

The Front Page

May 24 - June 6, 1983

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RITA MAE ELICITS STRONG RESPONSE

Dear Editor:

I have been reading the *Front Page* now for over two months, along with the gay newspaper that is published in Tidewater. I never knew there were any gay publications handy in Tidewater until two months ago.

I have been living in Norfolk for a year now and since I don't visit the gay bars/clubs it was a pleasure to know that these papers did exist.

I have applauded every issue, but after reading the article done on Rita Mae Brown, I felt it deserved a standing ovation. The interviewer, Karla Jay, I feel did a fine job.

It is one of the best articles I have ever come across period.

Ms. Brown is indeed a very fine person as well as a beautiful-minded woman.

That article gave me hope because I thought I was the only one who was searching to be truly loved. I thought I was a few of the dying breed.

I am a black female gay person and I have found through experience that there are too many gay men and women who are into everything but the true essence of love, to love and to be loved a lifetime.

I have placed values upon my life and I don't want my life to be played with by anyone, therefore, my personal life is just the same.

Too many gay people for one reason or the other are afraid of commitment, of sharing their lives with only one person, and I don't understand it.

My life is no different from anyone else's except I am a female looking for a female to make lifetime commitments to. That's the only difference.

I'm 25 years old and I work hard trying to make something of my life. Because I am gay doesn't make one any less of a person, it doesn't make me want any less in my life. If anything, I want more. I'm not going to settle for less of anything because I am gay. I never have and never will.

Reading things Ms. Brown had to say, I felt as if I were reading some of my own words. It was really nice to realize that there was someone who shared some of my views the same.

I don't feel I'm too old to play games with someone or to find new lovers over and over again, but the point is I'm too wise to do these things now. I've had my share of all of it.

I want to grow gray and see there's someone growing gray beside me. If I'm going to rock in a rocking chair later in my years, I want to



Rita Mae Brown

know that there's someone in a rocking chair beside me rocking and I can reach out and hold her hand.

I don't plan to end up an old maid with cats. I don't plan to be 50, 60, or 70 and be alone. It seems that way now because it's hard to find someone who thinks the same as I. But Ms. Brown's article gave me more hope than I already had.

I often wonder about the gay people who now are young and into finding as many lovers as they can find. The ones who run around and are into the party side of life. I wonder do they ever stop to think about their lives 20, 30 years from now? As time passes, they won't find strength to party, to go to the clubs and cruise, pick-up, whatever. When they become 60, 70 years of age, are they going to regret the way they lived their young lives? I just wonder.

Loneliness is something now being young and vibrant. Loneliness turns to a pure bitch when we grow older and older.

My associates tell me I have got to be the last of my breed left because I cannot use anyone, I cannot go to the clubs and pick-up. I want to meet someone, learn to know them and go from there hoping love will appear. I just don't go for one night stands. I value myself higher than that, therefore, I value the self of anyone I meet.

So I say to Ms. Brown, it is not only her who is a public figure that can't keep lovers, it is also people like me, not so popular, but to give myself reason, I say because I take every part of me and my life very serious. My past lovers haven't been ready for that seriousness, therefore, I have lost lovers too, everyone I've ever had and I'm alone today because I won't change my want, my values, my beliefs, therefore, I too may very well end up an old maid with my cats.

To you, *Front Page*, I'd like to say you have a fine newspaper and I understand its circulation is great. I realize that the *Front Page* is criticized in some of Tidewater, maybe that's why the *Front Page* is read more than the Tidewater gay publication.

Your classifieds are great. They let people such as myself know there are places I can go to be with other people my kind except the clubs. It gives people the chance to meet other people. It's just a fine newspaper and I applaud you. Well done!

I think articles such as the one on Rita Mae Brown give a lot of the gay people a lot to think about, if nothing else.

I feel that your paper and your staff have guts and that says an awful lot.

I have always been interested in journalism of all kinds. Novels, short stories, poetry, etc. I volunteered to the Tidewater gay publication here to write some things for them. I sent copies of some of my writing ability to them, but none of it ever was published in their paper. I feel that they weren't ready for such and what I sent was basically my thoughts, my inner feelings, some of what Ms. Brown had said, but I understand that the gay community here isn't ready for the truth. So, be it as it may.

If this letter cannot be published in the *Front Page*, could you please make sure Ms. Brown gets it. I want her to know in many things she's not alone.

Keep up the good work *Front Page*. Thank you for your time, may God bless & keep you all.

"Kapey"

P.S. If you do decide to publish my letter, please do not use my name, but instead use my nickname. I am a freelance writer here and I just want to keep safe while I'm here. If for any reason, I can assist you in any way, please feel free to let me know. Again, thank you for your time.

Dear Michael Baker:

Thank you for running the interview with Rita Mae Brown. She's an excellent spokesperson and I agree with most of the positions she takes. However, I have one complaint: Why must she consistently intersperse what she says with four-letter words? They cheapen her and detract from what she's saying. She doesn't need them—she's thoroughly articulate and thinks well on her feet.

I agree with her remarks about lesbians' unattractiveness in ever-present work shirts as a symbol of self-hate, but that same principle may also apply to people whose vocabulary is like hers. Perhaps people who are unable to express themselves comfortably without gutter language are subconsciously seeking attention that they fear they would not otherwise receive.

One final question: Is her Ph. D. from the Institute for Policy Studies legit? I have been told that the IPS is merely a left-wing think tank. Are you sure it grants degrees? You ought to check that out. I'm not interested in discrediting her, but am a bit curious.

Do pardon the negative tone of this letter; I'm not normally this way.

You're doing a super job with the paper. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Vince Mayer

Dear Sir:

Usually, written articles never bother me, but the article written by that queer lesbian (Rita Mae Brown) in one of the issues of the *Front Page* got under my skin. Why do gay people think it's fashionable or chic to degrade Christ or Christianity? She degraded my Lord and Savior in her article and her use of four-letter words let it be obvious she is poorly educated. Why do gays want to associate themselves only with filth? This lesbian's article was very repugnant to me as a gay person. She definitely doesn't want to represent the upper-class gays. Let's pray that you don't pay this anti-social deviate money for her articles. You can get the trash she writes from any porno store or a trash can.

My prayers go out to this poor demented soul. She's pathetic. We gays have enough going against us without bringing the wrath of God upon us, also the wrath of the established

continued on page 10

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