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EVERY PRESCRIPTION FILLED TODAY HELPS US GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY TOMORROW

The Members of the Board of the William J. Fanning Foundation wish to announce the dissolution of “Buzzy’s Boys and Girls.” After over twenty years, we consider the task we originally set ourselves accomplished and wish to pass the torch to other agencies, such as those to which we have donated our remaining funds. We were founded by Rodney Manko, Joyce Alberts, and Brian Eschette in 1992 to carry on the work of Buzzy Fanning after his death. At that time, an HIV diagnosis was almost always terminal, and we strove to render emergency assistance to those afflicted, especially those at Charity Hospital and then Project Lazarus, Belle Reve, NO/AIDS Task Force, and Children’s Hospital; we particularly wanted to help those whose expenses were not covered by other sources, to help those who “fell through the cracks.” We were an all-volunteer organization that raised hundreds of thousands of dollars with almost no overhead or expenses, and these were largely paid out of our own pockets. Thus, virtually every dime raised went to needy clients.



The Board members have voted to distribute our remaining funds among the following agencies: Belle Reve, In This Together, and the F.A.C.E.S. program.

With full hearts and many fond memories, we wish to thank all of our supporters, volunteers, and former board members, living and deceased. We apologize to those we may have overlooked. Here is a partial list of key supporters:

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moments in gay new orleans history

by Frank Perez
E-mail: f.perez@sbcglobal.net
Photo by: Larry Graham, GrahamStudioOne.COM

“Book Review: *Man of a Million Fragments The True Story of Clay Shaw*”

Man of a Million Fragments The True Story of Clay Shaw. Donald H. Carpenter. Self-published. 2014. 669 pages.

Clay Shaw was one of the most fascinating and influential gay men in Twentieth Century New Orleans. Although he is remembered mostly now as having been the only man ever charged and brought to trial in the John F. Kennedy assassination, Shaw was also a successful businessman, a decorated war hero, an accomplished playwright and actor, and a French Quarter preservationist. Clay Shaw has long deserved a full length biography. Finally, Donald H. Carpenter has given us one.

The first thing one notices about the book is its length—669 pages. The author has done an amazing job of researching Shaw's life (there are 2,966 endnotes). While Shaw has been written about before, most of those treatments are found in the formidable body of conspiracy theory literature surrounding the Kennedy assassination. Unlike most JFK conspiracy theorists, Carpenter has adopted a solidly academic approach to his subject and has apparently exhausted every primary source document concerning Shaw's life.

Unfortunately, exhaustive research does not necessarily translate into accessible writing. As is, the book is burdened with entirely too much detail, including a tedious 236 pages detailing the day to day operations of the World Trade Mart (yawn), which Shaw managed. This is unfortunate because many readers may give up on the book in the middle of that morass. The book would have benefitted from a professional editor, who doubtlessly would have suggested the book be cut by a third and perhaps even half.

Nevertheless, the first section of the book which deals with Shaw's early life is fascinating and offers important insights into Shaw's success as a playwright and his work with Le Petite Theatre, as well as his time in New York. The book also offers a glimpse into an often neglected aspect of Shaw's life—his intriguing military career. JFK assassination buffs will devour the last part of the book which constitutes an incredibly detailed account of Jim Garrison's investigation and prosecution of Shaw. Future researchers will find a goldmine of information in this book; however, they will also be mad-deningly frustrated to discover the book contains no index. (The horror!)

Stylistically, the book is dry and consists of a long summary of chronological facts concerning Shaw's life, career, and notoriety. And while there is a wealth of good information included, a compelling narrative of Shaw's life never quite emerges. The man himself is smothered by an overabundance of minutiae. This is perhaps the book's primary flaw—the reader never really gets beyond the surface of the man. Sure, there are interesting and juicy anecdotes about Shaw, but they merely illustrate what is already known about Shaw—that he was graceful and intelligent, that he was charming and successful, that he was gay and into sadomasochism.

Larger questions, questions that cut to the core of who Shaw really was and what motivated him, are not dealt with. For example, Shaw was very chummy with long-time mayor Chep Morrison yet the book never addresses Shaw's attitude toward Morrison's well-known homophobia. How did Shaw handle that? Did Shaw ever try to use his influence with the Mayor to curb the city's aggressive persecution of gay folk? Why or why not?

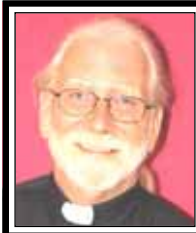
The same can be said about Jim Garrison. The author does make a few passing references to Garrison's closeted homosexuality and briefly discusses the allegations that Garrison molested a boy at the New Orleans Athletic Club but these issues are never fully analyzed or evaluated.

For those interested in gay history, the book does yield some interesting insights into Shaw's private sexual life and a few of his lovers. It also details Gene Davis' role in the Garrison investigation. Davis, a dubious figure who owned the notorious Wanda's, would later figure prominently in the story of the Up Stairs Lounge fire. There is also a passing reference to a Turkish Bath House on Canal Street that was apparently frequented by gay men. Readers should be aware that in several places, the author seems to conflate Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop with Café Lafitte (and later Café Lafitte in Exile). The building that now houses the Blacksmith Shop was originally Café Lafitte (opened in 1933) until that bar moved to the next corner in 1953 and became Café Lafitte in Exile. Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop did not open until 1958 (No, it's *not* the oldest bar in America).

The best way to approach this book is to think of it as three books: Shaw's early life, his work with the

Trade Mart, and Jim Garrison's persecution of him. Those interested in Shaw the man will enjoy the first part of the book. JFK assassination buffs will enjoy the last part of the book. Most readers, I suspect, will skim through or skip the middle of the book.

Donald H. Carpenter is from Baton Rouge and graduated from Kennesaw State University in Georgia. He worked for 25 years as a certified public accountant (CPA) in Atlanta and Nashville and has written a number of novels.



a community within communities

by The Rev. Bill Terry, Rector St. Anna's Episcopal Church, New Orleans
Email: fr.bill@stannanola.org

“Yes Lynette there is a God”

The following is a recent email from a parishioner who agreed to allow me to share her thoughts in a book I intend to write. But her dilemma, her challenges, her feelings are something that many share at any given time in their life. When bad things happen to good people what is going on? Instead of reading this and recalling the specifics recall her feelings and thoughts. To set the stage the person who wrote this is a Black woman from an extended family. She works very hard, attends church regularly, and is a surrogate mother for grandchildren. Her income is OK but not great. Mentioned below is “Johnny” who is early teens, shy, and very very gifted in his musical talents. In my response you will hear about “Lil” who is a drop dead knockout gorgeous young woman who has just hit 20 years old and has had struggle after struggle to get her life in order. She speaks with almost a whisper and wants so badly to be independent yet she is naive and fragile in so many ways. The parishioner we shall call *Lynette*.

So, Lynette writes:

My Daughter received notice yesterday that her whole department was being laid off effective 08/28/14. She was so depressed and neurotic that she comprehended nothing I was telling her. She tried to commit suicide by taking a bottle of Tylenols. After making her throw up and eating carbs to absorb the poisoning, she came around. She spoke with her therapist and went to sleep. She's having a hard time paying her rent; I borrowed money from my 401k to get school supplies and uniforms, food for 2 houses. Johnny, my grandson, may have to go to public school, it would be cheaper if she moved back in w/me, but I don't like my daughter. I love her dearly would kill for her but I don't like her ways, and we always butt heads. I just don't know any more. When things are looking up something always come to destroy the atmosphere. The older I get the harder it's getting. Is there really a God, if so why so many complication. It appears people who don't give a damn have such an easy life. Maybe it is just me and my family.

MY RESPONSE:

Yes, there is a God. Yes, it appears that people who don't give a damn have such an easy life. *Appears* is the secret word, believe me. If you travel to Mandeville, LA, for instance, you see some of the nicest homes. Most of the people are well dressed, often designer wear; they eat out a lot in good restaurants. Virtually all of their children are college bound. Mothers that are not professionals working in offices tend to be in the gym working out, playing golf with a group of friends, or doing service work in the community.

The men folk drive nice cars; many of these households have three cars: one for Dad, one for Mom, and one for the eldest child. Basically it is a charmed life. Now pull back the veneer. Dad is having an affair and drinks too much, Mom is neurotic with feelings of profound depression and thoughts of suicide, the kids started doing drugs in Junior high and for fun steal stuff from local stores for the rush. St. Tammany has one of the highest Teen suicide rates in Louisiana. Appearances are what people want to show you not what really is. Take you for example. You are quiet and a bit shy in some ways. So people in the church see you and often Kathy and think everything is fine. Good church women who knows maybe partners. It does not go much further than that. Appearances...yea...they show only what we want people to see.

And yes there is a living God. You and I both know the answer is yes but sometimes circumstances make us wonder. Why because it appears that God is not fixing “it” for us. That *free will* thing is a bitch. The prime relationship between God and God's people is based almost solely on *free will*. That tosses us all right into the muck and mire of everyday living. Those that oppose our personal choices or needs do so with their free will; Lil as an example got fired from a job once because she was late to work. After talking for a while she said she really didn't like the job so she didn't care about it. I am sure that showed through in her work habits and her demeanor. Free Will her choices not God's punishment brought her to being fired. The challenge is the offer and the hope of

[continued on 34]

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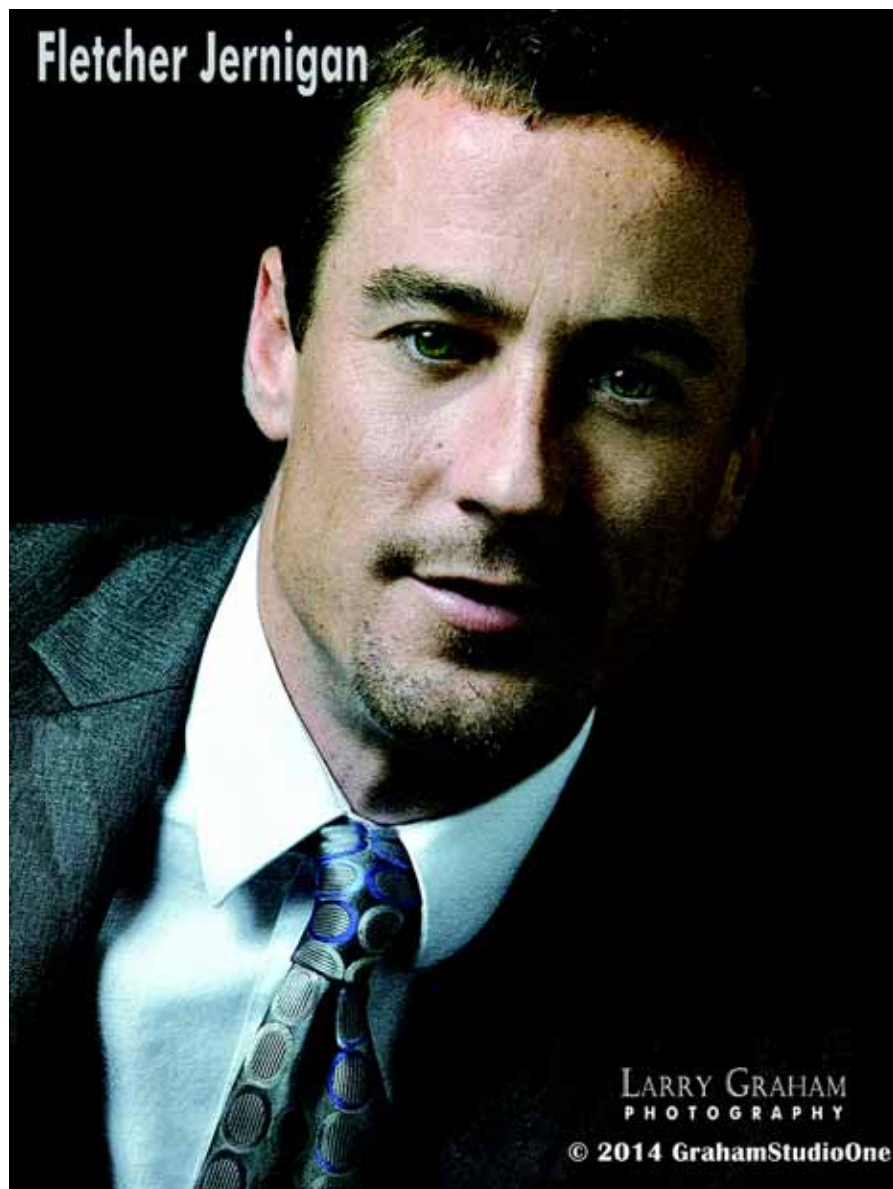
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