

Ass you like it



A Chelsea spa's racy new anal-bleaching campaign brings the rear to the fore.

If the outpouring of negative letters in response to last week's Sex issue (TONY 627) is any kind of barometer, New Yorkers are more chaste than Pat Robertson at a Purity Ball.

Take the recent controversy over a Washlet bidet billboard in Times Square that ended in Supreme Court intervention and begrudging self-censorship. Perhaps a greater message is being sent that although New York may have been a shithole once upon a time, it's since cleaned up its act. So don't push it.

How then will the city's new cold-shower climate receive Enrique Ramirez, the 38-year-old owner of face to face nyc in Chelsea, who is rolling out a pro-anal-bleaching campaign on October 22? The edgy ads, which feature pretty boys in various states of undress (Ramirez included, above, in black), will appear on posters, in local

gay magazines and in phone booths along Eighth Avenue. The ad blitz promotes a cosmetic treatment that evens out the pigmented skin around the anus.

The procedure first gained notoriety at the Pink Cheeks salon in Sherman Oaks, California. In 2005, an episode of *Dr. 90210* made bleaching a national punch line. Still, face to face is the only local spa offering the service.

Ramirez already bleaches half a dozen anuses a week, but is the rest of New York ready?

Apparently not. One gym already asked him to take down the ad flyer. Rance Wright, creative director of the campaign, defends the ads as reflective of the services they sell. "We offer skin care," he balks. "Skin care isn't done with your clothes on."

Jillian Wright, owner of Glow Skin Spa on Madison Avenue, thinks the treatment may be too eye-rollingly L.A.—see Strippercize and kaffiyeh-chic—to generate any serious buzz. "There's no market for anal bleaching

on the Upper East Side, unless I'm in the dark," she muses. "No pun intended."

Jose Serrano, a minister at St. Columba Church in Chelsea, says his mostly senior-citizen worshippers are not easily shocked. "Our neighborhood is flexible and open," he says. "They would tell me if there is something here that is not good for young people—the last time, it was a gallery that wanted to depict Jesus in chocolate."

Stephen Fleming is face to face's webmaster and a walking billboard. "I'm like a girl who just got a boob job," he laughs. "I'm constantly showing my ass off at parties, and friends are always like, 'I'm jealous! I'm jealous!'"

Mark H., the Manhattan copywriter and critic behind copyranter.blogspot.com, says he'd love to see more local ads push the envelope: "It's going to force mommies and daddies to answer some questions, but there are worse things your kids could know about than anal bleaching."

—J. Egan and Fareed Mostoufi

For more info, go to facetofacenyc.com.

TONY poll:

Street lair

Some West Village residents are angry that Community Board 2 approved last Saturday's leather street fest without asking the neighbors first. Does the executive committee's decision reveal an unfair bias?

a. Yes. The chair is openly gay, and this is clear favoritism.

b. No. Only a Village idiot would think something is awry.

To vote, go to timeoutnewyork.com/poll. Replies must be received by 10am on Tuesday, October 16. Results will be published in TONY 630.

The borough standings

| | This week | | Last week | Reason |
|---|---------------|---|-----------|---|
| 1 | MANHATTAN | ↑ | 4 | Fired exec Anucha Browne Sanders won an \$11.6 million civil judgment against Madison Square Garden, Isiah Thomas was found guilty of sexual harassment, and the HR department at MSG issued team burkas to the Knicks' cheerleaders. |
| 2 | QUEENS | ↑ | 3 | Queens resident Dong-mei Li was so angry at Apple for slashing the price of its iPhone, she filed a lawsuit seeking \$1 million in damages. Her lawyers are considering a class-action suit for suffering related to James Blunt downloads. |
| 3 | THE BRONX | ↓ | 1 | A cop, a detective and an 18-year-old suspect were injured after a gunfight broke out on Webster Avenue. One bullet grazed the detective's forehead, another blew off the suspect's middle finger. That'll teach you not to flip off the po-po. |
| 4 | STATEN ISLAND | ↓ | 2 | A 12-year-old girl and her mom have E. coli after eating Topps beef patties, along with folks in seven other states. The Hamburger People respond: "But isn't that the official borough bacteria?" And then...they closed their business forever. |
| 5 | BROOKLYN | ↔ | 5 | Adding to a long list of diseases including typhus and cholera, biologists at the New York City College of Technology have learned that the Gowanus Canal is also infected with gonorrhea. Now that's a love canal. |

81%

That's how many of you think Lee Bollinger was right to allow Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to address Columbia U (TONY 626). Case in point, says one:



"If we halt debate, how will our students use their reasoning?"
—A. Babilonia, SI