

The Company Mitt Keeps Second Draft 25 Jan 2012
For Salt Lake City Weekly
Lynn Packer

Packer note: This is the first draft submitted Jan 27 to City Weekly to kick off the review process. There are still a lot of typos and disjointed transitions but you'll get the general picture. I'm submitting it as a PDF since editing will begin later after length, angles etc. are determined. A couple of sections are tacked on at the end, sections that could be incorporated into the main body.

There's one story angle that is played down in the draft that, perhaps, should be played up or turned into a separate piece written by someone else. When a committee was formed to promote the church nation and world-wide, promoting high profile athletes and politicians was part of the concept. Paul Dunn and his famous athlete/entertainer (Osmond) friends were part of that. The Olympics, big time.

Bowen was involved at the beginning. Tie the positive-publicity-as-missionary-tool to the widely believed "White Horse Prophecy," that the U.S. Constitution will hang by a threat and a church elder will save it, plays into the Mitt Romney run for the White House. When his father ran in 1968 White Horse believers thought he would be the one. (Glen Beck is among the current-day believers.)

The Company Mitt Keeps Is Gordon Bowen, his most powerful gay ally, an asset or liability?

(Editor's note: During the past 15 years Lynn Packer, while working as a television consultant in Germany and legal consultant in Utah, freelanced stories for City Weekly. Three years ago he consulted on a divorce case whose file was sealed by the court. After the case concluded key parties signed confidentiality agreements. Given the nature of facts Packer refused to sign.

Part of this story is based on that case. Due to the fact the court file remains sealed and some key sources are muzzled by confidentiality agreements some details of this story may never be known to the public.

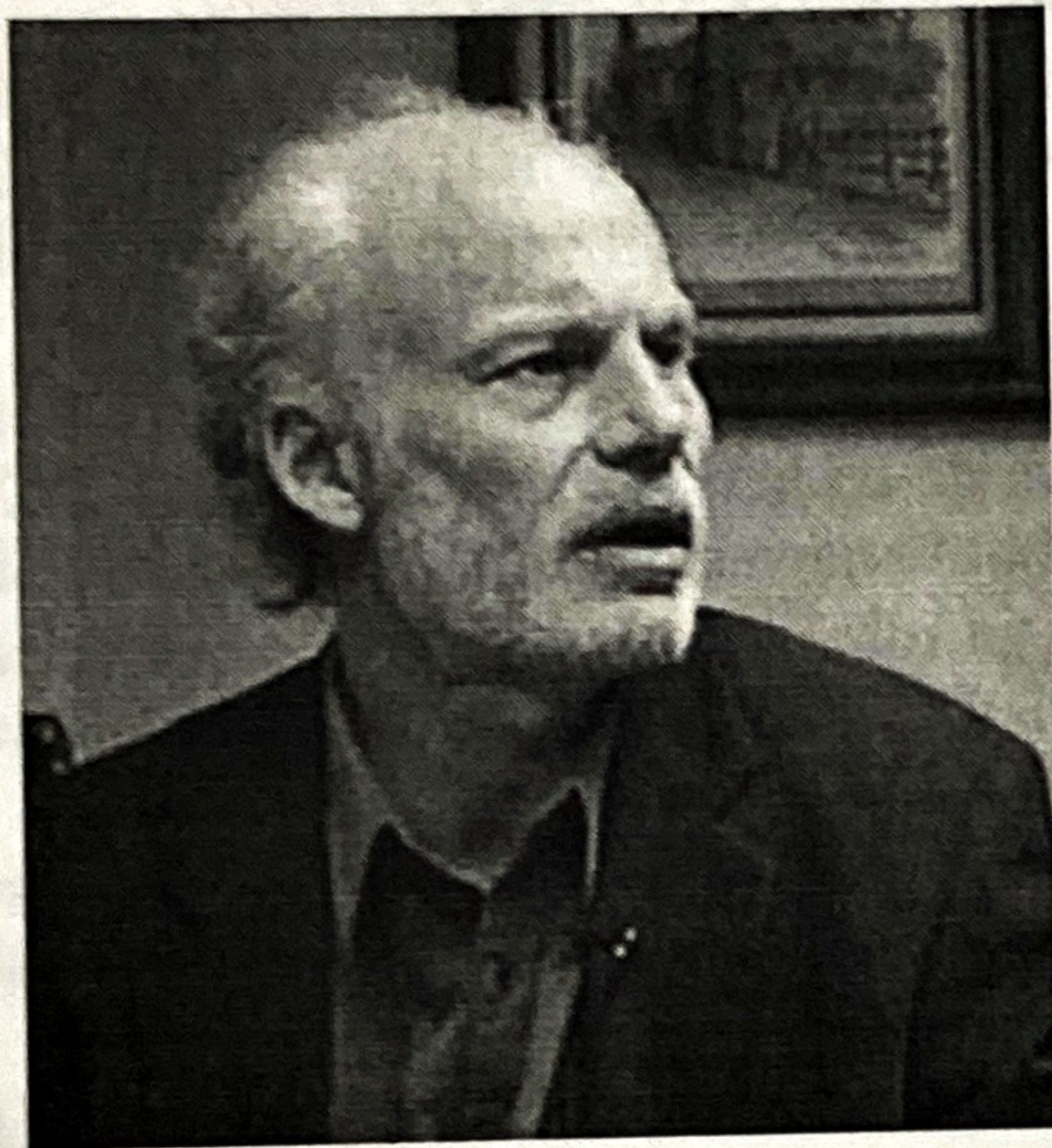
(Packer also covered the Utah Olympic Bid Scandal for City Weekly, winning the Utah Society of Professional Journalist's First Place Investigative Reporting Award in 2001. He interviewed Mitt Romney twice in connection with that series of articles. At that time it was known Romney was thinking about running for governor in Utah or Massachusetts.)

When Mitt Romney ran for Massachusetts governor in 2002, spring-boarding off his rescue of the Utah's Winter Olympic Games, some of his key campaign workers were openly gay. When Romney was elected governor he filled some top government posts with gays. As governor he approved gay civil unions.

Eight years earlier, when Romney failed to unseat Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy in 1994 he promised gay Republicans he would do more for "full equality" for gays, if elected, than Ted Kennedy. Although he stopped short of endorsing gay marriage.

Romney's moderate to liberal stance on gay rights should resonate to a great extent with most Americans who now support same-sex marriage. If he makes it past the Republican primaries he would face a President who also opposes same-sex marriage. So Romney's pro-gay position could be a plus, or at least not a negative should he become the Republican nominee.

The problem is getting there. For arch-conservative Republicans—tea partiers—anything remotely pro gay is a bad thing. That tail that wags the Republican dog forced Romney to flip part of position on gays over to flop.



Gordon S. Bowen

Far and away Romney's highest profile, most powerful gay friend and advisor is New York advertising powerhouse Gordon Bowen. Bowen helped Romney during the failed run for the Senate in '94 and then joined the Romney team in Salt Lake as creative director for the 2002 games, conceiving the game's motto "Light The Fire Within."

Bowen, earlier, also played a prominent role formulating Mormon Church PR strategy as a friend and advisor to the late President Gordon Hinckley.

It is largely undisputed that Bowen is an advertising genius. His "Membership Has Its Privileges" campaign for American Express is the only advertising to ever hang in the Smithsonian Institution.

But facing the tea party reality Romney shed some of his pro gay stand. It's one of the twists—flip/flops--of the 2012 run-up to the GOP nomination. But like a novel that takes more than one turn on its

way to what may be a dramatic conclusion the Gordon Bowen story is not that he is merely gay. A hidden story lurks beneath the surface. Over the years, even beginning with the early '80s when he worked for the OLDS Church's Bonneville Communications, he became known for erratic behavior including aberrant sexual conduct. His weird ways continued in 1991 after joining the New York ad agency McCann-Erickson near the time he began his friendship with Romney. Those vices were either missed or overlooked—the facts show mostly overlooked-- as Bowen became a friend and political confidant.

The press, as it should, will look under every rock of every candidate who seeks the presidency, to evaluate their character, their experience, who they rely on for counsel and who might fill important government positions.

There are a lot of reasons Romney's political handlers would now just as soon keep Bowen under his rock. The mere fact Romney was so close to any gay man could offend the religious right. Indeed, after Bowen helped with Romney's failed senatorial race in '94 Bowen's profile in the 2002 gubernatorial race and in the 2007 run for the presidency was kept very low, almost off the radar. Neither Bowen nor Romney will comment about any possible connection this time around.

In a 2008 speech attacking then presidential candidate Barack Obama Romney said, "To get a fix on who Obama is, one needs to look at Obama's longtime association with the Rev.

Jeremiah A. Wright Jr.” Substituting Romney’s name for Obama’s and Bowen’s name for Wrights: “To get a fix on who Romney is, one needs to look at Obama’s longtime association with Gordon Bowen.”

But Bowen’s Romney connection is arguable longer and deeper than Wright’s was to Obama. Two of Romney’s sons lived with Bowen in New York when they interned at his ad agency. Another son, Josh, who considered running against Jim Matheson in Utah, became friends with Bowen on his own right.

Who is Gordon Bowen?

Gordon Bowen, 62, is the co-founder of New York’s mcgarrybown advertising agency, last year named Ad Agency of the Year by *Adweek* magazine. You see a Burger King spot on TV. They did it. Ditto Chevron, Marriott and Verizon. Like Romney he’s a millionaire a few times over. But unlike Romney he was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth.

Bowen is the son of the late Wes Bowen a long time Salt Lake broadcaster and talk show host for KSL Radio. Despite Wes Bowen’s vice president status with the LDS Church-owned KSL—he wrote and delivered on-air editorials for the station—he was liberal and non-Mormon despite his parents being converted to Mormonism in England where Wes grew up. He was a paratrooper in the British army during World War II, worked as a Hollywood writer after the war, and segued his career into journalism after joining his emigrant family in Salt Lake City.

Prior to their divorce Wes and his wife Lucille had four boys and a girl. Gordon was raised non-Mormon, perhaps as an indicator of antisocial behavior to come, claims his father Wes sat by while a friend sexually molested him as a child.

Gordon Bowen struggled with same-sex attraction while he attended the University of Utah. He joined the LDS Church during his college years and began wrestling with his church’s position that it’s a sin to engage in homosexual activities, although not a sin to have sexual feelings for the same sex, a conflict that would play itself out in bizarre fashion as he rose to the top of the advertising world, making prominent and powerful friends, like Gordon Hinckley, Mitt Romney, and others along the way.

Bowen, in a letter, said he spent weeks, even months fasting and praying “trying to find the will of the Lord” and seeking personal revelation. He emphasized the importance of marriage. “It is in and only in the marriage state that we can become purified enough to be like him,” he wrote.

Bowen was obsessed with the notion of marrying a Highland High classmate, Barbara Boyce. It was God’s will. He needed a family to be saved in the celestial kingdom.

The two, Gordon and Barbara, went their own ways, both serving LDS missions. Initially Bowen’s obsession to marry her was unknown to Boyce. But that became all too clear in 1976, just before she married Steve Timothy, when she was teaching a class for missionaries. “Gordon pulls me out of a class I am teaching at the Salt Lake Mission home and desperately tells me he’s been on the mountain fasting and praying for 10 days and God has told him I am to marry him, not Steven whom I’m scheduled to marry in four days.”

Bowen eventually apologized for the intrusion and then penned a six-page letter offering some marital advice and asking to be friends.

During this same time frame Bowen was appointed to a special committee formed by media-savvy church president Gordon Hinckley. First named the “communications futures Committee” the committee was charged with remaking the church’s public image. Apostles

James Faust and Russell Ballard were members. Elder Faust, after timothy died unexpectedly of cancer, would later perform Bowen's marriage in the Salt Lake Temple and Elder Ballard would later offer counsel as the Bowen marriage unraveled.

Experts from around the world were brought in to formulate a new LDS PR strategy.; Bowen was working for J. Walter Thompson in Chicago at the time. Bruce Olsen, who was once the main spokesman for the church, recalled:

A number of people were involved in that committee. Gordon Bowen, for one, and others brought a great deal of expertise from their experiences in other places. Out of those recommendations grew a number of things that the Church does today. I'll mention two. One was the new logo of the Church.

Olsen also remembers the story when President Hinckley was asked by CBS 60-Minutes Mike Wallace to do an interview. Hinckley asked Olsen for advice:

Well, Bruce what did you find out? And I said, —Well, I called Gordon Bowen and he talked to some of his Jewish friends, and they said they wouldn't touch this with a twelve-foot pole. President Hinckley just shook his head, and I said, —but I talked to Steve Coltrin, and you know Steve, he's in public relations in New York, and he said he thought you should do it. President Hinckley said, —That Steve Coltrin's a smart man. We should listen to him. So of course he did the interview. And Mike Wallace came, and it was a delightful interview, and there was not a subject in the world that President Hinckley didn't tackle.

The interview which aired on April 1976 was considered among Mormons to be a tour de force. Bowen and Coltrin would go on to promote Utah's 2002 Winter Games and then, again, serve on Mitt Romney's host committee when Romney was raising money in New York for his 2007 run for the Presidency.

One of the outcomes of the committee's work was the celebrated Homefront series of television public service spots. Even the Mormon Church's PR effort during the 2002 Winter Games was an offshoot of their work.

In January 2008 TIME Magazine carried a piece on Gordon Hinckley titled "The Man Who Made Romney Possible." The report said, "But were it not for Hinckley's relentless 20-year publicity campaign to assure fellow Christians that Mormons, as he insisted, were not 'weird,' Romney would have had a much more difficult time overcoming the impression that many have of his faith."

The apotheosis of the normalization campaign was probably the Salt Lake City Olympics in 2002. Hinckley, says (Jan) Shipps, worked closely in the Games' administration with the their president and CEO, Mitt Romney. Arriving in the wake of a bidding scandal and budget shortfalls, Romney essentially saved the Games. "It was a great civic success for Salt Lake City," says Richard Ostling, author of Mormon America: The Power and the Promise, "a come-from-behind success for Mitt Romney that made his presidential campaign feasible, and it brought Mormonism very much to the fore, as the successful hosts of a kind of national festival."

In about 1982 Bowen left his job working for J. Walter Thompson Advertising in Chicago and returned to Utah as creative director for the church's "ad agency", Bonneville

Communications. He was eventually fired during his attempts to move up the power ladder and as stories of strange behavior circulated. But he used the success of Bonneville's Homefront series to parlay a job in 1984 with ad agency Olgilvy & Mather in New York. That's where his career skyrocketed when he worked on the American Express Don't-Leave-Home-Without-It "Portraits" campaign. Then in 1991 he was recruited by another agency, McCann-Erickson, to work on the mother of all ad campaigns—Coke.

In 1992, two years before Steve Timothy died of brain cancer, Bowen wrote an essay titled "Dearest Savior, My Sacred Journey Home" and dedicated it to "Barbara and Jesus, My Only True loves." His story is about a young, blond girl in a sea of men with small penises, doing penis exercises. The girl ends up being rescued by Gordon. It's a story Mrs. Timothy-Bowen would not come across until years later. After she bore a blond, blue-eyed daughter.

Meanwhile, that same year, Bowen was working in New York for McCann-Erickson on the prestigious Coca Cola account. And he was also named to a board supporting the nomination of Richard Eyre for Utah governor. Mitt Romney's father, George who sought the U.S. Presidency in 1968, was also on the board among other well-known dignitaries. Eyre had been a campaign worker for George Romney and in 1969 wrote his BYU master's thesis on the campaign. That led to a close friendship with Mitt. "As he readied himself for a 2008 White House run, Mitt Romney would turn over Eyre's main points to his own campaign team, determined not to fall prey to the same mistakes," wrote the *Washington Post*. Eyre ended up losing the Republican nomination to Mike Leavitt.

Still in 1992 Bowen, still riding his wave of success, was named to the "November Company", the term the George Bush campaign coined for its media operations. Bowen joined other prominent pitch men like Sean Fitzpatrick who came up with Chevrolet's slogan, "the heartbeat of America." After that Bowen had some campaign advertising cred.

Two years later, in 1994, the same year Steve Timothy died, Bowen went to work on Mitt Romney's attempt to unseat Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy. Bowen had recently been fired from the New York headquartered ad agency McCann Erickson and returned to Utah, in debt.

Bowen began dating his former Highland High classmate who was impressed that he had "close contacts with the Brethren in the highest echelons of the Church and with other important people in society like Mitt Romney."

In 1995 LDS Church President Gordon Hinckley sent Bowen a letter encouraging him to marry. Later that year Bowen convinced Barbara Timothy to marry him. Her father, based on reports that Bowen is gay, confronted his son-in-law and asked if he were homosexual. Bowen said no.



Barbara and Gordon Bowen
Wedding Day September, 1995

They were married in the Salt Lake temple in September, 1995. Mormon Apostle James Faust performed the ceremony. Luminaries like President Gordon Hinckley, Richard Eyre and Mitt Romney attended the reception.

Timothy-Bowen had three sons from her first marriage: Adam born 1978, Collin born 1981, and Eric born 1984. Bowen, according to the family, fixated on the two younger boys. He provided them with lavish gifts (like BMWs) and trips, inviting them to spend time in his apartments in Boston and New York, inducing them to sleep in the same bed with him.

Bed-sharing with men and boys had long been a Bowen



**Mitt and Ann Romney
with Gordon Bowen**

pattern. Several former co-workers said that on business trips Gordon would try to arrange hotel rooms with single beds. Many said they had, indeed, slept overnight in the same bed with Bowen. Some said other than sharing the bed nothing sexually happened. But two provided sworn testimony they were sexually fondled. One was a Brigham Young University graduate, who lived with Bowen in New York while pursuing a career in male modeling and acting, testified he frequently shared a bed with Bowen and exchanged massages. But once, he said, "Gordon's hand slipped down to my abdomen and pushing his fingers underneath the elastic band of my

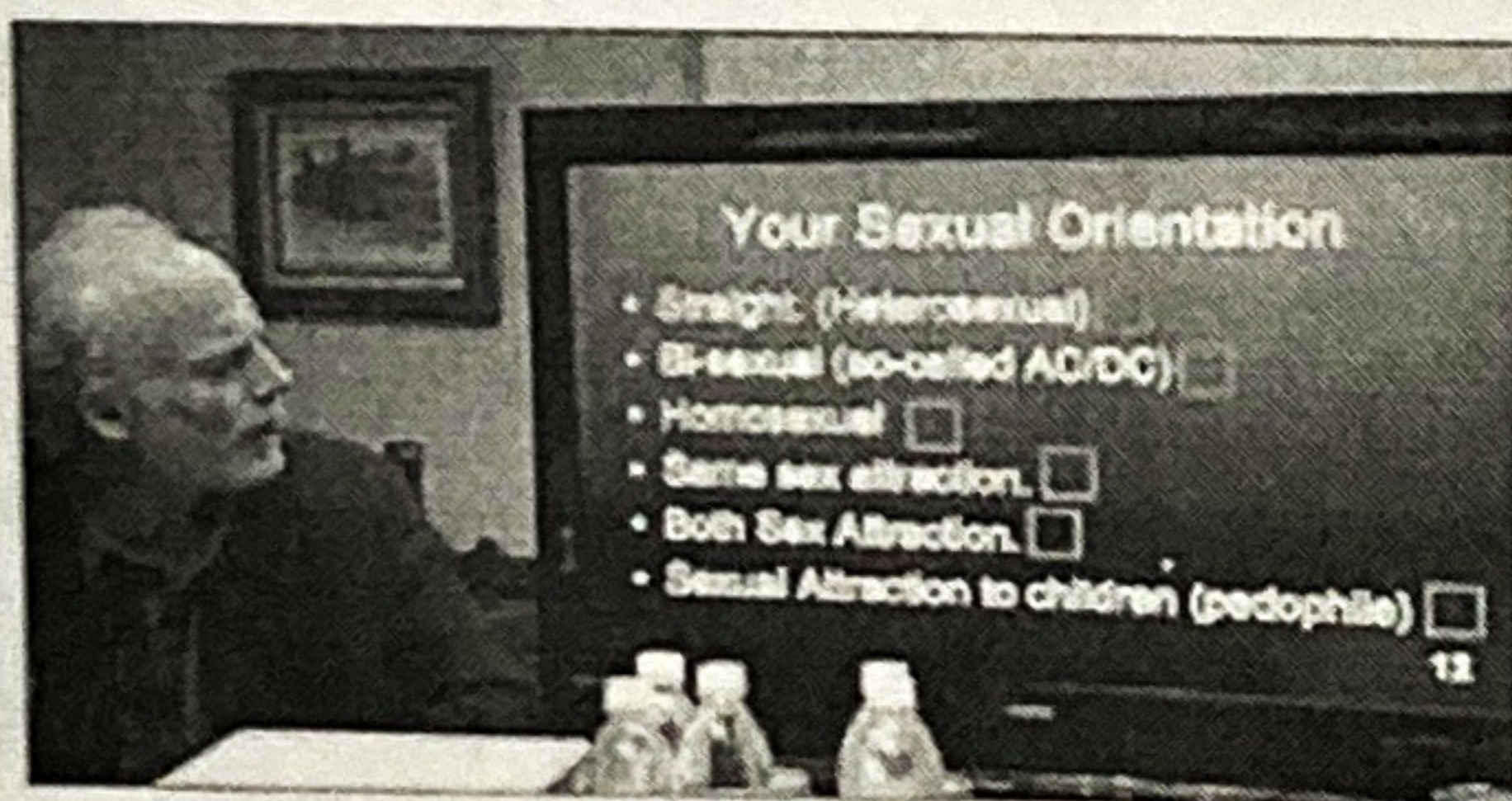
underwear, he slowly inched his fingers down into my public hair between the top of my public bone and the base of my penis."

In 1997 Bowen wrote a story, possibly a screenplay idea he was working on, titled "The Holy Dream" in which Gordon portrays himself a horse that is mounted by a naked Jesus, in order to help Jesus leap over a chasm. The narration is laced with phallic, homosexual symbolism:

"Jesus, gorged, engorged, throbbing with blood bursting in a billion veins, the whole man Stands, Erect. RISEN Full Frame in Celestial Flesh, the heavenly He, mighty arms outstretched, thrusts His holy hands full of force into the chomping, biting foaming mouth. Holding hard the sharp teeth and digging His nails into the slippery gums, He chins Himself up on the Great Jawbone. Free of the clinging cloth, He wraps his bare things around the hairy mane. The naked feet lock on the thick stiff neck. The hot Jesus does not just hand on...RISING STILL.HE MUSCLES His whole body... brain... breasts... bowels... balls...against the throat...the winnowing windpipe...of the black beast."



**Gordon Bowen, left, Gordon
Hinckley, right, Barbara
Timothy-Bowen second right**



**Bowen during a deposition:
Are you gay?**

During a deposition that was taken after he and Barbara were divorced, Bowen said he was merely writing down dreams, a hidden place inside his heart. At that point in the deposition, after declining to be pinned down about his sexual preference, he was asked again if he is gay. "At this moment in time," he said, "I don't know." At other times Bowen would admit tht he has "homosexual issues" and his journal writings described wrestling with efforts to get rid of gay spirits.

Meanwhile, in early 1997 the New York ad agency Young & Rubicam fired Bowen for misconduct including "strange behavior" he moved back to Utah to work as creative director for Robert Redford at Sundance.

In April, 1999 Gordon allegedly molested one of his stepsons, Collin, then 18, during a vacation in St. Johns. The incident went unreported for several years. "During the night I