

Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

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celebrating the lives and times of rainbow folk in Grand River country

Outlook Magazine

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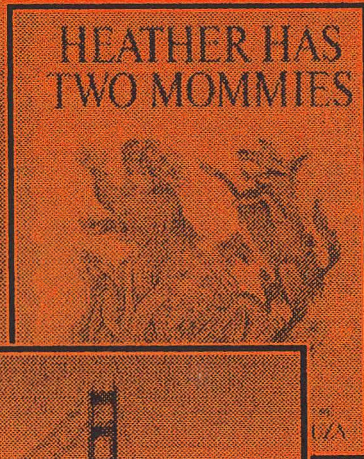
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OUTLOOK[©]

The Voice of Waterloo Region's Gay and Lesbian Community

Inside This Issue:

Shaping Minds:
A Look at
Gay-Themed
Children's Books



A Weekend In
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Ellen Update

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This issue of Outlook is dedicated to our dear friend and colleague Colleen Coolin. 1954 - 1997

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ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE RISES DESPITE OVERALL DROP IN CRIME

(Reuters) -- The New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project and the National Coalition of Anti-Violence released a report which said reports of violence against gay men and lesbians rose last year despite double-digit drops in violent crime throughout the country.

Reuters said in response to the report, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno issued a statement condemning the acts of violence. "Recent reports, including data from the FBI, have shown a disturbing rise in the number of hate crimes based on race, color, national origin, religion, and sexual orientation," she said. Reno called on Congress to improve the government's ability to prosecute and prevent such crimes.

Federal law does not currently allow for prosecution of crimes motivated by hatred of a person's sexual orientation. However, provisions under the 1994 Crime Act allow for stiffer penalties if anti-gay or anti-lesbian sentiment was found to play a factor in the commission of a federal offense.

The two anti-violence groups noted most incidents occurred in a public space rather than a gay bar or event. The report also noted a sharp rise in anti-gay violence during Gay and Lesbian month in June, when gay visibility is most strong.

The report noted anti-gay violence dropped in St. Louis, Phoenix, and New York City but rose in, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

NO GAY/LESBIAN ROOM AT THE INN

(NewsPlanet) -- Activists are outraged by a new law barring gay and lesbian couples from occupying hourly-rate "love motels" in a town outside of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The working-class community of Malvinas Argentinas ruled that all pairs admitted to such "transitory hostels" for the sharing of amorous delights "must be without exception a man and a woman." It is well-known that young

people who still live in parental homes -- or any other romantics who have a secret -- frequently find brief refuge in such establishments.

In response to charges by gays and lesbians that the law is discriminatory, Mayor Jesus Cariglino defended the law to the press, saying, "We would be discriminating if in this new by-law we had specified that fat people can't use them, or that preferably only blondes with blue eyes should go there."

BRIT GYM TEACHER FREED, FIRED

(NewsPlanet) -- The quirkiness of age-of-consent laws was highlighted March 11 when a British gym teacher was found not guilty of indecent assault charges when it proved that the female student she was involved with was 16 rather than 15 at the time. However, the physical education and science instructor was also fired from her job the same day.

The unnamed student was said to have become infatuated with gym teacher Ceri Bevan when they met on a school field trip Bevan supervised. The student somehow discovered a photo of another woman in Bevan's wallet and deduced that Bevan is a lesbian. Apparently the attraction was mutual,

SWEDEN ANTI-HATE BILL DEFEATED

as a few weeks after the field trip Bevan took the student for a ride in her car. For two years, the girl would sneak out of her house at night to meet Bevan for lovemaking after a drive to a secluded spot or to Bevan's home.

Bevan had stated consistently from her first contact with police that she had started the sexual relationship only after the girl had turned 16, the age of consent for lesbian sex in Britain. (The age of consent for heterosexual and lesbian acts is 16; when the Parliament reformed the gay male age of consent a few years ago from its former 21, it was unwilling to go any lower than 18).

Cardiff Crown Court Judge William Gaskill instructed the jury March 11, "Whatever you may think of the defendant forming a sexual relationship with one of her pupils, the criminality lies with the child being under 16. To convict her [Bevan] you would have to be satisfied that she [the student] was under 16 when the offenses took place. She [the student] started off by saying she was under 16, but when cross-examined gave various dates when she was over 16." The jury acquitted Bevan, who maintained that the charges were brought against her as an act of revenge after she'd ended the relationship.

While awaiting trial, Bevan was suspended from her teaching duties but received her full pay of 20,000 pounds per year. At the completion of the trial, a disciplinary hearing resulted in her termination. She plans to appeal that decision.

Tabloids dramatized the relationship between teacher and student as "lesbian sex romps" and "lessons in lovemaking," seemed to find it meaningful that the car in which Bevan and the student had their assignations was a white VW Polo, and inevitably emphasized that Bevan is blonde.

(NewsPlanet) -- Sweden's ruling Social Democratic Party has defeated two among a number of pro-gay bills introduced in Parliament this session.

One would have prohibited "Incitement to Hatred Against Homosexuals," a bill inspired by growing Neo-Nazi activity in Sweden which has included attempts to bomb gay and lesbian venues. The measure had the support of the Centre Party, the Green Party, the Liberal Party, the Leftist Party, and even some Social Democrats -- in fact, three Social Democratic Members of Parliament (Nalin Baksj, Johnny Ahlqvist and Juan Fonseca) had made two separate parliamentary motions against incitement. Nonetheless, the ruling party, aided by the Christian Democrats and the Conservatives, was able to defeat the proposal March 12.

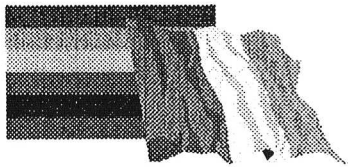
The Swedish national gay and lesbian advocacy organization RFSL (the Swedish Federation for Gay and Lesbian Rights) reports that the Social Democrats received considerable criticism for their opposition to this bill in the course of the floor debate.

The Queen of Sweden was recently embarrassed when a thank you note was sent in her name in response to a homophobic letter from Vera Oredsson, a leader of the neo-Nazi NRP (Nordiska Rikspartiet, or Nordic National Party). The letter warned of dire consequences for acceptance of gays and lesbians and its recommendations included, "If the illness is not dealt with in its early phase, only firm attacks will do." The Queen's small and harried public relations staff had simply responded with a form letter prepared in connection with a recent international conference on child pornography, an issue the

Queen has taken to heart.

A measure to establish a constitutional prohibition against any legislation which discriminates

against gays and lesbians has also been defeated in the Swedish Parliament.



ITALY'S LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY EMBRACES GAYS

(Washington Blade) -- Italy's largest political party adopted a Gay civil rights resolution on Feb. 23, according to the Italian news agency ANSA.

The adoption of the resolution came during the annual convention of the Democratic Party of the Left (Partito Democratico della Sinistra), which holds the largest number of seats in the Italian Parliament.

The ANSA report was forwarded to the Blade from the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C. A spokesperson in the Embassy's press office said they had no additional information on the resolution as of yet.

SWAZILAND REJECTS G/L GROUP

(NewsPlanet) -- The newly-formed Gay and Lesbian Association of Swaziland (GaLeSwA) has been denied recognition by the Swazi government. Prime Minister Dr. Sibusiso Dlamini announced the rejection in a media conference March 13. He believes that homosexuality is new to the country and is generally considered abnormal and unacceptable by the general public. He feels no need for the government to "condone" it until that's demonstrated to be the wish of the majority of citizens, and says they will have the chance to express their opinions in an upcoming constitutional review. He did note that no existing law or policy prohibits homosexuality and affirmed

the right to free expression.

GaLeSwA president Mangosuthu Dlamini says there has not previously been anyone to speak up for Swazi gays and lesbians in response to those who have abused them mentally and physically and have lobbied against them. The Mbabane-based advocacy group recently announced its formation in a statement which described their mission as establishing recognition of gays and lesbians as full and equal members of Swazi society as the traditional Kingdom becomes a modern democracy.

PRESBYTERIANS MULL GAY ISSUE

(AP) Religion Writer -- Seeking to make a definitive stand in the sex wars convulsing mainline Protestantism, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) made its ban on the ordination of homosexuals part of church law.

Less than a year after an Episcopal church court ruled it had no legal ground to censure a bishop for ordaining a gay man, regional bodies of the 2.7 million-member Presbyterian Church have voted to prohibit the ordination of individuals who are sexually active outside of marriage.

The ban got the majority it needed March 18 with approvals from presbyteries in Miami and Charlotte, N.C. The Book of Order the church's constitution will be amended to require chastity of single ministers.

"As far as establishing this is in fact the position of the church, that has been established," said the Rev. Robert Bullock Jr., editor of The Presbyterian Outlook.

An official announcement of the vote is not expected for some time as votes are sent to church headquarters in Louisville. But advocacy groups said the 172 districts so far have voted 88 in favor and 60 against.

The United Church of Christ is the only major Protestant denomination to permit the ordination of homosexuals. Opinion polls show a majority

of people in the pews oppose having gay and lesbian ministers.

But the issue continues to dominate the agendas of mainline churches. In a decision last May that averted the first heresy trial of an Episcopal bishop since the 1920s, a church court ruled that Episcopal doctrine does not explicitly bar the ordination of practicing gays. It also declared a 1979 resolution against the ordination of non-celibate gays is nonbinding.

The Presbyterian General Assembly, the church's chief legislative body, in 1993 affirmed past church policies forbidding the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals. The church's Book of Order, however, has not specifically addressed the issue of gay ordinations.

Last year, after a three-year churchwide study of sexuality, the General Assembly sent out a proposed constitutional amendment forbidding the ordination of individuals who fail to live "either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness."

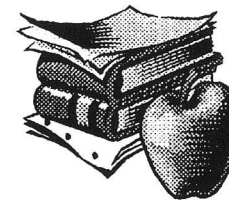
In practice, what the amendment does is give church policy banning gay ordinations the "status of church law," said spokesman Jerry Van Marter.

"It says to the country that Presbyterians are committed to reaffirming their biblical center for faith and practice," said the Rev. Jack Haberer, moderator of The Presbyterian Coalition, a group favoring the amendment.

Scott Anderson, co-moderator of Presbyterians for Gay and Lesbian Concerns, said the change will force more gay and lesbian Presbyterians out of the church. "It's one more club that has been used to beat up gay and lesbian people in the Presbyterian church," he said.

Still, Anderson said, activists have no plans to give up. In addition to the 60 votes against the amendment, he said there was significant opposition in many church bodies that voted for it.

"The Presbyterian church is a house divided, a church divided, right now," he said.



CANADIAN TEACHERS VS. HOMOPHOBIA

(NewsPlanet) -- As the British Columbia Teachers Federation held its annual general meeting in Vancouver, they passed by a large margin March 17 a resolution to develop anti-homophobia resources. The first step is establishment of a committee which will develop a report over the coming year. The priority for the education program is teachers themselves, to establish a norm against labelling, name-calling and stereotyping based on sexual orientation. The resolution was moved by Murray Warren, who says that although the education system already offers an anti-discrimination curriculum, teachers need further guidance as to materials and resources. He noted that the program would be entirely optional, and the Federation's president Alice McQuade emphasized that the resolution would never mean members were "going to teach children how to become homosexual."

Late last month, the school board of the Vancouver suburb of Coquitlam rejected a proposal to provide lesbian and gay students with counseling and other specialized services, although they passed a measure against discrimination and sexual harassment.

Elsewhere in Canada, the Alberta city of Calgary's public school board established new guidelines last month to create a "safe and secure learning environment" for gay and lesbian students and staff. Plans include making special counseling services available for the students and increasing awareness of homophobic harassment and violence. The move came despite objections from the Parents Response Association, which may bring a lawsuit against the school district.

35 ARRESTS AT NYC'S ST. PAT'S

(NewsPlanet Staff) -- ILGO, the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization, held its annual protest over its exclusion from New York City's Saint Patrick's Day Parade March 17. 100-150 demonstrators marched outside the New York Public Library with signs reading, "Homophobia is the religion of cowards" and "We will not be excluded." 35 arrests on charges of disorderly conduct and resisting arrest were made when protestors staged the traditional sit-in on Fifth Avenue in an effort to block the route of the main St. Patrick's day parade sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). AOH's position is that an identified gay and lesbian marching unit would hurt the parade's Roman Catholic values message.

That exclusionary policy led three of four

Democratic mayoral hopefuls to skip the parade. One of them -- Reverend Al Sharpton -- actually joined the ILGO protest, and accused his competitors of cowardice for not doing the same. Democratic mayoral candidate Sal Albanese and Republican Mayor Rudy Giuliani (green tie and all) participated in the mainstream parade, with Giuliani saying, "This is a parade about Irish pride, and June is the Gay and Lesbian Pride parade. They'll have a chance to demonstrate their pride."

ILGO has applied to join the main parade since 1991 and always been refused. They have held a counter-march each year but have been denied parade permits (despite a pending lawsuit) and so have acted in civil disobedience. Both the number of ILGO marchers and the number of arrests were lower than in recent years. ILGO member Ann Maguire told the press, "We asked the AOH to resolve this this year, but they wouldn't," and went on to say, "This is not over 'til it's over."

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TTC BENEFITS

(XTRA, 3/13/97) -- The Toronto Transit Commission is extending benefits to the same-sex spouses of its employees.

According to a one-sentence undated press release that was faxed out in early March, the decision follows the recent Ontario Human Rights Tribunal decision ordering Metro Toronto to extend similar medical and dental benefits.

ANGLICANS, TOO

(XTRA, 3/13/97) -- Gay employees of the Toronto Anglican Diocese now qualify for same-sex benefits. Diocese communications director Colin Johnson says the change was announced at the February meeting of the Toronto Anglican executive committee.

TRIALS OF LESBIAN MOTHERHOOD

(NewsPlanet) -- There may be plenty of lesbian mothers (and co-mothers) who manage to raise their children in peace, but they never seem to crack the headlines until they're in a courtroom somewhere. An outstanding foster parent in Canada is currently struggling for the chance to foster more children, while a dissolving lesbian couple in Philadelphia have been ordered to make their sperm donor a party to their custody battle.

Somewhere in the area of Edmonton, Alberta, an unnamed lesbian is fostering one child. The Alberta Foster Parent Association considers her to have been a "model" foster parent for 17 years now. However, earlier this year Social Services Minister Stockwell Day indicated in a letter to the Association that his department policy would now be to deny fostering to "non-traditional families," although he also promised that children presently fostered in such ill-defined homes would not be removed.

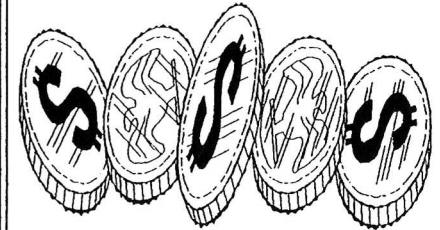
The government has since refused to place any

more foster children with the lesbian, and has made it quite clear to the Association that gay and lesbian couples will no longer be approved to serve as foster parents. The lesbian foster parent is now contesting the policy with the support of the Association, and is doubtless headed for the courts once she's exhausted the provincial government's internal appeals process.

Meanwhile, in a hearing in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania earlier this month, the judge insisted that the sperm donor who sired a lesbian couple's child by artificial insemination should be a party to their custody struggle. Of course, under the law of the state of Pennsylvania the sperm donor is "the natural father of the child," and Family Court Judge Allan Tereshko felt compelled by that law to order "the natural mother" to provide contact information for the donor.

That's fine with the biological mother, known as EPH, although she'd made a formal agreement with the donor at the time of conception, that he would give up any visitation rights and she would

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give up any rights to child support from him. It's also fine with the donor, who has kept his word about staying away for all five years of his daughter's life, although geographical distance led him to ask to participate in the trial by telephone. But it's not fine at all with lesbian co-mother JAL, who lived with the child from the time of her conception through her first year, but has not been allowed to visit her for nearly three years. Her attorney wants her to be viewed as "standing in the shoes of a parent," a non-custodial parent who like any other would be immediately granted at least some weekend and holiday visitation. JAL in fact had to win a whole separate action just to gain the right to sue for visitation. Neither attorney intends to call the donor as a witness.

ANTI-GAY GRIT MP DUMPED

(Toronto Sun) -- Her views on homosexuality cost Liberal MP Roseanne Skoke the nomination March 22 in the new constituency that replaces her riding, said a former supporter.

Janet Rosenstock of Ship Harbour, N.S., said Skoke went "way over the top" when in Parliament she accused homosexuals of hurting family values.

"People don't forget things like that," said Rosenstock, a novelist and long-time Liberal who in 1993 actively campaigned for Skoke.

Skoke was defeated by Francis LeBlanc, the Liberal incumbent for Cape Breton Highlands - Canso and her only opponent at the nomination meeting.

Immediately after her defeat, Skoke expressed an interest in running as an independent candidate against LeBlanc, and taking a run at the leadership of the provincial Liberal party.

Premier John Savage announced March 20 he was resigning as party leader.

Rosenstock scoffed at talk of Skoke entering the race to replace Savage. "Yeah, she and a cast of thousands," she said. "I can't say that anything this woman does surprises me."

The nomination meeting attracted about 1,900

registered voters - some of them first-time Grits who obtained party memberships to oppose Skoke because of her stance on gays.

ACT UP MARKS TEN YEARS

NEW YORK -- 10 years ago, a group of angry gay men gathered in the New York Lesbian and Gay Community Center and founded the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power. The goals of Act Up were simple: more money for AIDS research, faster access to AIDS treatments, and action to call attention to the disease and the community it was ravaging.

Act Up at 10 is now a shadow of its former self, but by most accounts, this is more a reflection of its success than failure. The one-time radicals screaming for access have been inside the gates now for some time.

Larry Kramer, the angry conscious of the organization, and Peter Staley, another prominent force in Act Up's development, consult regularly now with the AIDS powerbrokers they once decried as murderers. And while some may question the value of people now part of "the system," no one can argue with their accomplishments or the difficult battles fought to secure them.

Reinforced by a loyal army of angry demonstrators, ActUp representatives pushed the annual AIDS budget from \$290 million in 1987 to \$1.5 billion today. The span of time between development of new treatments and their administration to patients has fallen from seven or eight years to less than three. And more than any other gay group in history, ActUp forced its message into American living rooms and focused attention on its unapologetic demands for more action, more funding, and compassion for a community of people society wanted little to do with.

The ActUp working committees under which the group organized its various efforts spun-off

long ago to become active and enduring institutions in the community. The treatment and data committee became the Treatment Action Group (TAG), the housing committee broke off to become Housing Works, and the Gay Men's Health Crisis, sometimes described as ActUp's alter-ego, also got its start in ActUp.

Act Up in the late 80s and early 90s defined the styles and expression of an entire generation of gay men and women and transformed social activism from a quaint sideline into a community literally fighting for its life. For the people involved, ActUp channeled despair, anger, and fear into a common effort continually energized with the talents of people drawn into its orbit.

On its anniversary, survivors and veterans that have moved on to lead new organizations, serve on treatment advisory boards, launch periodicals, or fight a host of other different battles are indications only of a group that has accomplished what it set out to do.

Though some mourn its passing, ActUp chapters remain active, if vastly diminished in size and stature. If the goals of a radical AIDS action group seem out of place in today's environment, it bears a reminder today's environment is one ActUp struggled so passionately to create.



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GAY WEST POINT GRAD FIGHTS MILITARY OVER TUITION

DALLAS, Texas (AP) -- After an eight-year fight, the Army apparently has given up trying to collect \$76,000 in tuition from a West Point graduate who was forced out for saying he is gay.

Just before Clayce Rodamer was about to tell his story on ABC's "Nightline," Army officials called the program to say they were recommending that the Department of Defense stop collection efforts against him.

Rodamer, 32, said he was stationed at Fort Bliss in Texas when he acknowledged his homosexuality in 1988. Rodamer says he was told he could either resign or face a court-martial and possible dishonorable discharge.

Two years later, Rodamer says he got a form letter asking him to repay the government \$76,000 to cover his West Point education. With penalties and interest, that bill is now nearly \$175,000, he says.

APPLEWHITE SOUGHT CURE FOR HIS HOMOSEXUAL URGES

SAN DIEGO (CNN) -- The leader of Heaven's Gate, whose members conducted a mass suicide last month, met his co-leader at a hospital where he had hoped to be cured of homosexual urges, according to a report in The Washington Post.

Citing local news accounts, The Post reported that Marshall Applewhite was fired from his job in 1970 as a music professor at the University of St. Thomas in Houston after school administrators learned he had an affair with a male student.

Charles Krohn, a colleague of Applewhite's at the Catholic college, told CNN that he heard the rumors about Applewhite's conduct. "(But) I only heard those stories ... after he left," Krohn said.

The Rev. William Young, a former president of the Catholic college, told the San Diego Union-Tribune that school officials denied firing

Applewhite for a "morals problem." The school listed "health problems of an emotional nature" as the reason for the firing.

Friends and former members of Applewhite's group said that their leader met nurse Bonnie Lu Trousdale Nettles at the psychiatric hospital where he hoped to find a cure for his desires.

He told his sister, Louise Winant, that he had been hospitalized for a heart ailment.

Robert Balch, who infiltrated the group for two months in 1975, told the Post Applewhite felt guilty about his homosexuality and had told at least one male lover that he wanted a "platonic relationship where he could develop his full potential without sexual entanglements."

Applewhite's followers, Balch said, had to maintain a strict "no sex, no human-level relationships, no socializing" rule. James Lewis, who has studied Applewhite and Nettles' group for over two decades, said Applewhite "was so alienated from his homosexuality that he was teaching people not to have sex.

"He would put people of opposite sexes together and force them to learn to become neutral, non-sexual," Lewis, of the Institute for the Study of American Religion, told The Post.

Members of the group all had close-cropped haircuts and dressed alike.

Known as "Bo" and "Peep" -- and later "Do" and "Ti" -- Applewhite and Nettles spread their teachings as the way to a "next level" of existence, to be found in outer space. Applewhite insisted that his relationship with Nettles, who died in 1985, was non-sexual.

Robert Rubin, a member of the group 21 years

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ago, told CNN the group was required to abstain from sex. He suggested that the six group members -- including Applewhite -- who had been castrated had undergone the procedure to help ensure they remained celibate. Rubin said that when he was a member the group did not discuss mass suicide or castration.

14-YEAR-OLD AUSSIE SUES SCHOOL

(NewsPlanet) -- Openly gay student Christopher Tsakalos, age 14, today filed Australia's first lawsuit against a school for failure to protect him from violence and abuse. The target is Cranebrook High in Penrith, New South Wales, where Tsakalos claims teachers stood by and watched without intervening in instances of extreme verbal abuse, gang bashings by as many as 20 students, and an attack in which a pair of scissors was held to his throat. Tsakalos recently left Cranebrook, the fourth school he's had to leave because of attacks by other students. The principal there denies having ever received any complaints from Tsakalos, as well as denying that her staff failed to protect him.

The abuse has left Tsakalos enraged with the school and burdened with feelings of worthlessness that have driven him to attempt suicide three times, despite psychological counseling. He's now

pursuing his studies at home, reportedly having been advised by the state that there is no school which can guarantee his safety.

Tsakalos has the support of his mother, who says she hopes the lawsuit will prevent other families from having to face the same kinds of problems, and of the Gay and Lesbian Teachers and Students Association (GLTSA). GLTSA co-convenor Derek Williams says that his association receives up to 20 calls each week from students facing similar abuse, and that as many as 10 other lawsuits will soon follow Tsakalos'. A barrister on the case believes that the U.S. case of Jamie Nabozny, who was awarded a \$900,000-US judgement against school administrators in Wisconsin in 1996, has established a clear precedent that could lead to an award for Tsakalos of more than \$200,000 Australian.

George Green, New South Wales' Director-General of Education, denied that the problem

is widespread, but said his department was investigating Tsakalos' case with great seriousness.

BASHER ORDERED TO PERFORM GAY COMMUNITY SERVICE

SAN FRANCISCO -- The San Francisco Examiner reports a city bus driver has been ordered to perform 200 hours of community service with a gay advocacy or service group as part of his sentence for beating a gay man on a bus.

Court records pulled by the Examiner say 43-year-old Wardy Joubert justified beating a gay man on a city bus in July for violating biblical teachings. Joubert, who was off-duty at the time, witnessed the victim kissing another man.

In a statement to the bench, Joubert offered in his defense, "It's supposed to be Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve." On the advice of counsel, Joubert eventually pleaded no contest to felony assault and two hate-crimes charges.

Superior Court Judge Jack Berman sentenced Joubert to 90 days in jail and three years probation along with the 200 hours of community service.

ABC SAYS IT IS "NOT RESPONDING" TO FALWELL PROTEST OF "ELLEN"


BOSTON -- ABC told the Boston Globe yesterday it was "not responding" to Rev. Jerry Falwell, who has urged General Motors, Chrysler, and Johnson & Johnson to withdraw their April 30 sponsorship of "Ellen," the episode in which the lead character announces she is a lesbian.

A spokeswoman for ABC told the Globe the network has a longstanding policy of not discussing their sponsors and refused comment on the impact of Falwell's call.

A spokesman for Johnson & Johnson denied that Falwell or his supporters had anything to do

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in this show simply because it was not on our slotted schedule," he said.

The Globe quotes network schedules that it says indicates neither GM or Chrysler had planned to advertise on the April 30 "Ellen" episode.

ABC says Falwell's assertion that they had "withdrawn" in support of his call for a boycott was untrue.

U.S. RESEARCHERS IDENTIFY CELLS THAT SUPPRESS HIV

(Reuter) -- Researchers in California said on Wednesday they had identified cells that suppress the reproduction of HIV and their findings could arm scientists with new weapons in the fight against AIDS.

The cells, known as "naive" CD4 T cells, mount the body's initial response to infections such as HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. About half of all CD4 T cells circulating in a healthy adult are "naive."

HIV cannot replicate in these cells and, as a result, cannot directly harm them, according to a study by Mario Roederer, a genetics research associate at the Stanford University School of Medicine south of San Francisco.

"If we could figure out how they suppress replication, that could lead to a therapy," said Roederer, whose study appears in the April issue of the Journal of Clinical Investigation.

Stanford University said Roederer's findings were bolstered by the results of a similar study published in March that showed that HIV replication was impaired in naive CD4 T cells.

Roederer suggested that researchers could take CD4 T cells from people with HIV and allow the cells to multiply. This would eliminate the virus from their cells, he said.

"Then you could give them back their own virus-

free cells," said Roederer, lead author of the study.

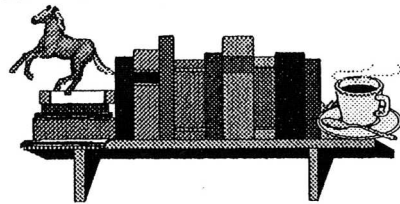
Roederer said his findings add to the evidence that something other than viral infection destroys T cells in HIV patients.

"Since HIV doesn't kill naive T cells, something else must be causing the loss of these cells in people with HIV disease," he said, adding that the deterioration of the thymus gland may be the cause.

All T cells migrate to the thymus -- a chestnut-sized gland at the base of the throat -- where they are "taught" to recognise foreign molecules, or antigens. The thymus then releases the T cells into the bloodstream, where they lie in wait to intercept invaders. Because they have not yet encountered any antigens, these cells are called "naive."

"Our current theory is that it's the destruction of the thymus that is causing the abnormally low levels of T cells," Roederer said. "But we don't really know."

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DUTCH GAYS WILL HAVE TWO WAYS TO GET HITCHED

(Rex Wockner) -- Come Jan. 1, 1998, Dutch gay, lesbian and straight couples will be able to register their partnership and gain every right of marriage except access to adoption.

Then around the year 2,000, Dutch gays and lesbians likely will be able to get married -- under the regular marriage laws.

The registration measure passed Holland's Second Chamber of Parliament in December with 104 of 150 possible votes. It now must pass the First Chamber but that is only a formality. The First Chamber only looks for procedural errors.

The Second Chamber, meanwhile, has begun debate on gay co-parenting in an attempt to void the adoption exclusion via a separate piece of legislation.

Should that measure pass also, there would be no differences between partnerships and marriages except when it comes to divorce. Married people have to go to divorce court whereas partnered couples would only have to go to court if one of the parties contested the breakup. Otherwise they would just unregister at City Hall.

Ordinary marriage is coming for Dutch homosexuals at the turn of the century, gay activists say. Parliament has instructed the government to prepare preliminary legislation by this August and a special committee is scurrying to determine what being the world's first gay-marriage country would mean for Holland's international agreements and relationships.

"The majority in Parliament is for gay marriage," said Henk Krol, editor of Holland's largest gay publication, De Gay Krant. "The minority in parliament says people in other European countries and in America won't understand us. We are already such a strange place for all the people around the world. What will be the rights of [gay] people married in the Netherlands when they go abroad? It will give us a lot of problems around the world. What about foreigners coming to the

Netherlands just to marry? So, we have to investigate how people around the world will react when we are the first to open up marriage for gay people -- that's what the minority says, and that's what is taking place now."

The research is being conducted by the Justice Ministry's Commission on Opening Legal Marriage, composed mostly of university folks and former politicians.

"The group is coming around to be very much in favor of saying someone has to be first [on gay marriage] and why not Holland?" Krol said.

The commission will report to Vice Justice Minister Elizabeth Schmitz, an open lesbian who, although worried about the international consequences, is also leaning toward supporting gay marriage.

The Second Chamber has said it wants to begin debate on the commission's report and the draft legislation by December of this year.

VIOLENCE AGAINST GAY BRAZILIANS COMES OUT IN OPEN

(The Chicago Tribune) -- Flamboyant homosexuality is widely accepted, with drag queens and transvestites greeted with smiles in public. It's the 'average' homosexuals who are viewed as a threat.

In a nation where the president kisses drag queens and one of the country's most beautiful women once was a man, violence against homosexuals is a growing problem.

The reasons are as complex as Brazil itself, a country torn between its mild form of Latin machismo and its reputation for Carnival eroticism and sexual tolerance.

"Brazil is a very tolerant country but also a very hypocritical one," said Veriano Terto Jr., project coordinator for the Brazilian Interdisciplinary AIDS Association, or ABIA.

"Homosexuality here is something exotic, and it's tolerated if it remains that," Terto said. "It's

when an average-looking guy who pays taxes falls in love with another average guy that there's a problem."

That "problem" was displayed in graphic detail when local newspapers published a photograph of a 20-year-old man who had been disemboweled, his eyes gouged out, and said the reason for his murder was the fact that he was gay. Authorities said 125 gay men were murdered last year for what might seem to be an odd transgression in a country as tolerant as Brazil.

While it's unclear whether attacks on gays are actually increasing or there are just more reports of violence, there is little doubt that homosexuals confront brutality.

In a 1995 study by ABIA, 59 percent of Brazilian homosexuals interviewed said they had suffered some type of violence as a result of their sexual orientation.

Many reported having been beaten, shot at or threatened by police officers or homophobic gangs

of men.

"There's a lot of prejudice," said Genildo Santana, a tall, slim gay man with a gold loop earring, white sleeveless T-shirt and denim shorts. "People walk by on the street and say things like 'Fags should die.'"

Even a high-profile actor such as Andre Goncalves isn't immune. The first actor to portray a gay character on one of Brazil's enormously popular nightly soap operas, Goncalves received death threats after taking the part--even though he isn't gay.

"He played a young man like anybody else, and that's what bothered people. He wasn't exotic," Terto said.

That difference, gay activists say, is precisely the problem facing most homosexuals in Brazil.

Violence against homosexuals is hardly a new problem in Latin America, or even Brazil. In 1591, a Brazilian woman named Felipe de Souza was tortured by the Portuguese Inquisition on

charges of being a lesbian. An International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission award now is named in her honor.

French colonists on the Brazilian island of Maranhao were equally upset in 1616 to find homosexuality among the local Indians. One individual, history records, was loaded into a cannon and shot out over the Atlantic Ocean.

In Brazil today, flamboyant homosexuality is broadly accepted. Drag queens on roller skates glide down Copacabana's beachfront Atlantic Avenue. Businessmen blow kisses to transvestites. Roberta Close, Brazil's standard of feminine beauty, was once a man.

At Carnival, everyone cheers floats covered with nearly nude gay men decked out in glittering wings and feathers.

The problem, gay activists say, is that while Brazilians celebrate flamboyant homosexuality as harmless fun with little connection to their own lives, many also fear everyday homosexuality as a threat to the country's Roman Catholic and increasingly evangelical Protestant norms, as well as its understated Latin machismo.

"It's a paradox," said Paulo Fernandes, the president of ATOBA, Rio's Gay Emancipation Movement. "The same people who clap during Carnival for the gays on the floats, throw rocks the rest of the year."

The intolerance is the result of far more than religious restrictions. AIDS, which has grown to epidemic proportions in Brazil, has made the country dramatically more homophobic in recent years, activists say.

AIDS also has cast a shadow over the country's widespread tradition of bisexuality. More than half of Brazilian men, ATOBA estimates, have had sexual relations with other men at least once. But what once was viewed largely as harmless experimentation has become a health risk, particularly as married men carry home the threat of AIDS.

Married women in their 30s are now one of the fastest-growing groups contracting AIDS in

Brazil, according to ABIA. And bisexual men, driven into the closet, sometimes are participating in attacks against homosexuals in an effort to hide their own inclinations.

"Married bisexuals don't see themselves as gay. They'll harass gay guys, even guys they've had sex with, just so they aren't identified," said Raimundo Pereira, vice president of ATOBA. "A lot of the killers are people who have slept with their victims."

As homosexuals have become increasingly marginalized in Brazil, in part because of AIDS, they also have become growing targets for Brazil's police officers, who traditionally have enjoyed broad support for their efforts to violently clear cities of "marginal" populations including street children, beggars and thieves.

In other cases, police simply look the other way when confronted with crimes against homosexuals.

"If somebody kills a gay man, the police say it was just a defense of honor. All the killer has to

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say is that the homosexual tried to induce him into sex," Pereira said.

Still, for the most part, homosexuals in Brazil have had an easier time than their counterparts in other Latin American countries. During Argentina's years of military dictatorship, homosexuals were routinely targeted by death squads. In Chile, homosexuality remains illegal.

In Brazil, by comparison, 74 cities including Rio have laws that forbid discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The country has no federal anti-discrimination law, and enforcement of local laws is sketchy.

Only one business owner, a hotel manager in the southern city of Porto Allegre, has received a formal warning.

Brazil's Congress also is considering a domestic partners law that would extend to gay partners rights to social security payments, inheritance and the Brazilian equivalent of a "green card" for foreign partners.

All in all, "this is one of the more open places for homosexuality in South America. It's better here than in some U.S. states," Pereira said.

But violence remains a problem. Like many gay activists, Pereira, who also works as a classical singer, has received death threats.

Bringing the problem to light, he says, is what may save his life and others.

"Before, in the dark of the night, no one knew how many died," he said. "Now, at least, more are speaking out."

GAY PARENTS RAISING HEALTHY CHILDREN, STUDIES SHOW

(Data Lounge) -- Supporting arguments made for years by gay parents and child welfare advocates, three separate studies conducted in the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands indicate children born to lesbian couples through artificial insemination are emotionally healthy and well-adjusted, the Associated Press reports.

Charlotte Patterson of the University of Virginia told the Associated Press, "When you look at these kid with standard psychological assessments, you can't tell who has a lesbian parent and who has a heterosexual parent," she said. "That's really the main finding from these studies."

The studies, presented at a national meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, found no significant difference in the healthy development of children conceived at fertility clinics by lesbian parents and those born from natural conception by straight parents.

None of the studies focused on child development above the age of 9, so there was no indication from this batch of research whether being raised by gay parents had any impact on sexual orientation.

NEW SEX-OFFENDERS LAW IN MICHIGAN RAISES GAY CONCERNS

DETROIT -- The Detroit Free Press reports a new Michigan law creating a statewide public registry of sex offenders has raised fears that gay

men who have been arrested for lewd behavior -- such a consensual sex in a public area or other minor offenses -- will appear on lists alongside rapists and pedophiles available to anyone in their community.

Michigan's law requires local police departments to maintain the lists and enter offenders' names into a statewide registry. The law, however, does not make clear distinctions about what kind of crimes should be entered into the system.

Civil libertarians and gay advocates note that because of confusion over the implementation of the new law, widespread inaccuracies are appearing on the lists. Michigan gay rights groups insist that until these problems have been dealt with, the registry has the power to destroy innocent lives.

The Los Angeles Times reported in February that California Department of Justice officials admitted to the newspaper that in the rush to compile and update decades-old criminal sex offender records, names were very likely being entered into the system that didn't belong there. Since there was no way make that judgement based on incomplete reports -- some which stretched back 50 years -- officials were erring on the side of "public safety."

The Times spoke with a 90-year-old Orange County resident who was arrested in 1944 for lewd conduct when police found him touching the knee of another man. 50 years later, his wife went to the mailbox to find an envelope addressed to him stamped in red ink with "SEX CRIME." The letter said if he did not register with police he would be arrested.

"ELLEN" DEGENERES COMES OUT

(NewsPlanet) -- Brace yourselves -- Ellen DeGeneres

is a lesbian! No, no, really...she is!!

"I never wanted to be the lesbian actress. I never wanted to be the spokesperson for the gay community. Ever. I did it for my own truth." So today's "Time" magazine quotes Ellen DeGeneres in her first formal public statement that she is herself a lesbian, and not just about to play one on TV as the lead character of ABC's "Ellen" who's scheduled to come out April 30. But personal truth and acting celebrity are a difficult mix, and it's been a long and winding road to perhaps the biggest lesbian self-identification in television history -- certainly the most by choice and one of the most proud. If it has also been the most media-managed coming out in history, it has been a campaign of desensitization.

When in the "Time" article DeGeneres goes on to say, "I always thought I could keep my personal life separate from my professional life. I mean, I really tried to figure out every way to avoid answering that question for as long as I could," absolutely no one can argue the point.

There has been so much tap-dancing around the issue in the press for the last six months that her ultimate coming out seems like a "freeing experience," to use DeGeneres' words, for media junkies regardless of their orientation as well as for her.

To many the biggest surprise was that the scoop



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went to "Time", when ABC has been promoting DeGeneres' scheduled appearance for an interview on their "20/20" newsmagazine April 25. Yet, the network is now heavily promoting the "Time" article. Their announcement avoids those nasty "L" and "G" words, saying nothing at all about DeGeneres coming out, and even now saying of the show only that it "is undoubtedly one of the most talked-about series currently airing on primetime television...with a groundbreaking episode which will surely make television history." The official announcement of the scheduling of the coming out episode used the "G" word for Laura Dern's guest-shot character and spoke only of an "intimate" aspect of DeGeneres' character.

DeGeneres told "Time," "When I decided to have my character on the show come out, I knew I was going to have to come out too. But I didn't want to talk about it until the show was done." It's been reported at every step along the way that DeGeneres chose to have the character come out, initiating the idea and advocating hard for it. So while she chose not to discuss her personal orientation until after the show was "in the can," perhaps in some sense the show was setting the stage for the personal statement, rather than the personal statement being delayed for the sake of the show.

DeGeneres says of her new sense of freedom, "Now I feel completely comfortable with myself and I don't have to be fearful about something damaging my career if it gets out, because now I'm in control of it -- sort of. No one can hurt me now." She's saying she's free of the fear of outing, and yet it's hard to hear these words without knocking wood, when so many careers have been ruined, when the rabid homophobes were already aiming at her show's destruction. But Amanda Barse, Dan Butler and Mitchell Anderson have paved the way to coming out and staying on the small screen; and DeGeneres has going for her a lot of powerful friends, a lot of fans, a prospective long-term relationship, a lot of brains and talent, a wonderfully supportive mother, and not least

of all, her truth.

ABC WON'T RUN GAY RIGHTS AD

(AP) -- A gay rights group that wanted an anti-discrimination ad to run during the "Ellen" episode where the lead character reveals her homosexuality has been turned down by ABC.

Despite the network rejection, the Human Rights Campaign said a majority of ABC affiliates have agreed to run the television commercial.

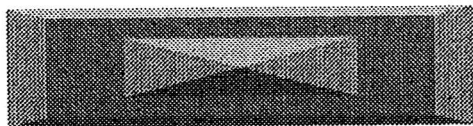
The ad depicts co-workers expressing surprise that a former colleague has been fired from a job because she is a lesbian. It is designed to build support for a federal law banning job discrimination due to sexual orientation.

ABC says it has a blanket policy against issue-oriented ads and this commercial fell into that category. "Topics of this nature are better discussed in news programs," said Janice Gretemeyer, ABC spokeswoman.

The rejection is ironic given ABC's hopes that the April 30 "Ellen" episode, which will feature Oprah Winfrey, Laura Dern, k.d. lang and Melissa Etheridge, is a big ratings grabber, said David Smith, a spokesperson for the campaign.

"They have determined that an actual depiction of a fact of life for gay people in this country falls under the judgement of controversial advertising," he said. "We strongly disagree with that judgement on their part. We believe they have made an error." ABC's decision is somewhat mitigated by its courage in permitting the "Ellen" story line and strong pro-gay corporate policies, he said.

Smith's group went the more expensive route of trying to persuade local affiliates to run the ad. Traditionally on prime time shows, separate time is set aside for ads bought through the network and through local affiliates.



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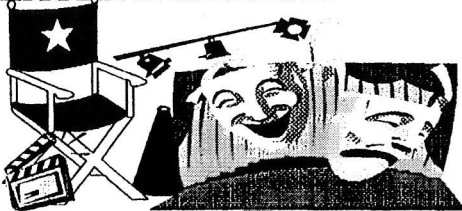


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ENTERTAINMENT



CANADIAN GAY COMEDY RARELY DULL

HEADS OR TALES (J'EN SUIS)

(Canadian, comedy, no rating)

By Brendan Kelly

MONTREAL (Variety) - The veteran Quebec team of director Claude Fournier and producer Marie-Jose Raymond are back on the big screen after a long absence with "Heads or Tales," a comedy about a heterosexual guy who pretends he's gay.

The pictures opened on 37 screens March 14 in Quebec, and is likely to clean up on local turf thanks to its broad-based sitcom-like humor.

The premise of Fournier and Raymond's script, however, is not all that original, and the predictable comic situations, largely based on spoofing all the usual gay stereotypes, will limit its reach outside Canada. The presence of Gallic starlet Arielle Dombasle may pique interest in France, though her part is a relatively minor one.

Homoerotic comic tone is set as the credits roll over shots of scantily clad Dominique Samson (Roy Dupuis) and Pierre Sanchez (Patrick Huard) in the midst of a sweaty wrestling bout. The two wrestling aficionados are partners in their own architecture firm, but they've barely dried themselves off from their post-wrestle showers when they discover that bailiffs are emptying their offices due to the company's heavy debt load.

With the business belly-up, they're both suddenly on the job market. Pierre almost immediately snares a teaching position, but Dominique has no luck. In desperation, he sells

an old chest of drawers to an antique dealer, Etienne De Beauregard (Albert Millaire), who takes a real shine to the young architect and shortly offers Dominique a job. There's only one small catch -- De Beauregard assumes that Dominique, who is married with kids, is gay, and it appears that the offer is dependent on Dominique being part of the family.

Urged on by Pierre, Dominique decides to take the job, which leads to a slew of comic scenes built around his rather preposterous impersonation. Pierre agrees to vamp it up as Dominique's boyfriend at various social functions; an unrepentant hetero, Pierre takes to the gay role with much enthusiasm.

Everything is going along just swell for Dominique until his wife, Maude (Charlotte Laurier), returns from vacation and discovers that her husband seems to have changed his sexual orientation. After meeting a few of his new friends and rifling through his gay-nightclub-themed wardrobe, Maude boots him out of the house. Dominique begins to question his sexuality and virility, but his worries vanish when he meets French designer Rose Petipas (Dombasle), who quickly reignites his heterosexual libido.

Fournier keeps the jokes coming at a fairly rapid-fire pace, and the seasoned writer-director knows exactly how to pull together an old-fashioned comic romp. It may not be the most distinctive material, but at least it's rarely dull.

Dupuis handles himself well in his first major comic role, and he manages to add a welcome human element to the goofiness. Huard, a popular Quebec comic making his bigscreen debut here, has a fairly one-dimensional character to play. Millaire hams it up big-time as De Beauregard, as does Normand Levesque as De Beauregard's hysterical friend Victor. Dombasle has little to do except look like a gorgeous French sex symbol, which is hardly a stretch.

Odette Gadoury's costumes are suitably ostentatious, while rocker Dan Bigras' score is surprisingly gritty for such a frothy comedy.

8TH ANNUAL GLAAD MEDIA AWARDS CYBERCAST BY PRIDE MEDIA AND COMPUSERVE

Los Angeles, March 19 -- The 1500 attendees of the 8th Annual GLAAD Media Awards got a look at the future of entertainment Sunday night, March 18, as the star-studded show at the Century Plaza Hotel & Towers appeared on home computer monitors via the World Wide Web. Pride Media and CompuServe arranged to make this important and entertaining event available for free, bringing Cher, Ellen DeGeneres, Lily Tomlin, Gregory Peck, Valerie Bertinelli, Kristine W., Jennifer Tilly, Malcolm-Jamal Warner, Gina Gershon, Mitchell Anderson, Garry Marshall, Ed McMahon, Ming-Na Wen, and more to home computers around the world.

"Pride Media is proud to be counted among those who helped to spread the message of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)," said Pride Media President, Bill Montgomery. "Our mission is to take the gay and lesbian community on-line, bringing news, entertainment, and much needed resources to people worldwide: for those who do not have ready access to organizations such as GLAAD; for those in the closet who need a safe place to explore their identities and belong to a community; for busy people who want timely information, easily accessible by computer." Pride Media can be accessed at www.pridemedia.com.

Television

ELLEN ON OPRAH

As all of us know by now, the coming out episode of the 'Ellen' show will be airing Wednesday, April 30. But, did you know she'll also be the guest on The Oprah Winfrey show the same day? Oprah airs locally at 4:00 p.m. on BBS.

TV MOVIES

Friday, April 18

No Blame, directed by Danièle J. Suissa. Famed Canadian actress Helen Shaver plays the role of a pregnant modern executive, Amy Donaldson, who has everything a woman could want. A loving and successful husband (Stephen Macht), a healthy son (Robert Bednarsk), and a loyal best friend, (Marie Christine Barrault). Then one day she tests HIV-positive. Canada, 1988. 10p.m. Chan.39

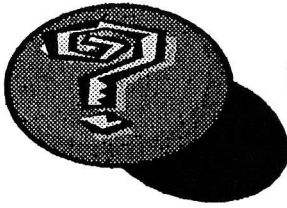
Friday, April 18

Chain of Desire, directed by Temistocles Lopez. Set in the present era of AIDS, this film chronicles the various out-of-the-ordinary and steamy sexual encounters among a group of unique Manhattanites. Starring Malcolm McDowell, Linda Fiorentino (Jade, The Last Seduction) Kevin Conroy, and Seymour Cassel. U.S., 1992. 12 a.m. Channel 39.



1ST ABC STATION DROPS "ELLEN"

(NewsPlanet) --Someone out there was probably running a betting pool as to which of the 223 ABC television network affiliates would be the first to refuse to air the April 30 episode of the sitcom "Ellen" in which the lead character comes out as a lesbian ... and if so, an Alabama station would no doubt have been a popular choice. WBMA-Birmingham president and general manager Jerry Heilman announced April 9 that his station did not find the coming out episode "appropriate for family viewing." He said the network refused WBMA's request to broadcast "Ellen" at 11:30 PM instead of 8 PM, and so the station will not show the first lesbian episode at all. Heilman said the station will consider future "Ellen" broadcasts one episode at a time and may reject the rest of the season if, in his words, "it deals with the same thing."



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- Fridays:
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Out for dinner afterwards.
- Sundays:
Run or Walk 8:15 - 9:00a.m.
Swim: 9:00 - 10:00a.m.
Out for breakfast afterwards.

Admission is free at the times we run, however, there is a \$2.50 charge for use of the pool. Hope to see lots of you there.

For more information please call Todd, Mark or Lindsay at (519) ██████████



GAY, LESBIAN & BISEXUAL YOUTH

A discussion group for gay, lesbian and bisexual youth (16-25) is currently running. If you are interested please give Rob a call at 570-3687.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Regional Pride Committee of Waterloo-Wellington is looking for volunteers interested in organizing this years Regional Pride Celebration.

This years event will be taking place in the Rotunda of Kitchener City Hall on Thursday, June 26th.

Co-ordinators are busy making plans for the event and are looking for assistance in organizing all aspects of the celebration.

If you're interested in helping or would like more information about the event, call ██████████ or check out our website at: www.rainbow.on.ca

It's time to take PRIDE in your community...get involved.



ACGWC DANCE

The AIDS

Committee of Guelph and Wellington County

is holding monthly dances the first Saturday of every month. These dances are for the gay, lesbian and bisexual community; and their friends. The cost is \$5.00 at the door and the start time is 9:00 p.m. Look for a different theme each month with door prizes, raffles and munchies at midnight. Please call the office at (519) 763-2255 for the location. The next dance will be held Saturday, May 3, 1997. Come on and have a great time!

CATE FRIESEN AND CAROL ANNE WEAVER

Cate Friesen and Carol Anne Weaver perform for a benefit concert in support of Leaven Inc. (a Christian social justice organization that does a lot of homophobia work in churches). Waterloo North Mennonite Church, June 13 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available from Gloria Nafziger (New Directions Counselling) 519-579-3394 or Reader's Ink Bookstore in Waterloo. Advance tickets are just \$10.00 or \$12.00 at the door.

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Colleen, a dear friend and active member our community died peacefully at home after a very courageous battle with cancer.

She was surrounded by her loving mother, brother, friends, and longtime friend and companion Julie Stumpf.

Colleen was co-host of the popular women's radio show "Womyn 2 Womyn" on CKWR radio. She was also a very active member of ACCKWA's volunteer team where she was involved with the support group and the buddy program along with numerous other committees over the years until she became too ill to do so.

Colleen was an avid women's activist, pet lover and when she wasn't shopping you'd find her fishing or on the phone. "Right on!" she would always say with that unforgettable smile.

She will be forever remembered as a loving, compassionate friend, who always thought of others before herself.

Party on! Colleen....You will be missed. ♥

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Shaping Minds

Cultural Warriors Want Place On Children's Shelves

by William J. Mann
(Reprinted with permission of the author; Copyright 1997)

Linda Guida is a children's librarian in upstate New York. Standing among the shelves of books and the rows of reading tables she is, in a very real sense, in the midst of a battlefield.

"Sometimes it sure feels that way," she says. "Every time a child picks up a certain book, I worry, 'Is this going to lead to a battle?'"

Those "certain books" happen to be the Gay-themed titles. And not just any book: what worries Guida most are the Gay-themed picture books -- Heather Has Two Mommies and Daddy's Roommate and their ilk -- the ones aimed at the youngest readers.

"I've had parents come to me worried about what their children are reading," she says. "It's funny how the picture books often cause the greatest stir. We had to remove Heather Has Two Mommies and Daddy's Roommate for a time." She says rather than risk a highly public controversy, the school board quickly acceded to the parents' demands to take the books off the shelves. "They didn't want a repeat of what happened in the city," she said.

"The city," in this case, is New York, where a protracted fight in

1992 over the inclusion of Heather and Daddy's Roommate in the school curriculum drew national headlines. Schools Chancellor Joseph A. Fernandez eventually lost his job over the "Rainbow Curriculum," an attempt to bring books representing a multicultural spectrum into school libraries.

The American Library Association noted a dramatic increase in reported challenges to Gay-themed books in public and school libraries after the New York City fracas, and the trend has continued unabated ever since. Some of the challenges have been successful, others have not.

The issue arouses fierce public sentiment, pro and con. There's an ongoing battle in Kansas City, Mo., over Gay-themed children's books in school libraries, where the Lesbian-themed young adult novel *Annie on My Mind* by Nancy Garden was actually set on fire in a public book-burning in 1993. In Rutland, Vt., last year, the public library had to ward off attempts by parents to have *Daddy's Roommate* removed from the shelves. And just last month in Anchorage, Alaska, the school board voted to keep as part of the curriculum the book *Earthshine*, which deals with a child whose father is Gay and has AIDS, after some parents had called for its removal.

"There's no question that Gay and Lesbian-themed materials in schools will continue to be lightning rods for the right,"



says Deanna Duby of People for the American Way. Duby tracks censorship issues for the liberal watchdog group based in Washington, D.C. "The right gets a ton of mileage out of these cases. Anything that mentions homosexuality in anything but a negative way can be charged with 'promoting a lifestyle.'"

Duby says that children's picture books are often the hottest issue.

"There's always more concern the younger the children are," she says. "The right loves to charge that [such books] are 'teaching sodomy to first graders.'"

Taking the offensive

Now the tables have turned. Alan Klein, national communications director for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, says his pro-Gay advocacy group is taking a different strategy in the war over children's literature.

"This time, we're going after them," he says.

The group recently spoke out against *Alfie's Home*, a picture book by Richard Cohen, through press releases and online postings. GLAAD accused the author, Richard Cohen of the International Healing Foundation, an organization advocating "reparative therapy" for homosexuals, of spreading "lies and myths about the Gay and Lesbian community."

The book, first published in 1993, tells the story of a boy who thinks he might be Gay. In the course of therapy, however, the boy realizes his attraction for other boys stem from being sexually abused by an uncle and from his father's neglect. *Alfie* ends up straight, even married to a woman.

Cohen, who lives in Maryland, says he believes that *Alfie's Home* presents an alternative perspective for "those who wish to change their sexual orientation."

"As a former homosexual and

psychotherapist, I am standing up for what I believe, and the journey that I have chosen," he says. "I respect the choice of those who wish to fulfill their homosexual desires. I would equally appreciate the reciprocal respect for my choice."

In any case, *Alfie's Home* is a first. There are no other such blatantly anti-Gay picture books aimed at children. In fact, Gay issues and characters have been treated quite favorably when they do (admittedly rarely) appear.

"I cannot think of a single trade book that has had a negative Gay character," says Roger Sutton, the editor of *The Horn Book*, an influential review of children's literature. Might then *Alfie's Home* signal a trend? GLAAD's Klein says he doesn't know, but he's cautious. "It very well might be a portent of things to come."

Shaping minds

Meanwhile, the children for whom these books are intended remain at the heart of the debate.

"The Christian radical right, for that's who really leads these protests, has the perception that we're trying to recruit children into homosexuality via these books," says Lesla Newman, author of *Heather Has Two Mommies*. "But Heather isn't about the mothers' sexual orientation. It's about a little girl who views all sorts of families around her. It's absurd to think some kid is going to read *Heather* and become Gay."

Indeed, the book is more about having tolerance for *Heather*, a little girl in a special situation, than for her mommies -- although there is a clear message that their family is equal to any other. It's that message -- some would call it subversive -- that so concerns opponents: Opinions formed at a very young age often last a lifetime.

"That's what so frightens the Christian right," says Newman, "who think we're

going to influence children's minds before they have a chance to."

Jill Karpf, a librarian in the Montgomery County, Md., public school system, said she she recently helped students research topics assigned for a debate class: the legalization of drugs, abortion, Gay marriage. One parent, getting a glimpse of the books his child brought home, complained to the teacher and got the Gay marriage assignment dropped.

"Not their kid being excused from the debate, mind you," Karpf says, "but the whole Gay marriage debate dropped."

Picture books, she says, raise even more hackles. A few years ago, after a parent complained, Karpf's school district forbade children under the fifth grade from seeing the book *Families*, which had won an award from the National Council of Social Workers.

"It's a wonderful book, with pictures of all kinds of families, including a Gay and a Lesbian family," she says. "But the county school district ruled it couldn't be distributed, couldn't even be shown to the younger children. Which was a real problem, since it was meant for younger kids."

She recalls that, during the controversy, one of the book's opponents was quoted in the media as saying, "These people [the book's proponents] are trying to get our children to think."

Karpf laughs. "Which is right," she says. "Isn't that the job of the school?"

Not everyone agrees on just what "the job of the school" should be. According to those who have led the fight against Gay-themed picture books in the nation's libraries (both school and public), such titles proselytize, teaching children values their parents would rather them not have.

"The whole curriculum is a smoke screen for promoting homosexuality," said Erin Harte of Concerned Parents of Educational Accountability, one of the many "ad hoc" groups that sprung up in

response to New York's Rainbow Curriculum. "It plants the seed early [that] children can either marry a man or marry a woman."

Guida says she was able to quietly replace *Heather and Daddy's Roommate* on the shelves of her public library after the furor in her town died down. Likewise, *Families* is now available again to younger readers in Karpf's library; the county school district's ruling was in effect for only three years.

"You have to weigh the needs of your community," Guida says. "We have more and more children now with Lesbian parents. We have to meet their needs."

Newman concurs. "The whole reason I originally wrote *Heather* was because I recognized there was this need. There is still a glaring omission of books on families other than those with one mother, one father, sisters and brothers."

She has helped correct that omission, following *Heather* with several other children's books, including *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride*. Michael Willhoite, author of *Daddy's Roommate*, has also penned other Gay-positive children's titles, including *Daddy's Wedding* and *Uncle What-Is-It Is Coming to Visit!!*

Bottom line

While the number of Gay-themed young adult books has risen steadily, the number of picture books has remained fairly static, in part perhaps because of the controversy. There are other reasons, of course, having to do less with content and more with the bottom line. Just who are the children who read these books, and how many are there?

David Gale, senior editor for books for young readers at Simon & Schuster, says it's hard to know what kinds of numbers Gay picture books really have.

"Everything's skewed," he says, pointing out the fact that so many Gay-themed

picture books come from small presses with smaller print runs. "It's hard to say what the market [for these books] is. There is a growing number of Gay and Lesbian parents, to be sure, and there are always those liberal parents who want their children to read about diverse families. But to get the numbers up to a point where a publisher will want to go with it -- that's a long way off."

As a result, there are precious few Gay-themed picture books, almost all published by the Gay small press Alyson, which put out *Heather*, *Daddy's Roommate*, *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride*, *Daddy's Wedding*, *Uncle What-Is-It Is Coming to Visit!!*, and others. Newman published *Too Far Away to Touch* with the mainstream house Clarion last year, but that's the exception -- and the book's Gay characters were not explicit.

A Question of Quality

Sutton, of *The Horn Book*, points out that among the recent surge in Gay-themed older children and young adult books, he's seen some "stunning" writing. Karpf, the Maryland librarian, says the work of such writers as Nancy Garden and Jacqueline Woodson are "good literature first," and then "good Lesbian-themed books."

Such is not the case, many believe, with Gay-themed picture books.

"These books tend toward the didactic," says Sutton. "Often when people write about social themes for children they end up being preachy. I've said that *Daddy's Roommate* is more for Daddy than for Junior."

"There are so few good picture books," says Simon & Schuster's David Gale. "So many are there just to teach a lesson or make a statement."

"More and more," says Elizabeth Ford, an associate professor of English at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pa., "children's literature is being seen as

a prescription to medicate children for some particular issue."

With such a small number of Gay-themed titles to choose from, librarians are left with few options.

Karpf says she could not recommend *Heather Has Two Mommies* to her school district. Though it's perhaps the best known of the children's titles, Karpf says "it's just not good literature." Instead she offers *Asha's Two Mums* by Elwin Rosamund, from an even smaller publisher: Women's Press of Toronto.

"I will not put a book on the shelf if it is merely didactic or of poor quality," says Karpf. "I don't care what it is."

Many librarians make choices based on the recommendations of *Booklist*, a publication of the American Library Association. The magazine has been friendly to Gay-themed children's books -- it gave good reviews to *Heather* and another Newman book, *Saturday is Patty Day* -- but it's picky about giving out starred reviews.

"Quality counts for them," says Karpf, who adds that if *Booklist* stars a particular review, she'll usually order the book.

Families is one of the very few picture books with any Gay content that has been starred by *Booklist*. So far, *Alfie's Home* has not been reviewed.

Ultimately, as Guida points out, it's really up to the librarian which books get placed on the shelves, meaning they not only wield considerable power but also important responsibility.

Conservative critics might agree with the assessment of the didacticism of Gay-themed children's literature. But *Alfie's Home*, too, exists primarily to make its point and send a message.

Literature professor Ford asks where, then, are the picture books that address the complex, nuanced realities of Gay life?

"Shouldn't books be less specifically about the condition and more about the character?" she asks. In particular, she

cites the lack of real exploration of gender issues in the existing Gay-themed picture books. Among the real-life themes for both Gay children and Gay parents is "gender confusion" -- a girl who acts like a tomboy and is ostracized by her friends, a boy who's called a sissy, a mom who's very butch, or a dad who's effeminate.

"There's a necessity of distance," she says. "Distancing the reader from a threatening [sexually ambiguous] situation." So far, such themes haven't been covered by picture books. Though Guida feels that such titles as *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* essentially are simple, safe, didactic books, she acknowledges that these titles serve a very real purpose. "Gay children's books are the needles in the haystacks of all the rest," she says. "Sometimes you can't even get them in bookstores. That's why I keep them on the shelves."

The one Gay-themed picture book she says she'll never order, however, is *Uncle What-Is-It Is Coming to Visit!!* In this, a boy and girl are fearful that their Gay uncle will turn out to be a drag queen or leather man. When he turns out to be Joe

Average, they're relieved. "What kind of message is that?" Guida asks. "If you ask me, that's as harmful as *Alfie's Home*."

Still, she says, "There is always going to be criticism within the Lesbian and Gay community about which books are the most appropriate for children. There needs to be an ongoing discussion."

That discussion will surely continue for some time. As each new battle is resolved, one way or another, another one appears. Of course, as Newman points out, the controversy over *Heather Has Two Mommies* and the others has had a beneficial kickback.

"It certainly made the book much more visible and known that it was," she says, noting the book's increased sales and placements throughout the country. Likewise, the same controversy could help *Alfie's Home* now, and other books that may come along like it.

For now it's clear that children's literature will remain a battleground for some time to come.

"It's a fight for the hearts and minds of our children," says Guida. "It's as simple and as profound as that."

-The End

DID YOU KNOW...

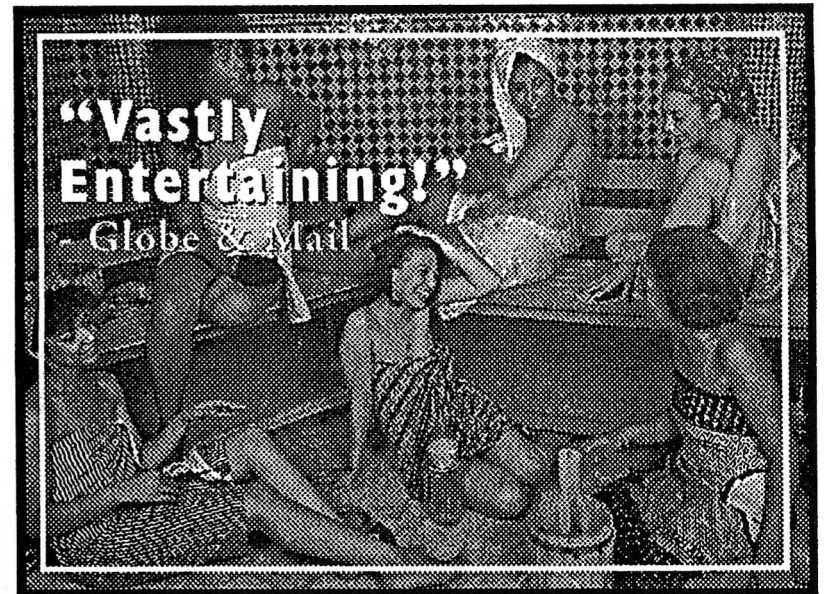
▷ Despite allowing the use of descriptive names in dozens of other events, such as the Rat Olympics and the Dog Olympics, the U.S. Olympic Committee went to court and spent \$96,000 to block the use of the name "Gay Olympics".

▷ In Arlington National Cemetery, the tombstone of veteran and gay activist Leonard Matlovich reads: "When I was in the military they gave me a medal for killing two men, and a discharge for loving one."

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- Steve Gravestock, FESTIVAL GUIDE.



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National Volunteer Week April 13 - 19, 1997

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Everyone has their own personal reasons for volunteering. These may include the desire to give something back to the community, help others, keep busy, meet new people, or gain new skills. Whatever the reason, everyone has something valuable to offer through volunteering.

Volunteering not only benefits organizations and our community in general, but also the volunteers themselves. The benefits to mental and physical health are widely acknowledged. Volunteering is a proven way to build self-esteem, self-confidence and a sense of belonging.

National Volunteer Week 1997

From April 13 - 19 communities across Canada will be celebrating National Volunteer Week. This special week is designated to commemorate the people who donate their time and energy to their fellow citizens and the causes they believe in. The dedicated work of volunteers is often unrecognized by the rest of the community. National Volunteer Week is meant to increase public awareness of the vital contributions that our volunteers make to our communities and to Canadian society as a whole.



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Volunteers form the backbone of The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and Area (ACCKWA). ACCKWA has about 140 truly remarkable volunteers who generously donate their time and skills on an ongoing basis. These dynamic individuals enable ACCKWA to provide services that could not otherwise be delivered. Also, their ideas, enthusiasm and commitment have put ACCKWA at the forefront of agencies providing AIDS support, education and advocacy programs.

Over the past year, ACCKWA volunteers have contributed 10,000 hours to the various programs and services that we offer. Wow! What incredible support these incredible people provide!

ACCKWA would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all our wonderful volunteers for their ongoing support and dedication throughout the past year. Your efforts really do make a difference in our agency programs and in the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS in Waterloo Region. Keep up the great work!

ACCKWA volunteers really are outstanding! They are an amazing group of dedicated people that put their hearts into everything they do. This Volunteer Week please join ACCKWA in thanking our volunteers. Let an ACCKWA volunteer know that they are making a difference in our community!

If you have any questions about ACCKWA's Volunteer Program, please call Tracey at 570-3687.

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San Francisco City of Pride

by Richard
Andrews
(Our World)

Preserving its heritage and ethnic flavor, San Francisco also succeeds as a modern cosmopolitan center to the people who inhabit its mix of pastel painted Victorian mansions and glass skyscrapers. The city is alive year round with parades and festivals honoring various cultures, racial groups and lifestyles. Nothing stays the same in this constantly changing place of pilgrimage.

The city itself, wedged between the Pacific ocean and one of the world's great natural harbors, has a resident population of some 740,000. However, the metropolitan area is home to almost 6,000,000 people--the San Francisco Bay Area. For traveling gay men and lesbians the City by the Bay is one of the must do destinations on their itineraries. Some arrive to find themselves, others just want to have fun in an openly gay atmosphere. It is the spiritual home to many gays. But to every visitor San Francisco is a place of wonder, vigor, power and love.

Having decided to take the plunge, you will be wise to pick up one of the local publications; the Bay Area Reporter, San Francisco Bay Times or The Sentinel. The Lesbian and Gay Switchboard is available Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., by phoning (510) 841-6224. The choice of gay and gay-friendly inns and hotels in the city offers something to satisfy every requirement that you might have. Price, atmosphere

and location vary in importance with each individual, and San Francisco has it all. Neighborhoods are a consideration when planning your trip to the city. Each area is distinct with its own attraction, but because there is excellent public transportation, no part of the city is all that far away from another.

For instance, you could stay in the Downtown area and be within easy walking distance to the Castro, South of Market and Polk Street neighborhoods. The Presidio, in the northern part of the city, was actually an army base covering 1,500 acres of mostly park land with hiking trails and beautiful views of the Bay and Golden Gate Bridge. Following the coastline along San Francisco Bay past the Marina District is Fisherman's Wharf. Somewhat touristy with shopping malls and an amusement park, the area is still worth visiting. Aquatic Park is the site of the National Maritime Museum and, in the Cannery, The Museum of the City of San Francisco offers an interesting exhibit highlighting the Earthquake of 1906. Shoppers will especially enjoy Ghirardelli Square where they may purchase some of those world famous chocolates. Leaving The Wharf you round the Bay by The Embarcadero, one of the world's great landfill projects and, at the foot of Market Street, Embarcadero Center, a huge complex of skyscrapers and pedestrian malls has been likened to Rockefeller Center.

Moving inland from the Bay is the neighbourhood of North Beach with Telegraph Hill crowned by famous Coit Tower (worth visiting for the views from its summit), and "the steps," a garden area including the Greenwich and Filbert Steps. This neighborhood was popular in the 50's with the "Beat Generation" and is also where you will find some of the city's best Italian restaurants. Russian Hill, a residential area, is the site of world famous Lombard Street, The Crookedest Street in the World. Pacific Heights is the place to go for a stroll through an architectural "candy store" of the city's wealth and heritage. Of particular historic note is the Spreckels Mansion on

Washington, across from Lafayette Park.


At Grant Avenue and Bush you enter Chinatown through a dragon decorated archway that welcomes you to shops, restaurants and atmosphere in one of the most densely populated and visited neighborhoods in the city. Japantown, bounded by Geary, Post, Laguna and Fillmore, is the place for exploring the riches of Asia, many excellent shops featuring imported merchandise being situated at the modern Japan Center.

San Francisco's Downtown revolves around Union Square with its posh hotels and smart shopping. Just southwest is the Civic Center, site of United Nations Plaza, City Hall and the Opera House. An unusual gay-owned restaurant just two blocks from Union Square is Dottie's True Blue Cafe, 522 Jones Street. Offering innovative daily homemade breakfast and lunch specials with weekend brunches, this eclectic cafe welcomes gay and lesbian visitors

from around the world.

Take the cable car up to Nob Hill, symbol of the city's pre-earthquake wealth. Today, the hill features three luxurious hotels, the Stanford Court, Mark Hopkins and the Huntington. The most impressive structure by far is massive Grace Cathedral, a Gothic-style church built of concrete to be earthquake proof, filled with exquisite stained-glass and art treasures. It is the seat of the city's Episcopal bishop.

The Polk Street area is one of the city's traditional "tres gay neighborhoods." Antique, curio shops, boutiques and bars line the streets, many gay-owned. For socializing try one of the neighborhood bars such as The Cinch, Giraffe, Kimo's, the Polk Gulch Saloon, or any of the many pubs on Polk Street, or the Mother Lode at 1002 Post Street. For food, try Stars Cafe, 555 Golden Gate Avenue or Grubstake II at 1525 Pine Street for dinner.



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Haight-Ashbury, once synonymous with counterculture, is today a quiet upscale neighbourhood wedged between two lovely parks, with attractive streets lined with Victorian homes. Haight Street offers unique shopping, art galleries, atmospheric cafes and gay bars.

The Mission District encompasses the city's cosmopolitan Latino population. The area around 24th Street is most colourful with all its wall murals. Attractive residential Dolores Street leads to Mission Dolores, one of the Spanish missions built in 1791. Also in the area is Valencia Street, center of the city's lesbian community.

The legendary Castro Street neighbourhood needs little introduction to gay men and lesbians. An area packed with gay stores, restaurants, bars and accommodations, it is an easy and interesting place to walk around. And speaking of walking, be sure to avail yourself of "Cruisin' The Castro," Trevor Hailey's comprehensive tour of the neighbourhood from a historical perspective. You will learn everything you want to know about the gay and lesbian community in The Castro and San Francisco from 1849 to the present during this fascinating walkabout, visiting all of the monuments and attractions, with brunch to boot.

People-watching at Castro restaurants is an art, and the selection of eateries is huge. Favourite spots include Bad Man Jose's on 18th, Bagdad Cafe at 2295 Market, Luisa's Italian on Castro, May's M&L Market at 691 14th, Ma Tante Sumi, 4243 18th, the Patio Cafe at 531 Castro, and the Zuni Cafe at 1658 Market.

Making the most of your time and money, an excellent way to experience San Francisco close up is with gay owned and operated Kent's Convertible Bug Tours. The easy going rides in a spiffy VW take you to areas the other tour operators can't even get to, and Kent will take your special needs into account or design a tour just for you. Day trips are also available to the Wine Country and the Redwood forests. "See the city like a native," says Kent.

However you decide to see the city, be certain to leave enough time for all of the attractions, nightlife and events that offer almost weekly. One thing is certain, the San Francisco experience is unique in all the world for gay men and lesbians.

NEXT MONTH:

Provincetown



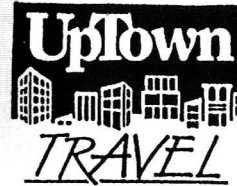
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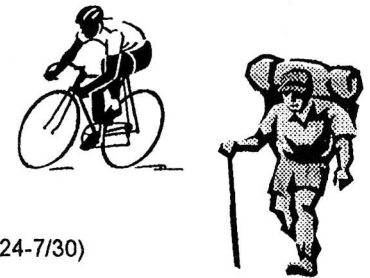
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The Gay Travel Calendar
 Your Guide to Upcoming Events Worldwide

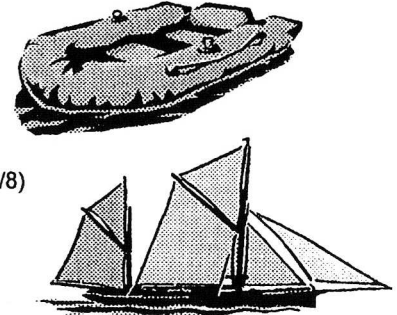
JULY:

- Bicycling Europe/7 day Tours (departing 7/1)
- Alaska Women's Yacht Trips (departing 7/1)
- Colorado Backpacking (7/3-7/7)
- Greek Isles/Turkey Cruise (Women) (7/4-7/11)
- River Rafting - Oregon (Women) (7/19-7/22)
- Spain (7/22-8/5)
- Alaska Inside Package Cruise (7/23-8/1)
- UTOPIA '97 - Russia (7/23-8/1)
- Lesbian and Gay Health Conference - Atlanta (7/24-7/30)
- River Rafting - Idaho (Women) (7/26-7/31)
- Men's Hawaii Gathering/Conference (7/27-8/2)



AUGUST:

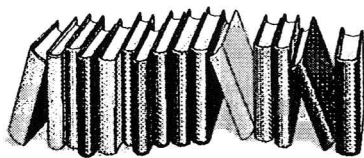
- Alaska Women's Yacht Trips (8/1)
- Pride Amsterdam (8/1-8/4)
- Great Britain - Edinburgh Festival (8/1-8/11)
- White Party - Montreal (8/2)
- Denali Park Alaska Backpacking (Women) (8/2-8/8)
- India Trek (Mix) (8/2-8/24)
- River Rafting - California (Women) (8/3-8/5)
- Colorado Hiking (8/3-8/9)
- Backpack in the Montana Wilderness (8/3-8/9)
- Atlantis Windstar Cruise (Men) (8/16-8/23)
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BOYS LIKE US

Edited by Patrick Merla



Boys Like Us presents the true "coming out" stories of a stellar line-up of gay writers, spanning two generations.

Written specifically for this collection, these are powerful, often stunning evocations of the primal process by which men come to terms with their desire for other men.

Coming out is undeniably central to every gay man's life, but the phrase encompasses multiple meanings. Here are accounts of revealing one's sexual identity to parents, siblings, friends, and co-workers - and, in one notable instance, to a stockbroker. Men tell of their first sexual encounters from their preteens to their thirties, with childhood friends who rejected or tenderly embraced them, with professors, with neighbors, with a Broadway star. One man writes of his marriage to a lesbian poet, another of leaving his wife for a male lover. Several sections reveal the autobiographical underpinnings of famous novels. These are intense, sometimes unexpectedly funny tales of romance and heartbreak, repression and liberation, rape and first love - defining moments.

Arranged chronologically from Manhattan in the late 40's to San Francisco in the early 90's, these personal essays ultimately form a documentary of changing social and sexual mores in the United States during the last half-century - a literary, biographical, sociological, and historical tour de force.

ISBN #0380973405
Publisher: Avon Books

HISTORY OF LESBIAN HAIR

by Mary Dugger

In *The History of Lesbian Hair*, Mary Dugger delivers an unrelentingly hilarious view of the modern world. The redoubtable Ms. D. offers an uproarious array of illustrated essays, diagrams, and short takes, subdivided into Life ("The Downside to Lesbian Chic," how to "Build Your Own Lesbian," "So You Want to Be a Straight Girl," and the ultimate definition of children - "pets with thumbs"), Liberty ("Far Right Trading Cards," the ethics of outing, and an irrefutable argument proving that if homosexuals really do make up only 1.5 percent of the population, then every gay person in Chicago spends an average of \$13.11 on liquor every single day), and *The Pursuit of Happiness* (the birth of the indomitable alter ego Marie DuGuerre, and her ongoing search for love, romance, and a decent vacation.)



Accept the challenge. Explore *The History of Lesbian Hair*.

ISBN #0385480377
Publisher: Doubleday

BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO

by Mary Gaitskill

These gritty urban fairy tales are terribly beautiful; and they are beautifully terrible. Gaitskill's depictions of characters grappling with what they want and what they know are utterly

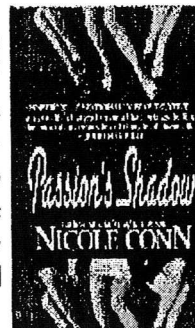
unsentimental; her precise, glittering prose is unsparing and relentless in its objectivity. Gaitskill scrutinizes human frailty with the intensity of an electron microscope. In short, this book is impossible to put down, and when it is finished, it's impossible to forget.

Publisher: Simon & Schuster

PASSION'S SHADOW

by Nicole Conn

A powerful, provocative, sexually charged drama from the author of *CLAIRE OF THE MOON*. A dangerous lesbian love-triangle involving two women and one of the women's daughter. A story of private addictions and deep passions.



NAKED

by David Sedaris

Want a good belly laugh? Pick up a copy of *Naked*, the new collection of short stories by David Sedaris (of *Barrel Fever* fame). *Naked*, while at least as hysterical as *Barrel Fever*, presents a more mature Sedaris. The stories are more candid and heartfelt, clearly stemming from the author's own childhood. The characters are so wacky and off-the-wall that they're believable (who could make up things like that?). Sedaris has a real knack for creating hilarity out of situations that would otherwise be tragic. *Naked* is the first book that had me laughing out loud in a very long time. - DSB
Publisher: Little Brown

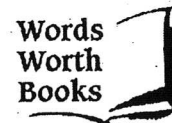


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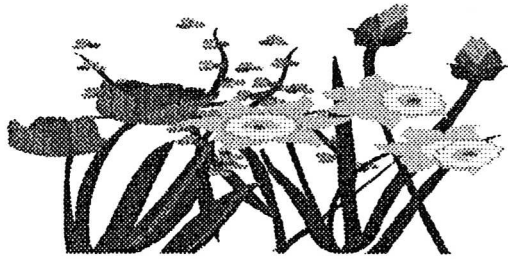
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Swing

By Suki

The hardest thing about being in love is falling out of love. We sit on the porch swing and watch every one of our fairy tales end wrong, all our dreams die unceremoniously on the exhaust smoke of the passing cars, and all our promises are broken by the kids rolling down the street in their roller blades.

It's been three weeks now, but we still sit here on this porch swing that's been here longer than we've both been alive, trying to find something to make us stay or maybe something to make us go away. We sit here in the humid heat of late summer, cursing the lack of air conditioning, the heat of the city, enjoying the chill of the beer can against our foreheads. You talk about work and I laugh, watching your face wondering why you're telling me. We still eat together, dinner at six. I wash the dishes, you take a shower. I run a bath and you watch the news. I walk around naked, wondering if I should start going to the gym again, lose thirty or so pounds—would it make a difference? You turn off the tv at eight and we escape the heat of the house to the heat of the porch.

This swing, do you remember when we first saw it? You had a look of such awe and wonder, like a little girl at a carnival. It was the greatest ride you had ever seen. It was where we were supposed to rock our first baby—a girl with your brown eyes. This is where I fell in love with you each time I saw the look of awe and simple joy that comes from gently pushing the swing back and forth. You have that look tonight and I feel the same as I always do, questioning it only after I realize I'm not supposed to feel like that anymore. Quickly I turn away before you can see the tears spill. There are only two, one for each year together.

You love this house so much, and so do I. This is where we built our dreams on cold beer and warm nights. Every room has your touch or your scent. When you're gone, I can hear you brushing your teeth, walking up the stairs, brushing the hair off the back of my neck. I feel your breasts brush against my back and catch my breath. But it isn't you, only memories of my dreams.

Here you are, sitting next to me but not touching me. I hold my breath, thinking that you'll reach over and put your arm around me like you did when we first sat here. But you just drink your beer and talk about the new mall they're building downtown. I nod, watching your lips and your eyes staring off into the distance. I am mesmerized by the sound of your voice; the words don't matter now, only this melody that I hold in my heart. This rhythmic dance of melodies that take me away from this time to another when the words meant something—when they meant everything. Your silence frightens me, not your words. How some things change over time.

I stare off at the sunset and close my eyes. There are so many things left unsaid between us. I am yours but you are not mine. I can't ask you to hold me, I can't ask you to touch me. All I do is wait for you to begin another sentence be caught up in the rapture of your sweet voice keeping time with this swing that you love so much.

(E-mail submission)

Life, Love and Lily Pads

And life did begin
With a pebble tossed
Striking the water
of a pond thought lost

Then seasons would come
And seasons would go
The lily pad died
And new ones would grow

Some lilies are lost
On currents flowing
Or heavenly tossed
On waves still growing

Some lilies will touch
Then lilies will meet
The waves drumming out
Their up and down beat

Some lilies will drift
Drift slowly apart
Away from ones known
From the very start

Slowly up and down
My lily pad moves
Rising and falling
On bumps in the grooves

But close to my pad
Others keep passing
The ones that do touch
Are always crashing

Longing another
To float by my side
On those up-down waves
Without a lost stride

Until the winter
When snow starts to fly
The pond becomes still
And I start to die

copyright 1997 - Mark Eldridge

You Are the One

It's you.
When I look into your eyes
there's no me,
there's no you,
it's just us
and I know
that you are the one
for me.

For now.
Forever.

When you smile
a light goes on inside me
and I am so happy.

It's you.
I spend every waking moment
thinking of you.
I dream the most wondrous dreams
They are of you.
Your face
Your eyes
Your hands
Your lips
You.

You are the one,
and if nothing ever happens
that's okay.
Because I met the one, and
only guy for me
for now.
Forever.
You are the one.

(Dedicated to the one, the only)

copyright 1997 - Darren Winfield

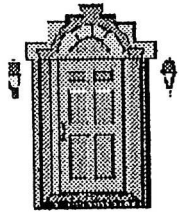
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Our features: GWM couple, 30 and 23 years old, friendly, 1 smoker, 1 non smoker, two cats. Your features: Employed or student, no additional pets, smoker OK, but only on the main level, stable and looking for a place to call home.

Rent: \$350 / per month includes cable TV, utilities, and access to laundry facilities.

To arrange interview/viewing call Stephen or Daniel at (519) [REDACTED]

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Are you tired of city living? Need some open space and fresh air?

Home to share on 1.5 acres with pool, gardens, etc. Less than 5 minutes north of Guelph. Must be gay positive (or positively gay), have own transportation and love animals. If interested, please call (519) [REDACTED]

SEEKING ACCOMODATION:

In Guelph, mid-late May, prof., working GWM, non-smoker, clean, responsible, seeks gay friendly living space. Sm. bach. or 1 bdrm, low rent. Call Jim @ [REDACTED] weekday evenings.

PRESS RELEASE

Re: Research study examining factors contributing to adjustment among HIV-Negative Gay Men Coupled with HIV-Positive Gay Men

Los Angeles, CA -- A research study examining the experiences of HIV-Negative Gay Men in HIV Mixed-Status couples is seeking participants. The research will examine the effects of HIV-related factors, AIDS-related loss, and relationship characteristics on the psychological adjustment of HIV-negative gay men who are in committed relationships with HIV-positive gay men. The study is being conducted by Antony Stately, M.A., himself a member of an HIV mixed-status couple, as part of the requirements in completing his Ph.D. degree in clinical psychology.

Study participants must be:

- 1) HIV Negative Gay Man at least 18 years old
- 2) In a committed relationship with HIV-positive Gay Man for at least six (6) months.

Participation in the study is voluntary and requires a commitment of 15-30 minutes to complete a questionnaire. Unfortunately participants cannot be compensated for their efforts, but may take satisfaction knowing that they have helped to contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge in an area that desperately needs to be examined.

To participate, you can complete the survey "on-line" by visiting the study website at <http://www.thinklink.net/hivstudy>. Or you may request a "hard version" of the survey. Send your return address to: Antony Stately, M.A., 5042 Wilshire Blvd. #306, Los Angeles, CA 90036, ATTN: Study Request, or send e-mail to: Astately@worldnet.att.net. For more information, please call (213) 223-5870.

TO PLACE AN AD CALL
[REDACTED]



THE GUESTLIST

A Monthly Guide Charting All
Things Hot Or New In Spank's
Record Box.

Compiled by Jayson Spank

April '97

1. Da Funk / Daft Punk
2. Insomnia (Moody Mix) / Faithless
3. Take California (Long One) / Propellerheads
4. Block Rockin' Beats / Chemical Brothers
5. Don't Say Your Love Is Killing Me (Jon of the Pleased Wimmin Flashback Dub) / Erasure
6. You Got The Love (Now Voyager Mix) / The Source
7. I'm Alive / Stretch & Vern Present Mad Dog
8. Discotheque (DM Deep Remix) / U2
9. Toxygene (Way Out West Mix) / The Orb
10. 6 Underground (Nellee Hooper Remix) / Sneaker Pimps
11. The Flame (Armand Van Helden Remix) / Fine Young Cannibals
12. All Because of You (Original Mix) / Universal State of Mind
13. Future of the Future / Deep Dish feat. Everything But The Girl
14. Pearl's Girl / Underworld
15. Stronger Than Pride (White Label Remix '97) / Sade

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Community Information



CKWBL (Cambridge, K-W, Bisexual Liberation)
P.O. Box 28002,
Parkdale Postal Outlet
Waterloo, Ontario
N2L 6J8

COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)
Provides education, support and community on local and international levels.
Contact Sarah at [redacted] or e-mail to: [redacted]

DISTRESS LINE
Kitchener 745-1166

GLLOW (Gay and Lesbian Liberation of Waterloo)
U of W [redacted]

GLOBAL (Gays, Lesbians or Bisexuals at Laurier)
e-mail:
00global@mach1.wlu.ca
website:
www.wlu.ca/~wwwclubs/www/global.html

GQE (Guelph Queer Equality)
[redacted]
email: gqe@uoguelph.ca

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Line
1-800-268-YOUTH

Ontario AIDS Network
Toronto
1-416-364-4555

Outline (formerly Gayline)
LGBT Information Line
836-4550

PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
Acton..... [redacted]
Cambridge..... [redacted]
Guelph..... [redacted]

Sexual Assault Centres
KW - 741-8633
Cambridge.....658-0551
Guelph.....823-5806

ACCKWA (The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and Area)
123 Duke Street East
Kitchener, Ontario
570-3687

AIDS Clinical Trials Hotline
Information on FDA listed clinical trials accessible from Canada.
1-800-TRIALS-A

AIDS Committee of Guelph and Wellington County
204-85 Norfolk Street
Guelph, Ontario
763-2255

AIDS Hotline
Ontario Ministry of Health
1-800-668-2437

AIDS Information and Education
205 Queen Street East
Fergus, Ontario
843-2460

Brethren Mennonite Council for Gays and Lesbians
P.O. Box 43031
Eastwood Square,
Kitchener, ON. N2H 6S9

Canadian AIDS Society
Ottawa
1-613-230-3580

Community AIDS Treatment Exchange (CATIE)
Toronto
1-416-944-1916

Substance Abuse Prevention
Kitchener
741-3827

Two Spirited People of First Nations
Toronto
1-416-944-9300

Waterloo Region Alliance for Equal Rights
[redacted]

Women's Centre
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888-4567 extension 3457

WOODS (Women Out Of Doors)
P.O. Box 13,
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Waterloo, Ontario
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web: www.rainbow.on.ca/woods/

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Monday- Out & About with your hosts Dave Callandar and Alan Fraser airs every Monday from 9:30 - 10:30pm on CKWR 98.7 FM. Woman Made Collective Show airs Mondays from 6-7 pm on CFRU 93.3 Fingers, Fists and KY is brought to you in part by The Lesbian Avengers and airs Mondays from 10pm - 12am on CFRU 93.3.

Tuesday- Girls Taste Good with your host Kristyn airs Tuesdays at 2pm on CFRU 93.3.

Wednesday- Nowhere To Hide airs Wednesdays from 8-9pm on CKMS 100.3 FM Womenspin on CKMS 100.3 FM airs Wednesdays from 6-8pm

Thursday- Thursdays listen in for Leaping Lesbians on CKMS 100.3 FM from 6-8pm. The Rainbow Radio Network can be heard Thursdays on CHRW 94.7 FM at 10:15pm. Fac Factory with your host Adam airs at 2pm on Thursdays on CFRU 93.3 FM.

-Happy Listening-



Community Health Department
AIDS/STD Program

I'd like an HIV test! What are my options?

The only way you can know for sure if you are infected with HIV is to have a specific blood test. In Waterloo Region, you can be tested for HIV at the following places:

1. You can be tested by your family doctor.

2. **Anonymous Testing:** available only from the Community Health Department

Waterloo 99 Regina St. South

Kitchener 123 Duke St. E.

HIV Clinic - 2nd Floor

Duke-St. Clinic - (ACCKWA)

▶ by appointment only

▶ walk-in first come, first served

▶ Telephone: 883-2251

▶ Thursday 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

3. Confidential HIV testing:

Cambridge 150 Main St.

Waterloo 99 Regina St. South

STD Clinic - 2nd Floor

STD Clinic - 2nd Floor

▶ walk-in: first come, first served

▶ walk-in: first come, first served

▶ Tuesday 3 - 5 p.m.

▶ Monday & Thursday 3 - 6 p.m.

These clinics offer a service that is positive towards gays, lesbians, straights and bisexuals. "Working" girls and guys are welcome.

For more information call 883-2251

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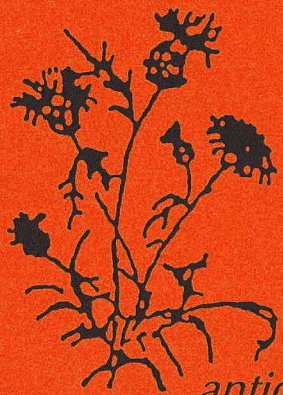
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