

# 'Lavender Scare' butches up the Caped Crusader

from page 15

ple on "morals" charges.

Indeed, the sort of intimacy between men enjoyed by millions of men in the early '40s was increasingly suspect by the end of the decade. Society moved quickly to restabilize heterosexuality and stigmatize many of the types of same-sex intimacy — sexual and nonsexual alike — that had been common during the war.

Margot Canaday notes in "Building a Straight State" that the architects of the 1944 GI Bill designed it intentionally to make ineligible for benefits those service members who

had been discharged on morals charges.

## The Lavender Scare

As tensions with the Soviet Union increased, psychologists, politicians and demagogues linked communism to homosexuality, arguing that communists and homosexuals were secretive and opposed to the "democratic" heterosexual family unit.

Even if homosexuals were not communist themselves, they could be blackmailed and strong-armed into complicity with communist schemes. Thus, the "lavender scare" — as historian Robert Johnson has called it — preceded

the "red scare."

In 1950, a subcommittee chaired by Maryland Sen. Millard Tydings convened to investigate Joseph McCarthy's notorious list of "205 known communists." Tydings worked to discredit McCarthy's claim, but in the process the subcommittee at least partially validated concerns that the State Department was overrun with "sexual perverts."

During the hearings, Nebraska Sen. Kenneth Wherry memorably claimed that as many as 3,000 homosexuals were employed by the Department. By the end of 1950, 600 peo-

ple had been dismissed from positions at the State Department on morals charges.

## Butching up Batman

How deeply the cultural climate influenced the creative forces at DC Comics is difficult to tell. Regardless, the charges levied by Wertham against Batman were bad for sales — parents might steer their children away from the title toward more "wholesome" comics and some communities might attempt to censor the comic book altogether. In an effort to combat the perception that their product was morally

see *Social Changes* on 26

Out  
to  
Eat

**Lupie's Cafe**  
HOME OF THE EMPTY PLATE CLUB!  
2718 Monroe Rd.  
Charlotte, NC 28205  
704-374-1232  
101-A Old Statesville Rd.  
Huntersville, NC 28078  
704-948-3959  
Email: lupie@lupiescafe.com  
www.lupiescafe.com

Your  
Restaurant  
Here  
as low as \$35

**GOOD OL' DAYS**  
Come Visit Your Friends  
at  
**GOOD OL' DAYS**  
The Arboretum  
3351 Pineville/Matthews Rd.  
704.543.4100  
Breakfast Served All Day!

Midtown Area | 901 S. Kings Drive | 704.334.4100  
University Area | 230 E. WF Harris Boulevard | 704.543.2432

Lasting memories... served nightly.

The Melting Pot is the most unique and interactive dining experience that is perfect for any occasion.

**The Melting Pot**  
a fondue restaurant

fine aged cheeses | assorted wines | seafood and steaks | chocolate fondue

www.meltingpot.com | fondue coast to coast | locally owned and operated