

## Jackson sister says molesting lasted for years

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TEL AVIV, Israel — Pop superstar Michael Jackson's sister LaToya said yesterday that she believed charges he molested children were true. "I just think Michael needs help," she said. "This has been going on since 1981, and it's not just one child."

"I cannot and will not be a silent collaborator of his crimes against small, innocent children," she told a press conference in Tel Aviv.

Other members of the family called her a liar.

Jack Gordon, Jackson's manager and husband of four years, said Michael Jackson had threatened to kill her and tried to kidnap her twice to keep her from revealing his secrets.

Jackson said her mother had frequently complained that Michael was homosexual and had shown her checks to alleged victims' parents.

Jackson family members strongly denied LaToya's remarks in a rare group appearance at their home.

"It is absolutely not true, my brother is not a child molester. This has got to stop," brother Jermaine Jackson told KCBS television.

LaToya Jackson claimed her family was supporting Michael for financial reasons.

Jackson faces a civil lawsuit in Los Angeles from a 13-year-old boy who claims he was molested by the singer. Police are investigating, but no criminal charges have been filed.

The 35-year-old singer canceled a world tour last month and disappeared, saying he needed treatment for a painkiller addiction.

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making market that other 'zines never found. And because the costs of desktop publishing are fairly low, profits are easy to come by. "You aren't dealing with a lot of overhead here," says Paul West, publisher of Los Angeles's *Spunk*, additional progeny of the bar-'zine craze.

Within four months of its first issue, *Homo Xtra* had inspired West, a former advertising director for *The Advocate*, and Darryl Anderle, the magazine's billing manager, to launch their own bar 'zine in Los Angeles. Called *Planet Homo*, the 'zine swiftly duplicated the success of its East Coast counterpart. "We started it just as a hobby," says West. "We

didn't make calls for ads, so whoever wanted an ad had to call. It paid for itself the second issue." Circulation more than doubled to 15,000 in six months' time.

Less than a year after the first issue of *Planet Homo* appeared, West and Anderle sold it for \$50,000 to Peter DePlacido. On the premise that "the market can always bear another magazine as long as it's good," West turned around and started *Spunk*.

Beyond their easy profits and ubiquity in heavily gay areas of the cities they cover, at least one other measure of business indicates that the bar-'zine industry has clearly arrived. The competition between the magazines is far from friendly; lawsuits are pending between competing publications in both Los Angeles and New York. *Homo Xtra*'s owners are suing the publishers of *Next* in New York state court for filching information from the magazine in order to steal advertisers—an

allegation that Blair says is false.

The battle in Los Angeles is similarly litigious. West and Anderle are suing DePlacido for reneging on payments for *Planet Homo* and are in turn the target of a countersuit alleging that they violated the terms of the 'zine's sale by duplicating its format in *Spunk*. Both parties deny the charges.

For some, the lawsuits have poisoned the heady atmosphere that led to the creation of the 'zines in the first place. "It's a total waste," says Rita Boyadjian, publisher of *Female FYI*, a lesbian bar 'zine in Los Angeles. "I wanted to help better the community, and now I feel I've gotten wrapped up in something I don't want to be part of."

'Zine publishers are hopeful, though, that the potential of the marketplace outweighs the dangers of the cutthroat competition. "Zines came out at a time when older, more established gay and lesbian publications had left the kids behind," says David Gardner, the current publisher of *Planet Homo*. "They forgot about the whole new generation coming along, so 'zines really fulfilled a need."

Gardner, who is involved in a lawsuit against West too, also believes the long-range interests of publishers make the market worth fighting for. "It's the feeling that the younger age bracket is a viable market," says Gardner, who is also the ad manager for *Frontiers*, a gay biweekly magazine in Los Angeles. *Frontiers*' publisher, Mercury Capital, bought *Planet Homo* last summer. "We realize what happens to 20- to 30-year-olds: They grow up. So building loyalty to the market is important."

To Bank, the market for *Homo Xtra* in New York City was all too obvious. "People were frustrated because there was no good way to get information about nightlife and entertainment," he recalls. "There was a real vacuum when it came to

