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Through Rainbow Colored Glasses

By Christine Dinsmore

My partner and I ran into Alix Dobkin's daughter, Adrian, toting her 2-year-old son, Lucca. After customary pleasantries were exchanged, Adrian turned to her tot and said, "These are friends of Grandma's."

Grandma? When did radical lesbian feminist Alix Dobkin turn into Grandma?

For that matter, when did Gloria Steinem become 71? And when the hell did I start spending more time thinking about the value of long-term disability insurance than the merits of long-term monogamy?

Before you baby-chick dykes turn the page rather than face another story about an old lesbian confronting her crow's-feet, or you young studs shudder at the thought of an off-key rendition of Elton John's "Circle of Life," I swear this column is relevant to you. Truth be told, we old-timers used to think the same thing—social security, pensions, old age, and death were our parents' concerns. But they snuck up on us as quickly as the first frost of autumn.

It turns out that as my generation becomes elders—next in line to drop off like flies—we have learned that history gets replayed over and over again. McCarthyism turned into the Moral Majority, which morphed into the Radical Right. Korea became Vietnam and Vietnam became Iraq. Richard Nixon begot Ronald Reagan, who led to Bush I and Bush II, each successive conservative making his predecessors look like flaming liberals in comparison.

For those of us who participated in Martin Luther King's Poor People's Campaign, we saw the stark realities of class and race in 2005. Hurricane Katrina revealed pockets of poverty and racism as ingrained and endemic as in the 1960s. Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty had been decimated by hand grenades lobbed at social safety nets by Republicans and Democrats alike—first by Reagan's mantra about the "welfare queen in a Cadillac," later by Bill Clinton's "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act," and most recently by Bush's proposal to rein in the humongous national debt through cuts in Medicaid, food stamps, and health insurance for uninsured kids. Turns out that life in these United States is just like Bill Murray's *Groundhog Day*. Only problem is, politicians don't ever seem to get it right.

Sound like the rants of a curmudgeon whining about the futility of activism, or the rocking-chair hippie attempting to thwart the idealism of youth? In reality, my passion for protest, ignited more than 35 years ago, continues to be fueled by hope. With a quixotic vision of what will come to pass during 2006, here are my predictions.

Before the dawn of 2007, Democrats will have the chutzpah to take a position guided by principles rather than polls. They will discover to their delight that when the party models itself after Maurice Hinchey rather than Joe Lieberman, Democrats will win back Congress.

During the next 12 months, Hillary Rodham Clinton will own up to having lesbian hair, styling her coiffure like another Clinton—Kate. Hillary for President fundraising will begin immediately after she trounces Jeanine Pirro in the 2006 Senate race.

Bush will set a timetable for troop withdrawal from Iraq—just before the November 2006 elections. But alas for the Republicans, it's too late. Pirro is just one of countless GOP losers on November 7. And before right-wing nuts can chant "Rick Santorum for President," Dick Cheney, Tom DeLay, and Bill Frist will be political toast.

Despondent that she no longer makes the public feel good about her bosses and her party, Condoleezza Rice will leave politics to record piano duets with Yanni. And Alix Dobkin will win the Grammy award for *Lavender Grandma Loves Lucca*.