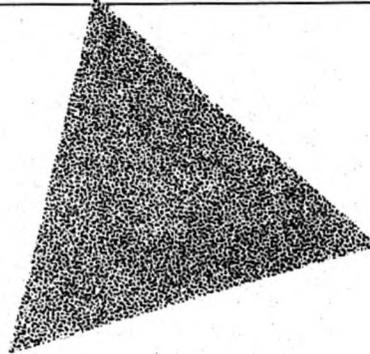


R L A V E N D E R e a d e r

News & Review for Santa Cruz County's Gay and Lesbian Community

Published Quarterly

Winter 1987



If you are a woman, chances are you are at some risk for getting AIDS. What should be a well-publicized fact in this country is actually one of the best-kept secrets of the epidemic: currently 1700 women have AIDS and many times that number have AIDS Related Complex (ARC) or are carriers of the AIDS virus.

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Women & AIDS

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Reader

AN OPENING WORD



DA VINCI...YOU RASCAL!

It appears that one of the art world's longest-standing mysteries has finally been solved. According to a Bell Laboratories computer specialist, the identity of the model for Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa is none other than the artist himself.

In an article published in the January issue of *Arts and Antiques* magazine, a researcher at the highly-regarded laboratories asserts that when the Mona Lisa and the only known self-portrait of the artist are juxtaposed, the subjects were found to be one and the same.

"The hairlines matched exactly. So did the eyes, the tips of the noses, the chins. The Mona Lisa's enigmatic smile was da Vinci's upside-down," states *Arts and Antiques*.

The history of the "world's most famous painting" has sparked curiosity and theories of its origin for centuries. Painted in Florence around 1503, the portrait remained with the artist until his death. Though it has long been speculated that the sitter was the wife of Francesco del Giocondo (Mona Lisa), a friend of the artist's in Florence, there has never been enough definitive proof to cool the debate. Unlike with most of da Vinci's other work, no preliminary sketches were ever found of the portrait!

Modern historians have long speculated that da Vinci was Gay. According to Wick Allison, publisher of *Arts and Antiques*, the Bell Lab finding coincides with what is now generally accepted about the artist's sexual identity. Says Allison: "That da Vinci would paint himself as a woman coincides with everything that is known about him...the discovery meets all the external evidence of Leonardo's life."

Furthermore, *Arts and Antiques* suggests that there exists further evidence as to identity of the sitter. According to the magazine, da Vinci was known to place an "overt clue" as to the subject's identity in each of his portraits. In the Mona Lisa, according to the article, the embroidery running around the neckline of the model's dress is basketry of endlessly knotted cloverleaf. The Italian word for the Osier branches which is used for basketry is 'vinco' and the verb meaning to knot is 'vincire'-both very similar to 'Vinci.'

-Michael Perlman

COMING UP

AIDS & Acupuncture by Rich Mick...Poetry by Irene Reti...Fiction by Carter Wilson...A Special Condom Digest...More from Scott Brookie
SPRING 1987/Publication Date: April 3/Editorial Deadline: March 6/
Advertising Deadline: March 20/ Calendar Deadline: March 25

COMMUNITY AT LARGE

Santa Cruz AIDS Project: UPDATE

The SANTA CRUZ AIDS PROJECT's new Executive Director has worked this fall to transform the new AIDS office into a working, staffed, resource center for AIDS information. Most days there are volunteers available to answer questions over the telephone and receive interested visitors. This coming winter staffing should improve even further so that there will be consistent coverage on a Monday through Friday schedule. The new office address is 234 Santa Cruz Avenue, Aptos, CA 95003 (behind Manuel's Restaurant). The office telephone number (408) 688-7641.

There are three continuing groups available for support. There is a group for persons with an AIDS/ARC diagnosis (please call 458-4999 for further information about group location and day). On Tuesday evenings from 7:30 until 9:00 p.m. there is a group for HIV test positive recipients. This group meets at the SCAP offices. And on Wednesday evenings from 5:30 until 7:00 p.m. there is a group for Families, Friends and Loved Ones. These support groups are excellent forums for individuals to work on their issues and are free of charge.

Freedom Foundation: UPDATE

The organization responsible for Santa Cruz County's Gay Pride Celebration is looking for people interested in planning this year's June event. The Freedom Foundation will begin meeting regularly in March and needs your interest and contribution. If you are interested, contact Toni Cassista at 423-4734, or John Riviere at 476-2562.

Coming Out To Mothers

A lesbian organization in the midwest is collecting stories about how womyn came out to their mothers. They are interested in the events, thoughts, and feelings that womyn experienced while coming out, and the reactions they got from their mothers. All too often in works about coming out, Lesbians are grouped with "gays" and mothers are lumped with "parents." They see the need to recognize the power of the daughter-mother relationship in the coming out process.



the Santa Cruz AIDS Project

The Santa Cruz AIDS Project is looking for volunteers to work with clients on our Practical Support Team. There will be a training at the end of January. Interested? Call 688-7641 for an application.

Also as part of our goals we are looking for gay men to sponsor educational forums in their homes for friends, where someone from SCAP will come and teach about safe sex. This approach is called the KOOL AIDS method of teaching. If anyone is interested in being a sponsor, please call the project.

They hope this anthology will encompass the lives of all womyn so that they can have a book that provides information and validates their feelings as Lesbians who have already come out or who are in the process of coming out to their mothers.

Poetry, photographs, etc., also welcome.

Please send stories and/or inquiries to:
Coming Out To Mothers
P.O. Box 6031
Minneapolis, MN 55406

National March: UPDATE

There has been a national gay and lesbian march scheduled for Sunday, October 10 in Washington, D.C. The march is in response to anti-gay governmental decisions and actions in the past year, and will be coordinated out of Washington, D.C. The first Northern California planning meeting was held on January 6. More details will be forthcoming in the next issue of the READER.



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Through their generous support,
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COMMUNITY AT LARGE

New Women's Group Forming

The purpose of LETS is to make the lesbian community in Santa Cruz County more visible and accessible to newcomers and ourselves, and thereby build a stronger community with more fun, connection and help for all of us. We discussed several great ideas to help meet the needs of those present at the first meeting. Some of the ideas were to: produce quarterly events structured to encourage interaction; coordinate dates of events; support networking for resources; produce a newsletter; problem-solve and mediate; sponsor book clubs, speakers, plays, and/or sports; start up a lesbian welcome wagon; research low-cost group health insurance; produce events; sponsor a potluck; look into means of funding; do crisis intervention; support and staff Matrix and Womanspace; and make use of radio time. We soon settled on one initial project to focus our energy on:

Our first major project is to compile a 3-month calendar, which will have two main purposes. First, the Calendar will

be at a central place where lesbians can call if they want to find out what's happening or where to go to connect with other lesbians. Second, we hope that by having all the lesbian events (and events of interest to lesbians) in one place, we can avoid overlapping events as much as possible.

For more information, contact LETS! Lesbians Empowering Them Selves, P.O. Box 3094, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. (408) 458-1218 (Anne Ru/day), (408) 429-6154 (Beth).

Women's Center: UPDATE

The UCSC Women's Center, at Car diff House on the University campus, is beginning its second year of operation. Established to provide a bridge between the campus and the community, the Center serves as a safe and supportive meeting space for over 25 women's organizations from around the Monterey Bay area, as well as providing films and programs throughout the year.

Special activities sponsored by the

Center for the lesbian community have included social gatherings and support groups, including a Religious Lesbians Support Group, and a Lesbian Mothers' Support Group.

Women are encouraged to visit the Center, share their ideas, participate in program planning, use the library, and have a cup of tea. For further information, please call 429-2072.

Info on Coupling Experiences Wanted

Two women are gathering non-fictional essays, poems, cartoons, drawings and songs from lesbians about their committed coupling experiences. They currently have twelve pieces and are seeking a total of forty or more, as soon as possible. There are several publishers who have voiced interest in the book. Writers and non-writers alike are encouraged to inquire. Previously published work will be considered. Please write to Lynn Scott and Pam White at Inner Link, Outer Vision, Box 56, Millers Falls, MA 01349, or call (413) 659-3156.

PROP 64: REFLECTIONS ON A VICTORY

On November 4th, voters in California trashed Lyndon LaRouche. In Santa Cruz County, he and his so-called AIDS initiative were trounced particularly thoroughly: 78% of the county voted no on Proposition 64, compared with the statewide average of 70%. Good news for gay men and lesbians, for people with AIDS, for the state economy, for just about everybody.

So why doesn't it feel like a wonderful, uplifting victory? Part of the reason is that most of the rest of the election results on that day were quite sobering. But the biggest reason, I think, is that Proposition 64 was a skirmish that we never asked to be involved in. A massive plebiscite on locking up people with AIDS. Sure. Just what we wanted.

In a sense, public opinion is the loose cannon on the deck of politics. You never know exactly where it's going to roll, or why. What's that? A 4-year-old boy with AIDS in Atascadero bit one of his classmates? Whoops! There goes 100,000 votes. And what? The ever-so-apolitical Red Cross has endorsed us? Two percentage points coming our way! And so on. We watch rather helplessly as our lives and futures are tossed about at the whim of a TV camera angle, distant power-brokering, a reporter's inflection, or some long-shot coincidence.

But we were dragged into this sleazy arena, and for our community, for our friends, for ourselves, we had to fight. And so we put on our nice clothes and pretended that we weren't the people everyone's mother had warned them about. We put on a little makeup or took out an earring and talked confidently about our close buddies, the American



Medical Association. We said we were interested in public health. We didn't say we might be interested in unconventional relationships, in quick sex at the beach, in latex toys, or getting tied up.

Maybe the hardest thing to take was the big ad the statewide campaign ran just before election day. It was a run-of-the-mill "these people say to Vote No on 64" ad, but at the top of the list were several federal officials, with the words "Reagan Administration" figuring prominently in their identifying titles. "They're associating us with Ronald Reagan!" exclaimed my campaign co-worker Allison, her voice edged with crystalline contempt.

How was it that we wound up so far afield? It was because in many ways, we weren't dealing in the currency of the

truth about our lives. We were dealing in the currency of votes. This is what happens when others set our agenda for us, when we are forced into the ring.

Now, none of this is to negate the many good things that came out of this campaign. First of all, we educated millions of people about AIDS. Second, we showed that even with our communities devastated by this horrendous disease, gay men and lesbians are organized, resourceful, formidable opponents. We have new respect from — and clout with — the medical establishment and state politicians. We have sent the drooling vultures of the Right — who would make the most loathsome of politics out of this tragedy — away hungry. Third, we are stronger now. We have made new alliances, new friends, and learned new skills. We have every reason to be proud of each other and of ourselves.

So, we made the best of a bad situation, and we won overwhelmingly. But now, let's take our new resources and the things we've learned and get back to our own agenda. Let us return to *defining ourselves*. Our culture is just emerging, our sexuality is reviled, our stories are largely untold. Furthermore, it is not now — nor will it be for quite a while — a time to relax, knowing that things are comfortable and will get better. Our friends are still dying, our children are still being taken away. Those who failed to squash us are still ruining the lives and often the countries of our allies. But we do have some breathing space. We know what we can do when we have to. Let's see what we can do when we want to.

BY SCOTT BROOKIE

I THINK THAT I STILL HAVE IT IN MY HEART SOMEDAY
TO PAINT A BOOKSHOP
WITH THE FRONT YELLOW AND PINK IN THE EVENING...
LIKE A LIGHT IN THE MIDST OF DARKNESS.
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Supreme Court Decision Leads to Sodomy Laws Repeal Effort

One of the major issues discussed at this year's conference of gay and lesbian elected officials was the subject of state laws regulating private consensual sexual conduct.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court shocked gay rights activists (and, according to polls, a majority of the voting public) by upholding Georgia's sodomy law in the case of *Bowers v. Hardwick*. The 5-4 Supreme Court decision led then-Chief Justice Warren Burger to point out "millenia of moral teaching" in justifying the action.

In 1960, all fifty states had such laws on the books. California's was repealed by Assemblymember Willie Brown's Consenting Adults Act of 1975. Twenty-five states still have these laws, with seven of those states prohibiting gay sodomy only.

The District of Columbia voted to repeal its sodomy law, but the U.S. Congress, which can overturn D.C. legislation, did not ratify the anti-sodomy bill.

In July, the New York-based Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund facilitated a meeting of gay legal rights advocates and agreed upon a five-point strategy to deal with the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision:

- *legislative reform of the laws in the twenty-five states that still have them
- *challenge of sodomy laws in state courts
- *a mass education campaign on the issue
- *prevention of "recriminalization" in states that have repealed their laws



*building broad-based coalitions for these efforts

All Deep South and southern border states are among the twenty-five states that still have laws regulating private sexual behavior. A few states outside the South that are generally regarded as progressive will be targets for repeal — Minnesota, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Michigan.

For Californians, the Supreme Court's decision was a cause for outrage, but had little practical impact. Should Republicans ever retake the state legislature, reenactment of a sodomy law could be given a serious try.

For the lesbian and gay movement across the country, sodomy law repeal efforts will near the top of the political agenda.

Outlook Mixed For AIDS Legislation in Congress

Last March, I joined other openly gay elected officials from around the country in lobbying members of Congress on AIDS issues. At that time, our concerns were increased research and education funding, prevention of Reagan Administration cuts in appropriations, AIDS vaccine legislation, and support for home health services for people with AIDS.

An AIDS teach-in was held in conjunction with the November 20-23 Washington, D.C. conference of openly gay and lesbian government officials. Among those participating in panel discussions was Tim Westmoreland, Rep. Henry Waxman's (D-West Los Angeles) staff assistant for the House health subcommittee assigned to AIDS legislation.

Westmoreland outlined the AIDS issues that will be confronting the 100th Congress when it convenes next month. They include funding for AIDS research, education, and treatment, as well as a series of repressive measures introduced by Orange County neanderthal Rep. William Dannemeyer.

Obviously, the major issue remains funding. Last March, we dealt with the Reagan Administration attempts to reduce the \$245 million 1986 appropriation by \$40 million. The final federal allocation for the current 1987 year is \$410 million.

A recent report released by Surgeon General Koop indicates that billions a year should be spent on AIDS. Westmoreland indicated that the President's proposed 1988 funding level — usually announced with the rest of the budget

Continued on page 16

AFFILIATION BLUES

THE FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS IN TRANSITION



There was discontent in the air. "What have the Democrats ever done for us?" demanded one woman. "The only time they come around is when they want our votes or our money!"

"Hardly any of them even came to our victory party," added someone else, only half-joking.

The rumblings of dissatisfaction had been rising in the Freedom Democratic Caucus (FDC) for some time. What did the group, the rest of whose title is "A Gay and Lesbian Alliance," gain by having "Democratic" in its name? Where was the value in having official ties to a party that seemed to demonstrate little interest in lesbian and gay concerns?

The murmurs of "affiliation anxiety" reached a crescendo as the Santa Cruz Stop LaRouche/No on 64 committee, many of whom were FDC members, gathered for their final post-election meeting.

Continued on next page

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"The idea behind affiliating with the Democratic Party was that in a time of crisis, we would have their clout and respectability behind us. Well, 64 was a crisis and they didn't give us much help, and we did fine."

Continued From Previous Page

"The idea behind affiliating with the Democratic Party was that in a time of crisis, we would have their clout and their respectability behind us," commented one man thoughtfully. "Well, 64 was a crisis, and they didn't give us much help, and we did fine."

The history of gay men, lesbians and the Democratic Party is a relatively short roller coaster ride. The first gay and lesbian democratic clubs began appearing on the scene around the country in about 1972. They symbolized a movement that was growing and diversifying. They also portended the beginnings of a growing split between radical gay liberationists, and those espousing less confrontational strategies, a division that continues, more or less, to this day.

In Santa Cruz, the first incarnation of such a group was the Charlie Parkhurst Gay Democratic Club, named after a woman who lived around Santa Cruz in the 19th century and drove a stagecoach. "Mountain Charlie" passed as a man for most of her life. The Charlie Parkhurst Club was founded in 1979, elected some officers, and held a few meetings. It existed — largely on paper — until the following year, when it died the quiet death of an organization that never really got off the ground. (Appropriately, the Parkhurst Club had followed a few years after the more radical affiliates of the Lesbian Umbrella Organization and the Red Fairy Brigade, a name which requires no further explanation.)

But things were changing in Santa Cruz County. The Board of Supervisors — a comfortable enclave of conservative business, tourism and real estate interests since who-remembered-when — was feeling the effects of a growing progressive movement led by local environmentalists. In 1980, county voters elected a liberal majority which has held sway ever since.

Similarly, in 1981, a liberal majority was elected to the Santa Cruz City Council, which has remained a bastion of the left-of-center to the present (or at least until the student voter suit is settled).

With the balance of elected power tilting more to the left, gay men and lesbians with an interest in electoral politics now stood a much greater chance of influencing local goings-on. Into this relatively hospitable atmosphere in 1983 was born the Freedom Democratic Caucus.

"We felt that the Democratic Party was the only vehicle within the conventional

electoral system that would respond to pressure for gay rights," remembers John Laird, one of the founders of FDC. "And that needed to happen because that kind of pressure didn't exist formally in Santa Cruz County."

Also, adds Laird, "the [democratic club] movement was an incredible network. It was a way for gay men and women to get involved in a way that reached beyond their local area."

Did it work? "We were successful in fitting into statewide and national efforts," says Laird. "And what the FDC has done with local elected officials is to put them all on the line. We educated people to the point that they sought gay endorsements and educated themselves on gay issues. The first time a majority of local elected officials ever attended a gay political event was through the FDC."

These were also heady times for gay and lesbian Democrats nationally. At the 1980 Democratic National convention, born-again Baptist Jimmy Carter swallowed hard and sent top-level aides to woo the gay delegates. The Gay and Lesbian Caucus of the Democratic National Committee could honestly lay claim to a little clout within the national party.

But the halcyon times didn't last long. After the debacle of the 1984 elections — in which the question was not how many states Walter Mondale would carry, but whether he would carry any at all (he carried one) — national Democratic Party leaders decided that a sharp turn to the right was in order. The first things to go? Surprise: the caucuses, which had been the voices of the disenfranchised — among them, the one for Latino people, the one for women, the one for seniors, of course, the one for gay men and lesbians.

One result nationally has been a movement to disaffiliate from the Democrats. At a November conference of the National Association of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs, made up of representatives of local clubs nationwide, a majority voted to sever formal ties with the Democratic Party. The proposal didn't pass because a 2/3 majority was required, but the message was clear. "This proposal will send a message to the Democrats that we won't be taken for granted anymore," one member told *Gay Community News*.

In Santa Cruz, the disenchantment with Democratic Party politics coincided neatly with the No on 64 victory. The campaign to stop LaRouche's AIDS initiative had brought together people from all different political perspectives

(well, "all" if you start from "liberal" and work to the left), and created an organization of people who, despite their differences, worked well and productively together. Many were members of FDC, but many were not.

For a lot of people who had worked on the campaign, it was not an experience to set on the shelf after the election and forget about. There was a momentum not to be wasted. "The experience in No on 64 was how powerful we are — lesbians and gay men — when we work together in coalition," commented Allison Claire, a non-FDC member who was active in Stop LaRouche.

Faced with the choice of bringing the post-election momentum into FDC, however, many people balked. "In my experience," noted Claire, "doing regular political work in the electoral process only leads to co-optation. So why do it? Besides, it says right in the FDC's bylaws that you have to belong to the Democratic Party."

At a marathon retreat last month — attended both by FDC members and by non-members, major changes were agreed upon, pending ratification by FDC's full

membership. First, the organization as a whole would no longer be identified with the Democratic Party, although a committee within the group would continue to do electoral work. Second, the name of the organization would be changed to something that *didn't* have "Democratic" in it, and presumably *did* have "Gay and Lesbian" (or maybe "Lavender") in it. Third, a new organization would broaden its political scope. "My hope is first, to get more women involved," says Claire, "and also to bring in some of the long-time activists who have been out there in the community, but haven't been associated with FDC."

"Also," she continues, "we need to have some genuine coalition-building happening through this organization. I would like to feel that this queer activist gang here has some kind of ongoing relationship with other activist groups in the community, and that we can call on each other for all kinds of practical, logistical things.

"Coalition work is perfect for this," concurs Laird. But, he cautions, "the trouble with the coalition is you need to know what your own needs are and

represent them before you turn around and enter into a coalition."

Nonetheless, says Laird, he is pleased with the changes. "The shift is going to include many more people and provide a sort of omnibus gay and lesbian organization locally, and I think that's great."

Claire is also optimistic. "People who are activists from within the electoral process, and those who are agitators from outside the process can be more coordinated with each other, and give more active support to each other," she says. "A two-pronged approach to social change is valid, but it never seems to happen. Hopefully this will be a means to start creating that."

The Freedom Democratic Caucus will hold its annual election meeting on Wednesday February 25, from 7-9 pm, at the Santa Cruz Main Library. This will be the time when new officers are elected, and when the proposal for a major restructuring - disaffiliation from the Democratic Party and the adoption of a more activist stance - will be discussed and voted upon.

SPECIAL WINTER EVENTS

Saturday-January 31st
Arabian Nights Dance Benefit
For The Santa Cruz AIDS Project
9pm-2am ▲ \$1 cover

Saturday-February 14th
Valentine's Sweetheart Ball

BLUE LAGOON

A DANCE VIDEO NEW MUSIC GAY CITY BAR

923 PACIFIC AVE., SANTA CRUZ 423-7117



Women and AIDS

Continued from the cover

The fact that women of all ethnic, social and economic groups can and do get AIDS is terrifying to face. Yet it is imperative that we do so. For as with all people at risk for AIDS, learning how to protect ourselves from exposure can dramatically decrease this risk.

Reasons for the lack of awareness about women and AIDS are annoyingly familiar. On the one hand, we are yet again experiencing the low priority placed on women's health concerns in this society, with limited research and relevant programs concerning women's needs. On the other hand, the media portrayal of AIDS as a gay men's disease is also accountable for the dearth of information about women. Not only does this skewed conception provide a breeding ground for homophobia, it also deals a dangerous blow to women in rendering our relationship to AIDS invisible.

To understand the implications of AIDS for women requires that we look not only at numbers and categories. We need also to view the epidemic through a different lens, a women's lens: one which encompasses our sexuality, our economic status, our relationship to pregnancy and children.

The extent to which women are at risk for AIDS varies with lifestyle and sexual practices. While all of us face the possibility of exposure to AIDS through rape, there are risk categories which further rank our vulnerability.

The highest risk group is intravenous (IV) drug users who share needles, accounting for more than half (52%) of the women with AIDS. The next greatest risk factor for women is heterosexual contact (27%), the majority of which cases involve sexual contact with a male IV drug user. The remaining delineated category is blood transfusion recipients, at 9% — a number that will continue to diminish due to current screening practices at blood banks.

AIDS in general disproportionately affects people of color (40% of all people with AIDS in the U.S. are of color). This

is even more pronounced for women, among whom three fourths are Black and Latina. One explanation for this is economics. White, middle-class IV drug using women often had their own hypodermic needles, while poorer Black and Latina women tend to share needles.

In the United States, there are far fewer women than men with AIDS; women currently comprise 7% of total cases. Yet in some circumstances women run a greater chance of infection than men, particularly in the area of heterosexual sex. The virus which causes AIDS, referred to as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), has been found in all body fluids including vaginal and cervical secretions. However, research indicates that these secretions are much less effective HIV transmitters than semen or blood. Thus, a woman is considerably more likely to become infected during vaginal intercourse with a man than vice versa (see accompanying information on safe sex practices).

The situation is complicated by the fact that one can be an HIV carrier without having symptoms, and still be infectious. Estimates hold that one to two million people in the U.S. are currently asymptomatic carriers. It is therefore essential that women obtain thorough sexual and drug histories from sex partners to assess risk, or insist upon practicing safe sex.

Lesbians share some of the same circumstances as heterosexual women in their risk for AIDS, and yet there are some significant differences. Since female secretions seem less able to transmit the virus than semen, lesbians are considered to be at substantially lower risk than heterosexual women of infection through sexual contact. However, as it is unclear to what extent sexual transmission between women is possible, if one or both women may be infected, it is advisable for lesbians to avoid unsafe sex.

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Female prostitutes have also been under attack throughout the AIDS crisis, being scapegoated in much the same way as gay men: the "deviants" who are spreading AIDS to the innocent straights. While some prostitutes have AIDS, partially attributable to IV drug use, there is no evidence substantiating the widely held belief that prostitutes are a major source of AIDS transmission. What is true is that women in the sex industry are more likely to contract AIDS from a client than to pass it on, and there is little apparent concern for

the health of these women.

Despite the facts, gross violations of civil rights are occurring, including efforts to require HIV testing of prostitutes, retention in jail or under "house arrest" of women with AIDS who have records of prostitution, in addition to other forms of harassment. Not surprisingly, the most onerous acts of persecution are against the most vulnerable: poor, women of color, and prostitutes.

The relationship between pregnancy and AIDS is of great importance, since most children born to HIV infected mothers become infected with the virus, regardless of whether the mother has ARC/AIDS symptoms. There is a 50% chance that a child born to an infected woman will develop a full-blown case of AIDS within the first year of life. "Maternal transmission" (in utero, at birth, or through breastfeeding) accounts for the vast majority of AIDS cases among children under 13 years.

Generally, women are unaware, prior to a child's diagnosis, of their own carrier status. Thus a woman is confronted with two extremely difficult conditions at once: a child with AIDS, and her own potential to develop the disease. Furthermore, since pregnancy is in itself an immunosuppressive condition, it can induce the development of ARC or AIDS in a previously asymptomatic woman, with this risk increasing with each pregnancy.

Heightened awareness of the relationship between pregnancy and AIDS has the potential to bring better education and counseling to women who are pregnant or are considering pregnancy. Yet it also creates the potential for abuse of women's rights: Reproductive issues easily become social issues, often at our expense, and AIDS raises a variety of sticky questions. For example, given the likelihood of infant illness, does an HIV positive woman have the right to begin or maintain a pregnancy?

In a climate of erosion of individual rights (workplace drug testing, mandatory HIV tests to qualify for insurance, etc.) forced HIV testing of pregnant

women or coercive abortion are not outlandish possibilities.

While AIDS brings financial hardship to most people it afflicts, women are more susceptible to its economic devastation than are men. Women in general earn lower wages, are less likely to have medical insurance, and are more frequently the sole supporters of dependent children.

In addition to economic barriers to adequate care, women with AIDS or women whose children have AIDS are likely to require services that often do not exist, such as childcare, mother assistance services, and women-oriented health care and housing for people with AIDS.

As the number of women with AIDS in this country doubles each year, it is essential that research and services be expanded to encompass the needs of women. We in Santa Cruz are fortunate to have resources close at hand that are in the vanguard of this work. The Women's AIDS Network in San Francisco brings together women and organizations involved with AIDS services to produce materials and programs, and develop strategies and support systems relevant to women. In our own community, the Santa Cruz AIDS Project has committed itself to broadening its work concerning women.

Since prevention is the best weapon we have against AIDS, each of us can help in the process by educating ourselves and talking to others. While much is still unknown about women and AIDS, one fact is clear: AIDS is a women's issue.

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 2. Santa Cruz AIDS Project
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BY LAURA GIGES

Women and AIDS

Continued from the cover

The fact that women of all ethnic, social and economic groups can and do get AIDS is terrifying to face. Yet it is imperative that we do so. For as with all people at risk for AIDS, learning how to protect ourselves from exposure can dramatically decrease this risk.

Reasons for the lack of awareness about women and AIDS are annoyingly familiar. On the one hand, we are yet again experiencing the low priority placed on women's health concerns in this society, with limited research and relevant programs concerning women's needs. On the other hand, the media portrayal of AIDS as a gay men's disease is also accountable for the dearth of information about women. Not only does this skewed conception provide a breeding ground for homophobia, it also deals a dangerous blow to women in rendering our relationship to AIDS invisible.

To understand the implications of AIDS for women requires that we look not only at numbers and categories. We need also to view the epidemic through a different lens, a women's lens: one which encompasses our sexuality, our economic status, our relationship to pregnancy and children.

The extent to which women are at risk for AIDS varies with lifestyle and sexual practices. While all of us face the possibility of exposure to AIDS through rape, there are risk categories which further rank our vulnerability.

The highest risk group is intravenous (IV) drug users who share needles, accounting for more than half (52%) of the women with AIDS. The next greatest risk factor for women is heterosexual contact (27%), the majority of which cases involve sexual contact with a male IV drug user. The remaining delineated category is blood transfusion recipients, at 9% — a number that will continue to diminish due to current screening practices at blood banks.

AIDS in general disproportionately affects people of color (40% of all people with AIDS in the U.S. are of color). This

is even more pronounced for women, among whom three fourths are Black and Latina. One explanation for this is economics. White, middle-class IV drug using women often had their own hypodermic needles, while poorer Black and Latina women tend to share needles.

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BY LAURA GIGES

SAFE SEX GUIDELINES FOR WOMEN

The AIDS virus is transmitted through direct contact with infected blood (including menstrual blood), semen, vaginal and breast secretions, and possibly urine and feces. Although the AIDS virus has been found in saliva and tears, there is no evidence that it is transmissible through these fluids. Body fluids can be exchanged through needle-sharing, or through unprotected sexual contact with a person who is infected with the AIDS virus. If you believe that you or your sexual partner(s) may be infected, or YOU ARE NOT SURE, avoid any contact with body fluids. USE SAFE SEX.

SAFE SEX IS:

- Massage
 - Hugging
 - Body-to-body rubbing
 - Social (dry) kissing
 - Voyeurism, fantasy, sex talk, phone sex
 - Touching your own genitals (masturbation)
 - Vaginal or Anal intercourse with a condom
 - Oral sex with a condom
 - Cunnilingus/ oral sex with a woman with a latex barrier (rubber dam)
 - Hand/ finger-to-genital contact with a latex glove (mutual masturbation, hand jobs, vaginal/ anal penetration with fingers)
 - S/M that does not involve the exchange of any body fluids
 - Use of sex toys covered with a latex barrier or condom, and/ or cleaned with bleach after each use
- Spermicide Nonoxynol 9, in contraceptive foams, jellies, and creams kills the virus on contact. Use it in addition to a condom*

UNSAFE SEX IS:

- Unprotected vaginal or rectal intercourse
- Unprotected oral sex
- Unprotected hand/finger-to-vagina or anus contact
- Blood contact of any kind (including menstrual blood)
- Urine or feces in mouth or vagina (watersports)
- Unprotected rimming (anal-oral contact)
- Fisting (hand in rectum/vagina)
- Sharing sex toys that have contact with body fluids
- Sharing needles
- Using drugs or alcohol when having sex (impairs judgement and ability to make safe sex decisions)

BE SAFE! IF YOU ARE UNSURE OF YOUR RISK FACTOR, USE SAFE SEX!

Compiled by Robin K. Roberts



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BRIEFING

LESBIAN INSEMINATION PROJECT

The Lesbian Insemination Project is a statewide research study that is trying to determine whether lesbians who have inseminated since 1979 have been exposed to the AIDS virus. The Project is trying to answer some of the following questions that women from all over the country have been asking:

*Have any lesbians been infected with the AIDS virus from using donor insemination?

*What techniques should lesbians use to screen donors?

*Have any children conceived through donor insemination been infected with the AIDS virus?

*What should a woman know if the donor she has chosen is in a high-risk group of AIDS?

This study was started in the summer

of 1985 and coordinated by Cheri Pies. At that time, a small sample of women were tested in the Bay Area. This year, we are conducting the study statewide and are hoping to interview 400 lesbians who inseminated with homosexual, heterosexual, and bisexual donors.

In November, we started interviewing women in Santa Cruz and the Bay Area. Participation involves filling out a questionnaire which asks about insemination, reproductive, and sexual history. Additionally, we will draw a small sample of blood for the AIDS antibody test. Participation in this study is vital for us to accurately access the present and future health risks of donor insemination for lesbians and their children. The more women who participate, the more we will learn about the transmission of the AIDS virus through donor insemination.

We are extremely concerned about protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of women who participate. If you decide to participate:

*You do not have to give us your real name.

*You will not have to give any information that could be traced to you.

*You will be identified only by code number.

The Lesbian Insemination Project is funded by a grant from the U.C. University-wide Task Force on AIDS. The Project is based in San Francisco and staffed entirely by women.

If you are interested in participating, or would like more information, please call us at (415) 863-3819 OR outside of the Bay Area, please call toll-free: 800-852-1818 from 9-5 Monday through Friday.

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Continued from page 8

during the January State of the Union message — would probably propose AIDS funding of between \$450 and \$550 million.

Even though these figures look promising, they still do not address concern about the federal government's ability to handle the growth of the AIDS caseload in the next five years. If current trends continue, there will be 250,000 new AIDS/ARC patients in the next five years. Westmoreland indicated that no real planning for this caseload growth is being done by the Reagan Administration. He further expressed concern about the limited finances available for all federal medical assistance.

Currently, about \$16 million from the federal budget funds the Medicaid program. Those funds are primarily allocated for health services to low-income children, people with AIDS, the developmentally disabled, and the elderly in nursing homes. The total resources for medical care are not likely to increase dramatically. Westmoreland expressed concern that there are not strong organized constituencies for the other groups receiving federal medical resources — and that increased support for people with AIDS could come at their expense.

He also pointed out one little-understood pitfall of funding research. While there are tremendous research needs — on sexual behavior after test results, on transmission, on conversion to AIDS cases, on the permeability of condoms, and other key questions — bad research or bad studies will give certain members of Congress ammunition to claim that too much is being spent on research.

Additionally, Westmoreland was concerned about the costs for drugs used in treating people with AIDS. The drug AZT, thought to slow the spread of the HIV virus, costs \$5,000 to \$10,000 for one person per year. That cost is pres-

ently being paid by the federal government. Yet when the drug is licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), these costs will likely be borne by the individual with AIDS. That could mean that the drug is available only to those who can afford it.

Another problem concerns public hospitals that take "no-pay" patients. The Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency presently has a deficit problem that could reach one million dollars this year for our local health program, Medicroz. Westmoreland pointed out that no federal policy is being developed to cope with the problem of private hospitals "dumping" no-pay AIDS cases on public hospitals, making them the AIDS treatment centers.

"No real planning for AIDS caseload growth is being done by the Reagan Administration."

Westmoreland also indicated that pressure will increase for Congress to respond to social questions concerning AIDS. Public employee labor unions, usually staunch allies of the gay and lesbian movement, are facing pressures from members about workplace issues. Hospital workers have unique concerns. Many prison guards favor mandatory testing of prisoners.

And the whole issue of support for public education is hampered by the current policy of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) that no explicit anal/genital references can be made in their educational material. Rather than deal with this explosive political issue, Congress is likely to turn educational funds over to the States and let each State decide guidelines for the educational material those funds will provide.

All those questions are difficult enough without the demagogic legislation introduced by Rep. Dannemeyer, one of two elected officials in California to back Proposition 64 in the recent election campaign.

Dannemeyer has made such legislation proposals as cutting off federal aid to hospitals who employ people with AIDS, cutting off federal revenue sharing and community health funds to local cities and counties in which there are gay bathhouses, making it a felony for HIV positive persons to donate blood, and making it a felony to knowingly transmit the virus.

The growth of AIDS cases will only accentuate each of these issues. During a meeting in which the gay elected officials provided a briefing to Congressional staffers, it became clear that homophobic AIDS legislation receives more support in letters sent to Capitol Hill. Gay men and lesbians, on the other hand, usually do not wish to sign letters to Congress-people and forego anonymity.

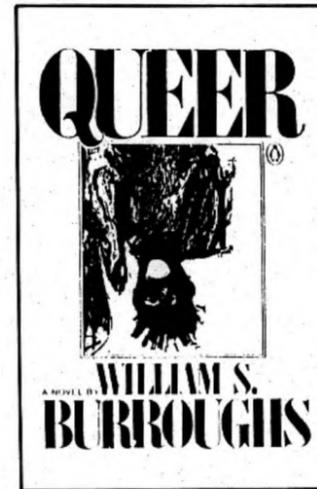
Our own legislators must hear from us. Senator Alan Cranston has been of assistance in recent budget battles. Senator Pete Wilson fends off homophobic assaults from people like Dannemeyer, but prides himself on being a "fiscal conservative" and needs pressure on AIDS funding issues. Rep. Leon Panetta is sympathetic, but must hear from his constituents to know that there is support for him on these issues. He could take a leading role in the House — given his pre-eminence on budget issues — but might not do so unless hundreds of his constituents point him in the right direction.

The gay and lesbian elected officials have tentatively committed to an AIDS lobbying trip when budget battles heat up in March. But every person reading this must take responsibility for writing letters and speaking up on these concerns. The people fighting for the right things are going to need all the help they can get.

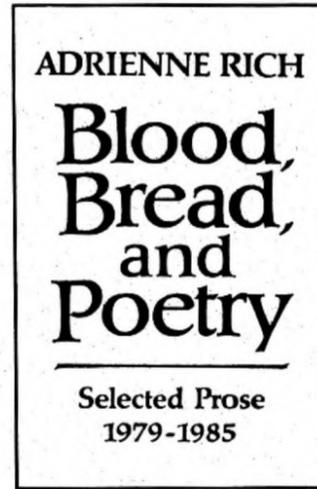
Blood Bread, and Poetry Adrienne Rich
QUEER
FAMILY DANCING
ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS
BOOKSHELF



Adult Children of Alcoholics was originally written only with children of alcoholics in mind. Since its publication, we have learned that the material discussed applies to other types of dysfunctional families as well. If you did not grow up with alcoholism, but lived, for example, with other compulsive behaviors such as gambling, drug abuse, or overeating, experienced chronic illness, profound religious attitudes, were adopted, lived in foster care, or in other potentially dysfunctional systems, you may find that you identify with the characteristics. It appears that much of what is true for the children of alcoholics is also true for others, and that this understanding can help reduce the isolation of countless persons who also thought they were "different" because of their life experience. Welcome.



For more than three decades, while its writer's world fame increased, *Queer* remained unpublished because of its forthright depiction of homosexual longing. Set in the corrupt and spectral Mexico City of the forties, *Queer* is the story of William Lee, a man afflicted with both acute heroin withdrawal and romantic and sexual yearning for an indifferent user named Eugene Allerton. The narrative is punctuated by Lee's outrageous "routines" — brilliant comic monologues that foreshadow *Naked Lunch* — yet the atmosphere is heavy with foreboding. In his extraordinary introduction, Burroughs reflects on the shattering events in his life that lay behind this work. *Queer* is the most revealing book yet by perhaps the bravest and most uncompromising American literary artist of this century.



That Adrienne Rich is not only a major American poet but a vividly compelling thinker and writer of eloquent and forthright prose is evinced once again by this new collection, in which she continues to explore the social and political context of her life and art. Examining the connections between history and imagination, ethics and action, she explores the experience and intricacies of being white, female, lesbian, Jewish, and a United States citizen, both at this particular time and through the lens of her past. Among the wide range of pieces included here are lectures addressed to the generation of students that has been variously termed "apolitical" and "postfeminist"; Rich talks to them about privilege, commitment, and history. Other works are contributions to ongoing feminist discussions of racism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, education, and literary criticism.



Though only in his early twenties, David Leavitt has won an O. Henry Prize and has been acclaimed by *Esquire* magazine as "a literary leader of a new (and as yet unnamed) generation." In *Family Dancing*, his first book, he takes you deep into the troubled heart of middle-class America ... its suburbs and cities, parents and stepparents, friends and lovers — and lays bare the terrible ties of love and pain that bind us all ... "Mr. Leavitt's stories have the power to move us with the blush of truth ... Regardless of age, few writers so effortlessly achieve the sense of maturity and earned compassion so evident in these pages." — *New York Times*

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NON-VIOLENCE: PRACTICING AWARENESS

(Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnamese Buddhist monk and poet, originally presented the following article as a talk sponsored by the Rochester Zen Center and the Buddhist Peace Fellowship in the Spring of 1983.)

I have a poem for you. It is called: "Please Call Me By My True Names." This poem is about three of us. The first is a twelve-year-old girl, one of the boatpeople crossing the Gulf of Thailand. She was raped by a sea pirate. After that, she threw herself into the ocean. The other person is the sea pirate who was born in a remote village in Thailand. And the third person is me. I had a lot of problems, because I was angry of course. But I could not take sides against the sea pirate. If I could it would be easier; but I could not, because I thought that if I were born in his village and were living his kind of life — economic, educational, and so on — it is very likely that I would now be that sea pirate. So, it is not easy to take sides. And out of suffering I wrote this poem: "Please Call Me By My True Names," because I have several names and when you call me by my names, I must say: Yes.

Do not say that I'll depart tomorrow because even today I still arrive.

Look at me: I arrive in every second to be a bud on a Spring branch, to be a tiny bird, whose wings are still fragile, learning to sing



in my new nest, to be a caterpillar in the heart of a flower, to be a jewel hiding itself in a stone.

I still arrive, in order to laugh and to cry, in order to fear and to hope, the rhythm of my heart is the birth and death of all that are alive.

I am the mayfly metamorphosing on the surface of the river. I am also the grass-snake, who, approaching in silence, feeds itself on the frog.

I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones, my legs as thin as bamboo sticks.

I am also the merchant of arms, selling deadly weapons to Uganda.

I am the 12-year-old girl, refugee on a small boat, who throws herself into the ocean after being raped by a sea pirate.

I am also the pirate, my heart not yet capable of seeing and loving.

I am a member of the politburo, with plenty of power in my hands.

I am also the man who has to pay his "debt of blood" to my people, dying slowly in a forced labor camp.

My joy is like Spring, so warm it makes flowers bloom in all walks of life.

My pain is like a river of tears — so full it fills up all the four oceans.

Please call me by my true names so that I can hear at the same time all my cries and my laughs, so that I could see that my job and pain are but one.

Please call me by my true names so that I could become awake, so that the door of my heart be left open, the door of Compassion.

I think the theme of this poem I still have in my mind, very much in my mind. "Where is our enemy?" I asked myself for a long time. Our earth, our green, beautiful earth, is in danger and all of us know this. We do not face a pirate, but we face the destruction of the earth where our small boat has been — it is going to sink if we are not careful enough. We still think that the enemy is the other, and that is why we cannot really see him. Now, everybody needs an enemy in order to survive. The Soviet Union needs an enemy, perhaps the United States. China needs an enemy. Viet-

nam needs an enemy. Everybody needs an enemy to the extent that without an enemy we cannot survive. In order to rally people behind them, the governments need an enemy and are very ready to approve that. They want us to be afraid in order for us to rally behind them. They want us to hate in order for us to rally behind them. And if they do not have a real enemy, they would invent one in order to mobilize us.

There are people in the United States who went to visit Russia and came home reporting that the Russian people are very nice, only the government is bad. And the Soviet people, the Soviet citizens visiting here in this country, when they go back home they will report the same thing. American people are fine; the government is bad.

I heard one American tell me this (he is in the peace movement): "Every time I see Mr. Reagan on the television set I can't bear it. Either I have to turn off the set, or I get mad." I think I understand him because it seems to me that he thinks it is the U.S. government that is entirely responsible for the situation of the world. If only Mr. Reagan changed his policy and we had a freeze, we would have peace with the Soviet Union and so on. I tried to tell him that it is not entirely correct, because Mr. Reagan is in yourself. We always deserve our government. That because of this, the other thing is like that. In Buddhism we used to

speak in terms of interdependent origination. That is, because that is. This is not, because that is not. Has our daily life nothing to do with our government? That is the question I would like to invite you to meditate upon.

The other day, I was talking about drinking a cup of tea and using toilet paper properly in order for peace to be possible. We really believe that our daily life has to do with the situation we now find ourselves in. If we do not change our daily life, we cannot change the situation. It is as clear as if I want to move this chair to my right, I have to stand up. I cannot move the chair without standing up.

I have said before that our Earth is somehow like a small boat. Yes, compared to other big things in the cosmos, it is a very small boat, and it is in danger of sinking. We need such a person to inspire us with calm confidence to tell us what to do. And who is that person? Who is that person? The Mahayana Buddhist Sutras have the answer. All the Buddhist Sutras tell you one thing, you are that person. If you are yourself, if you are your best, then you are that person. And only with such a person, calm, lucid, aware, solid, can our situation change and our danger be avoided. So please, good luck, be yourself, and be that person. Thank you.

Excerpted from the July, 1984, issue of the Catholic Worker.

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W I N T E R

JANUARY

MON 12 The Emerging Gay Self:

A psychotherapy group for men seeking further growth in their gay identity. For info: Contact Wesley Harris 688-8101

SAT 17
MBWA: Gym Night
7:30-9:00 pm \$1.00
MBWA Members \$2.00
Non-Memebrs New Brighton Beach Middle School, Washburn and Monterey off Bay St. in Capitola.

WED 21
Relationship Enrichment Group
for gay and lesbian couples. For info: Contact Wesley Harris 688-8101

THU 22
FDC/PDC: Joint Meeting. Cabrillo College - 8:00-10:00 pm.

FRI 23
MBWA: Lauren Crux's Part II "Hows it going Philosophical Agenda of Mid Life". UCSC Womens Center - 7:30 pm. Non-Members \$2.00.

SAT 24
Rainbow Ensemble for the Performing Arts presents: REPA CAFE CABERET YWCA - 8 pm to Midnight. Call for info. # 426-5044.

Dancemakers: "Happy Birthday Dance", a two year celebration. Live Oak Grange, 8:30 pm to Midnight.

Great Outdoors: Winchester Mystery House. 10:00 am. Call Dennis for info. # 427-1936

DMS: AFRIKAN BEAT, direct from Paris, a benefit for Media Watch. 8:00 pm, Vets Hall, Santa Cruz

Kuumbwa Concert: AILEEN VANCE, Karen Leigh & Patti Mattison \$6.50/7.00

SCAN: Building Grassroots Movements in Santa Cruz County. SC High Cafeteria 10am-2pm Call:458-9425

SAT 31
Great Outdoors: Fall Creek Hike. Call Dean for info. #427-1675.

FEBRUARY

SUN 1
Great Outdoors: Potluck & Meeting. 6:00 pm. Call Brett for info. #427-2722

MON 2
FDC: Executive Board Meeting. 7:00 pm. For info. call # 426-6077.

TUE 3
Gay Mens Support Group: Potluck Meeting. 7:00 pm. Calvary Esp. Church.

SAT 7
UCSC Womens Center Benefit: "June Millington in Concert". Two Shows \$8.00 at the door and \$6.50 in advance. For more info call 429-2072.

SUN 8
Great Outdoors: San Francisco Zoo and Primate Center. 10:00 am. Call Estalee for info #475-0962.

Resource Center for Non Violence : Their Annual Dinner featuring writer and activist Grace Paley . Dinner and Program \$15.00/25.00 sliding scale. Program only \$5.00/7.00. Dinner 5:30 pm, Program 7:30 pm. At the Jade Park, Capitola Community Center, Capitola.

Advance Reservations recomended, limited tickets. Tickets and info at the Resource Center for Non Violence, Call #423-1626.

SAT 14
REPA CAFE CABERET
YWCA 8:00 pm to Midnight. For info. call #426-5044.

MBWA: "Valentine Dance". A Womens event at FACES. 8:00 pm to Midnight. Live music with the PEARL DIVERS. for more info call #475-0251.

THU 19
"Evening with Adrienne Rich
Kresge Town Hall, Kresge College, UCSC. For more info. call #429-2072

SAT 21
Great Outdoors: Feb. 21-22. Reno Urban Camping. Call Buzz for info#425-3959.

TUE 24
S.C.A.P. & Cabrillo Lesbians Together present : LESBIANS & AIDS, a forum. All women are welcome! 7:00-9:30 pm., Cabrillo College. For info call #458-4999.

WED 25
FDC: 1987 ELECTION
SC Library 7-9pm

SAT 28
REPA CAFE CABERET
YWCA 8:00 pm to Midnight. Call for info.#425-5044.

Dancemakers: A Womens Dance. 8:30 pm to Midnight. Live Oak Grange.

MARCH
SUN 1
Great Outdoors: Potluck & Meeting. 6:00 pm. Call Brett for info. \$27-2722.

MON 2
FDC: Executive Board Meeting. 7:00 pm. Cal for info. # 426-6077.

TUE 3
Gay Mens Support Group: Potluck Meeting. 7:00 pm. Calvary Esp. Church.

SAT 7
Great Outdoors: Orr Hot Springs. March 7-9 - Sat. to Mon. For more info call Brett # 427-2722.

SAT 14
REPA CAFE CABERET
YWCA 8:00 pm to Midnight. Call for more info. # 426-5044.

SUN 15
Great Outdoors: Uvas Canyon Day Hike. Call Buzz for info. #425-3959.

WED 25
FDC: General Membership Meeting

SAT 28
REPA CAFE CABERET
YWCA 8:00 pm to Midnight. Call for more info. #426-5044.

DANCEMAKERS: A Womens Dance. 8:30 pm to Midnight. Live Oak Grange.



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GAY BIG BROTHERS, LESBIAN BIG SISTERS



Is there a dormant parent lying asleep within you? Have you ever longed to share your hobbies or interests or values with a growing child, to be a formative influence as well as a gentle companion? If you live in Santa Cruz County, you are fortunate to be freely able to participate in the Big Brothers or Big Sisters program.

Some readers might think twice about spending time with a child. Because of ridicule and ignorant bigotry of homophobic individuals and organizations, many of us deny our suitability to be parents or friends of youngsters. Some have also been so betrayed and scorned by their own families that they may have made a choice to completely avoid any association with heterosexuality, marriage, or children.

A more subtle form of self-oppression is evident whenever we repress or minimize our unique caring, mothering/fathering instinct. As a gay man, I have often felt "outside" of the family experience. Yet despite the barriers that discouraged my parental self-expression, I found myself in career choices that centered on the welfare and interests of children, first through education and currently in family therapy. In a doubtful moment, I complained to an associate graduate student in my studies to become a Marriage, Family, and Child counselor, "What does being gay have to do with families? What could I offer from my experience?" She kindly reminded me, "Number

one, you grew up in a family didn't you? So as a child that grew up knowing he was different, you must have a unique appreciation for the dynamics of family life and personal development."

"And number two, you've made your own decisions about living, loving, and learning to create alternative family patterns, so can't you offer a special flexibility and realism about relationships that can be helpful to families now?"

Some who follow national gay news may remember a lawsuit that Richard Stanley, a gay applicant, brought against the Los Angeles Big Brother organization concerning discrimination. Editorials and letters in the *L.A. Times* chronicled this hotly contested debate. The director of the agency, Richard Kline took the tenuous position that Big Brothers agencies were responsible "to guide impressionable young boys toward traditional values and lifestyles." He intimated that homosexuality was something contagious or so fascinating that Little Brothers would be compelled to "try it."

Paul Hoffman of ACLU reminded the public that the parent serves as the final screener, able to "reject a potential Big Brother for her son for any reason — because he's Catholic or because he is not; because he's a baseball player, or because he is not; because he's gay, or because he is not." Hoffman goes on to underscore that the development of sexual identity is not so fragile, but rather

mysteriously takes form for the most part, by the age of 6 and not primarily in relation to environmental factors. He makes another salient point: "Big Brothers is turning its back on all the fatherless young gay boys in the Los Angeles area ... Instead of perpetuating the kind of bigotry that threatens these lives, Big Brothers should be seeking out responsible gay men who could offer gay teenagers special understanding and hope for a decent and productive life."

Policies of the Santa Cruz chapter, fortunately, are different. The Santa Cruz chapter assesses eligibility of an applicant regardless of sexual preference with the agreement that the person's homosexuality will be disclosed to the parent of the matched child so that the parent is given the ultimate approval power.

A one-year commitment to spend 3 to 4 hours a week with your Little Brother or Little Sister is required. You need to be at least 20 years of age and to demonstrate that your current work and living situation is stable and dependable. All applicants are interviewed and letters of references are collected. Same sex matches are, as a rule, the only arrangements that are made. Obviously the caseworker and parent will be evaluating gay applicants' maturity, motives, and personal integrity, as they would for any prospective volunteer.

If you're interested, you may call the author, who serves as an intern caseworker, at 425-0802.



AL-ANON
462-1818
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Gateway School

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
688-2068
Lesbian Women's Group
Sundays, 7 pm
Janus, 718 Carmel St., S.C.

Gay Men's Group
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429-2811. For information call 423-4734

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Contact Lola Gold 426-6077

FREEDOM FOUNDATION
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For Information call 423-4734

GAY MENS SUPPORT GROUP
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Calvary Episcopal Church
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LESBIAN ELDERS LITERATURE GROUP
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Contact 429-6154

LESBIAN GATHERING
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Sweet Williams
538 Seabright Ave. S.C.

LESBIAN MOTHERS SUPPORT GROUP
Wednesdays, 6:30 pm
UCSC Womens Center
429-2072

MATRIX WOMEN'S NEWSMAGAZINE
418-B Cedar St., S.C.
429-1238

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
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10th & Fernando St., San Jose
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SANTA CRUZ AIDS PROJECT
P.O.Box 5142, S.C., 95063
458-4999

SANTA CRUZ WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTER
250 Locust St., S.C. 95060
427-3500

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