that they were patently unreasonable. Furthermore, he said, the police actions displayed a blatant disregard for the quality of humaneness that are shared by the Canadian public.

 $\rightarrow$  Finally, he found that the actions of the police "Bring the administration of justice into disrepute."

- 2. While we feel vindicated by this decision, the cost to all those involved has been significant. Our legal fees to date have topped \$60,000. To date our committee has raised \$54,000. We still welcome donations see below.
- 3. In June 2002 we held a second post-raid bathhouse: "License to Liq'Her." Happily, it involved lots of girl-on-girl action and no police.
- 4. In June 2002, JP Hornick and Rachel Aitcheson, or as we fondly refer to them, "the co-accused," were the grand marshals of Toronto's annual Pride parade.
- 5. Also in June 2002, Counselor Kyle Rae lost the defamation suit launched against him by the officers involve in the raid. Although the presiding judge described the officers' complaints as "flimsy," the jury awarded \$170,000 to the seven officers involved in the raid. Detective Dave Wilson, who led the investigation, was personally awarded \$50,000, while the remaining six officers each received \$20,000.
- 6. The Human Rights Complaint that the committee launched against the Toronto Police Services is currently under review by the commission.
- 7. And last, but not least, the Toronto Police Services remain unrepentant and unapologetic in regard to the raid.

Many thanks to Bobby Noble for his editorial suggestions, and input.

#### Works Cited

"Barging In." *Globe and Mail.* 25 Sept. 2000: A14. Slinger. "Bathouse 'Visit' a Message – But from Whom?" *Toronto Star.* 21 Sept. 2000: A2.

Donations to the Women's Bathhouse Defense Fund can be sent in the form of a cheque or money order c/o Good For Her at 175 Harbord St., Toronto, Ontario M5S 1H2. Or you can call 416.588.0900 and charge a donation to your credit card.

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