Murder, Merced Style:
Gays Are Taking a Beating in the Nation's Breadbasket

by Dave Ford

A casual observer might be forgiven for suggesting that something funny is going on in California's normally sleepy San Joaquin Valley.

But this kind of funny is no laughing matter.

An alarming rash of anti-gay violence has been spreading over the last several years in the center of the State's conservative agricultural community. Midnight slayings, strangulations, stabbings, bodies in the trunks of cars, kidnappings, burning automobiles: These crimes hint at trouble brewing just below the surface of the cities of Stockton and Merced's well-maneuvered, tree-lined streets.

Good news for the gay community doesn't seem to come often these days. However, for the largely closeted gay population of Merced, there was some good news last week. Gays in the town of 60,000, located 80 miles south of Stockton, are breathing a collective sigh of relief.

Merced officials revealed a week ago Monday that they had apprehended the suspect they believe is responsible for the strangulation and asphyxiation death of a gay hospital technician earlier this year, but refused to link the death to a similar Stockton killing. And Merced police denied any homosexual motivation on the part of the alleged murderer.

Continued on page 5
Enough is Enough!

teenagers who, according to a truck driver who witnessed it, bragged and con­
verted these events in the non-gay press is usually minimal, with little sym­
pathy toward the victim and much rationalizing about "homosexual

Armed with a carefully chronicled history of harassment, the jury

1) Stay away from parks, alleys and public restrooms.
2) Carry a whistle or a mace when you go out at night.
3) Contact the Community United Against Violence (CUAV) for

H'ayne Hatson, a 12-year-old General Motors worker, was brutally beaten to

Richard Steinman, M.S.W., PHD

The Silent Treatment

The AIDS Research Initiative was

The editor is

For you teachers who are very influen­
tial in the classroom, your anonymity is guaranteed

AIDS ALTERNATIVE TESTING SITE

3) Contact the community support group, the GLC, for counseling and

Defendant was acquitted this man, yet the remaining gang members still talk of

Because of a carefully chronicled history of harassment, the jury

5) Alert the police whenever you are harassed, even verbally.
6) Join a gym, pump iron and flex those biceps when punks ap­

Robert Genet was: a) A well-known lawyer and

The AIDS Research Initiative was

If you want general information about AIDS or the AIDS antibody test, telephone

AIDS ANTIBODY TESTING

Free, Anonymous Test Program

Los Angeles County General Hospital

AIDS patients ultimately can ex­

If you have AIDS, can you get a job?

If you want to volunteer your services as an Inter­

New funding will extend the anonymous AIDS antibody testing program offered by

AIDS Foundation for Research and Education Against AIDS recently launched by Liz Taylor and

Second of all, note our publication

They have difficulty adjusting to our timetable. If the people

Therefore, we recommend that you

If you have AIDS, you are entitled to

AIDS patients can sue their

If you have AIDS, you can't be

As the epidemic continues to spread

Grove at Market BART

Sacramento at Cesar Chavez and

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Human Rights Commission Chairwoman Esta Soler: 
Discrimination Has Just Begun

Interview by John Wetz

The largely black residents of the tenderloin district of San Francisco General Hospital, understand acutely the fears and prejudices at the root of physical violence. So they provide a safe, locked haven for those who have been brutalized in the outside world.

Chairwoman Soler, of the Commission, recently received a large and varied collection of abstracts discussed at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association. The Commission, of course, has its own criteria for selecting abstracts, but the information is a valuable tool for those who work in the field of human rights.

Our discussion was conducted, through an interpreter, in Spanish, the preferred language of the residents of the Tenderloin District. We began by asking her about the pending case of an accident at San Francisco General Hospital.

Chairwoman Soler: We have been involved in many cases of discrimination in the hospital, and we have been fighting for more than a year to get the nursing staff to change their policies. We have had many meetings with the nurses and doctors, but they have refused to change. They say that they are following hospital policy, but we believe that the policy is discriminatory.

We are working with the hospital administration and the City Council to try to get the nursing staff to change their policies. We are also working with the media to publicize the case and to raise awareness of the issue. We are hoping that our efforts will help to bring about change.

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Because dealing with AIDS has been hard. I came to Shanti angry. I came to Shanti sick. People with AIDS have no choice but to deal with the sickness and death and isolation. People with AIDS don’t have the option to get involved elsewhere. As a Practical Support Volunteer I do little things that make a difference. I do laundry or clean an apartment; I run errands; I hold a hand and listen; I carry a little thing. I have learned to appreciate the value of little things and to see them as something that helps.

The Shanti Project provides emotional and practical support for people with AIDS and their loved ones. Volunteers needed. Call today for more information.

FIVE THINGS TO DO ABOUT AIDS:
TALKING, LISTENING, SHOPPING, GETTING TOGETHER WITH FRIENDS

Shanti Volunteer spends a few hours a week doing little things that make a difference.

The Shanti Project provides emotional and practical support for people with AIDS and their loved ones. Volunteers needed now.

The AIDS HEALTH PROJECT

Learn How to Be:
• Manage stress
• Enjoy safe sex
• Reduce alcohol and drug use
• Enjoy social events

Groups for “Worried Well”, people with AIDS and AIDS Related Conditions. Special programs for women, children, those with AIDS in minority classes and children.

CALL TODAY FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT! 626-6637

The Nation

AIDS Walk New York
Set for May 18

On Sunday, May 18, thousands of volunteers will walk together through the streets of Manhattan as participants in the most broadly based AIDS related fund-raising event ever held in New York. AIDS Walk New York, a ten kilometer fundraising Walkathon, will be a "dynamic expression of the public’s commitment to combat AIDS," according to Gay Men’s Health Crisis Director Richard Deane.

According to event organizers, the initial response to AIDS Walk New York has been overwhelming. Craig Milroy, the Public Relations Director, said, "This is something the gay community has been waiting for. It's important that we show the public that the gay community is not afraid of the highly publicized issues of AIDS."

AIDS Walk New York will begin May 18, 8:00 a.m. at Washington Square Park. Participants will walk for two hours, then route will split with some walkers heading to the United Nations and others going to Central Park. All proceeds from the Walkathon will benefit the nationally acclaimed Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC). The organization provides comprehensive support services for people with AIDS and their families.

Interns Sought

The Human Rights Campaign Fund is seeking applicants for the fall session of its Internship Program for those interested in issues of gay and lesbian rights and the development and implementation of effective strategies to achieve social and political change.

For more information, contact: Sherry Glickman, P.O. Box 401, New York, NY 10003

Insurance Company Finessed to Write Discriminatory Guidelines

National — Gay Florida Carrier Made to Comply, Says Florida Health Dept.

A Florida health department has prevailed in a discrimination case, forcing a Florida health insurance company to comply with longstanding guidelines on AIDS patients.

The Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS) announced the settlement, which required the company to comply with guidelines for AIDS patients.

The settlement was reached with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida Inc., which had refused to comply with the guidelines.

The guidelines were developed in 1983 by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, and are designed to protect the rights of AIDS patients.

AIDS Affirmation Campaigns United Methodists on AIDS

United Methodists have become "a voice of presence and justice" for people living with AIDS, according to Rev. John D.可以, the bishop of the Central California Conference, who recently visited the San Francisco area.

"AIDS is a significant issue for our denomination," he said. "I was pleased that the San Francisco church was so responsive to the needs of people with AIDS."
Soler

Bank basically talked about their announcement on TV. That's what we need to do. For example, we should also take a look at what these problems does that make it in the city?

The corporate sector, we've seen the HRC has been a give the commission visibility, and are supposed to be doing. I think on the Commission, and what Do you really see the Commission has been doing the right thing, and what Do you think there might be Do you think you personally, I'm never personally satisfied Do you think the Commission's leadership I sure as hell hope it will. ■

POSTURAL INTEGRATION MILO JARVIS 863-2842

Sports Massage

| Your visit to one class or one session in the ABA's 200 hour Progressive Massage Therapy Program will
| give you a working knowledge of massage therapy
| and relate this knowledge to the application of massage therapy in a clinical setting.
| Postural Integration
| According to Dr. Bruno Gronek, the first type of postural integration is an ancient European technique that
| involves a combination of exercises, manipulation of body parts, and stretching. The goal is to improve posture
| and overall body function.

Rhabdovirin Price Hike: Activists Question Manufacturer's Motives, Plan Demonstration, Boycotts, Campaign

A coalition of gay leaders and health activists met this Monday in response to a drug manufacturer's profiteering on Rhabdovirin, a promising anti-viral agent used by many people diagnosed with ARC/AIDS.

The manufacturer, ICN Pharmaceuticals, recently raised the price from $6.95 to $2.30 in a box of 12 capsules. This company is repeatedly insensitive to produce the firm is attempting to market it for use in U.S. agriculture. While ICN could "postpone", as justification, the study showed that no major changes resulted. 30 mg of Viread April 3, Viread attributed to rebounding profits to 30 mg of Rhabdovirin (Rhabdovirin). Noting that these profits which the firm has been able to realize on the price hike and that the "point less" would be the problem, the coalition denounced ICN's rationale as economically unprincipled.

"Viread is still $14,900 in the black, which is reflected in its stock price, while every penny today is opposed to 20 cents per share one year ago," said spokesperson Thomas Mullen. "Regrettably, the economic health of ICN Pharmaceuticals, how they can do this."

The coalition resolved to pursue a three-pronged strategy: First, Group Oil Massage Group Meeting every Sunday evening. A safe space to touch and be touched. A chance to get massaged by 4-8 hands for 20 minutes. Call to place time, place, call 863-4342.

Weekly Classes

Learn to massage in this four session weekly classes. New classes starting every month (except Dec.) Call to sign up.

MIL LAJUS 863-3492 price

Deep Muscle Massage

Deep muscle massage is a technique used by many leading physical therapists and physioligists. It is a technique that involves the patient lying face down on a table. The therapist then uses a series of movements and pressures to help relieve tension and pain in the deep muscles of the body.

William Toeter, C.A.

My name is William Toeter. I'm a certified physical therapist and have been working with patients who have injuries in the area of the hip, knee, and back. I have a strong background in the area of therapeutic exercises and have been working with patients who have chronic pain in the area for more than 10 years.

Deep muscle massage is a technique that can be used to help relieve pain and tension in the deep muscles of the body. This technique is used to help improve the function of the body and to help reduce pain. It is a technique that can be used to help improve the function of the body and to help reduce pain. Deep muscle massage is a technique that can be used to help improve the function of the body and to help reduce pain.
April 25 — May 9, 1986

The ancient traditions of the zodiac are rooted in civilizational cycles. The symbol of each zodiacal sign, herein comprise the California Zodiac — the American Federation of Astrologers (AFAN) is sponsoring an all-day conference on Trade Support, April 26. 10 am to 6 pm. at the Urban Life Center, 1000 Franklin. For more information call Robert Cole at 788-6844.

There's a Full Moon in Scorpio on Thursday (26th). The American Federation of Astrologers (AFAN) is sponsoring an all-day conference on Trade Support, April 26. 10 am to 6 pm. at the Urban Life Center, 1000 Franklin. For more information call Robert Cole at 788-6844.

You've got seven days to place your ad. They've got all year to read it.

There's no better way to reach the local gay market on a year-round basis than by advertising in the Golden Gate Business Association Directory of Businesses and Professional Services. And you don't have to be a GGBA member to take advantage of this unique advertising opportunity.

This year's Directory is the first to include display advertising, which is available to anyone. But you must act fast. The deadline for advertising in the Directory is April 30, 1986. (GGBA members: You've got till the same date to confirm your listing.)

For information about the surprisingly low rates for advertising in the Directory, call Robert Sturm or Jim Stout at 415-861-8100.

The GGBA Directory of Business and Professional Services is a joint publication of the GGBA and the Sentinel.
Ken Coupland

Your Show of Shows


Impressionism, the subject of the 30-second television spot we are seeing, was one of the great moments in the history of art which we can approach knowing almost nothing. 

The press preview for the big Impressionists show is deceptive, so avoid adverse conditions if you're a ticket holder (Cover insert photo and photo this page by Thomas Allen).
A Wild West End Story

It may be tired, but it's true: Just as the Great Depression inspired the most lavish of film musicals, so you could say the harder the times, the more opulent they were. British rock video director Julian Temple's musical film version of the novel by author Colin MacInnes, *This Year's Theatre Week*, is a match for any of the screen's most extravagant musical spectacles, tinged with a contemporary sensibility which recognizes that escape carries its own price.

From a country — and an industry — going through its own hard times, Temple's brash, cynical, hyperactive sequence of music and dance seems out of place as the monstrous potential of the musical comes. In MacInnes' book, The London scene is a back door in which MacInnes' main characters, the punk rockers, do all the things which MacInnes himself does in the pre-soldiered comedy.

Absolute Beginners, in this rock scoop, is a battle for magazine David Bowie's role in the story, with other West Side Story left off. Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins' 1961 telling of the Roman and Julian myth was a truck and pedestrian look at social tensions, a tension where every word seems out of the Leonard Ber­

stein and Stephen Sondheim and mass, musical Broadway choreography (The Robbins) will hold, yet not all of because when viewed behind the Absolute Beginners, the rock music is unspooled.

Temple has taken West Side Story's them and given them another twist. The music that operated the opening New York's and provided the backdrop for MacInnes' book, singer behind Temple's taking, is rather in rather.

On the theme of of movie, while Montague against a band of workers, the show fleshes out the angle of vision shifted towards the focus on the background. Absolute Beginners, directed by Julian Temple and written by the creator of "method" acting, who saw them, especially the Chocolate Factory, as trophies of British talent, is particularly private. Harry, the chocolate maker, is a simple, low-down, lazy sort of the ragged rock group. Dean is a sort of a comic newspaperman who uses "smarter" characters, or the comedy is not what it is. While he is depicted as the voice of Common Sense, the film soars on the soundtrack over the ears.

Jimmie Fails plays his role as a poorly chosen song for the love of the music and his "chocolate factory" chic printed by Wanda's "you must have heard it before." The show fleshes out the background. Absolute Beginners, directed by Julian Temple and written by the creator of "method" acting, who saw them, especially the Chocolate Factory, as trophies of British talent, is particularly private. Harry, the chocolate maker, is a simple, low-down, lazy sort of the ragged rock group. Dean is a sort of a comic newspaperman who uses "smarter" characters, or the comedy is not what it is. While he is depicted as the voice of Common Sense, the film soars on the soundtrack over the ears.

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Choreography (the production credits what heavily on Robbins' jazzy pyrotechnics. Unlike the romantic leads in *West Side Story*...
No Tears for This ‘Evita’

Evita, a production of San Francisco State University’s Drama Dept. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Lyrics by Tim Rice. Directed by Lynbarbra Mahler.

I admit I didn’t really expect much at San Francisco State’s production of the modern opera, Evita. Other college productions I’ve seen turned out to be well-intentioned failures, with amateurs trying too hard to be better than they could ever hope to be.

Such was not the case here. Evita, directed by Lynbarbra Mahler, was a super theatrical evening, almost on a par with a Broadway equivalent. The casts that play the Golden Gate Theatre, directed by Lynbarbra Mahler, are well-suited to the roles, and received huge rounds of applause.

Unfortunately, Evita performs for only two weekends, then leaves many a fan longing for more. David Charles N. Texeira became the proverbial “person you love to hate” in the study, social climbing Eva Peron. His voice is powerful, his performance superb. Eva’s angry at the fall of Argentina, the heartbreak that follows, the gentle innocence of the night. She and Peron’s mistress when she was cast out in anger at the fall of Argentina, the heartbreak that follows. She is at times a bit out of context. High-kicking Buddy Berkeley-type chorus careers are eye-pleasing, but don’t really seem to belong in such an intensely dramatic story. David N. Texeira, his youthful face, was their only small part of the show. I left when a company worked in hard and performed well as a whole company, they are entitled to make a few minor errors and deserve our patience.

This was an evening of legtimate theatre rather than a night out “slumming” at an amateur theatrical company. This does effect their overdose of the drama of Eva Peron’s award and powerful story. David N. Texeira became the powerful “person you love to hate” in the study, social climbing Eva Peron. His voice is powerful, his performance superb. Lloyd Webber. Lyrics by Tim Rice. Directed by Lynbarbra Mahler, are well-suited to the roles, and received huge rounds of applause for their vocalizing.

The production had a few flaws. On two occasions, S.F. State University, 1600 Holloway Ave., SF, CA 94132. For more information call 864-3017.

Catherine N. Texeira’s and Raymond San- tuin for Evita cast and Eva Peron’s roles in the Fox and Clue, both strong, emotional voices, adult and junior generation. Catherine N. Texeira became the powerful “person you love to hate” in the study, social climbing Eva Peron. His voice is powerful, his performance superb. Even Evita, and both San- tuin for Evita cast and Eva Peron’s roles in the Fox and Clue, both strong, emotional voices, adult and junior generation. As a case in point, Erickson

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Bill Bllck

Reinforcement on the Recital Circuit

San Francisco Performances, the premiere recital series in the city, has recently offered a space of superbly wrought concerts. Barely had one's ears recovered from Louis Langree's ear-splitting rendition of Tchaikovsky's "Ricordanza" than Emiely Angeln arrived in town with a well-mounted recital of music ranging from Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Giacomo Puccini's "La Boheme," and Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words." The pianist's fortepiano by Malcolm Bilson is a marvel of craftsmanship and execution. The instrument is a replica of those made in the eighteenth century by Cristofori and others, and it allows the audience to experience the music as it was originally heard by listeners of that era. The recital was a triumph, with Bilson performing works by Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert withering precision and grace.

In her Goethe recital, Angeln took the great poet's songs as her inspiration, just as the composers had done. His music is set in a variety of styles, from the melancholic "Mondnacht," to the joyful "Springreise." The performance was a tour de force, with Angeln's playing reflecting the emotional range of Goethe's poetry.

Dance

Looking for Ideas that Matter

Piazza once said, "There is no abstract art." Of course, what he meant was that art is not something that can be taken for granted. It is a matter of being present and connected to one's surroundings.

Due to its historical significance, the Piazza has been a site of cultural and artistic exploration. The Piazza has played a role in the history of art, and it is a place where ideas are born and ideas are cultivated.

In the 19th century, the Piazza was the center of artistic and intellectual life. It was a place where artists and thinkers gathered to discuss and debate the ideas of the time. The Piazza was a place of innovation and creativity.

However, the Piazza is not just a place for the arts. It is a place for the community as well. The Piazza is the heart of the city, and it is a place where people come together to celebrate and to connect with one another.

But the Piazza is also a place of challenge. It is a place where ideas are tested and where new ideas are born. The Piazza is a place where the future is shaped.

In the 21st century, the Piazza is once again a place of innovation and creativity. It is a place where artists and thinkers are working together to create new works of art and to shape the future.

The Piazza is a place of diversity and inclusion. It is a place where people from all walks of life come together to celebrate and to connect with one another.

In conclusion, the Piazza is a place of both challenge and opportunity. It is a place where ideas are born and where the future is shaped. It is a place where the arts are celebrated and where the community is strengthened.
Rock Previews

particularly since they got that delicious credit to her gender. (Club Nine, Love. 26, 9 pm. $5)

Luther Vandross. The chocolate here too seldom. (Punch Line. 4/25 & 26, 8 pm, $10, $11)

The Nylons. These four gay Cana­

AIDS; I likewise condemn the sleazy innuendo. Sisters are doing it for reassurance. Wyndham Hill (the new Ip as the first release on their Theatre, 4/25-27, $20)

hall, 4/25 &26, 8 & 10:30, $13.50)

releasable. Janie Jett & Robin. A promising

Taylor ought to be doing. (Stone, 4/28, 9 pm. $9)

the headliners are out from New York, mystery bill. The opener is touted as a promised set by Cap'n Trips and Maria

This will introduce the new X, with Blasters' guitarist

mended for those who can't resist an acoustic set by Cap'n Trips and Maria

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**Twice a Month**

**April 25 — May 1**

*Supreme Tea Room* hosts a capital camp kick-off party at her Jackson St. home for benefit Compassion House, 4 pm, dance to a choice of $50, 75 or $100. Call 240-2662.

*Sandy Yu & Danny Williams,* 2:45 pm, 4 pm, J. Pope Feld, the Master of Misogyny, 9 pm, St. at Buckleys Bistro. Call 413-6359.

*Four Women in a Different Universe* Author Richard Smith will discuss his latest book, the impact on women of the social shift of past 20 years and more, 7:30 pm, free, at Metro Times Bookstore. Call 315-513, 583-1684.

**LEATHER THEATER presents Harriet Schiller in her performance work, Mirror Making & Wound Repairing.** (Showcco Presents, Fri., 7 pm, (7/19) 8-10 Saturday, 5-7 pm, at Leather Times 415-513, 3614-462.

*Pay Wynne** 474-3863.

*Herman's songs* 8:30 pm, $12.50, at 1177 Breen, 9:30 pm, $6, at Buckley's Bistro. Call 552-8177.

(one-man, two-wristed comedy show) has its last show April 30, 8:30 pm, $5, at Baybrick Inn (also dj Donna Rego, 2 am, $5, at Buckleys Bistro. Call 524-8371.

**dj Donna Rego** 5 pm, at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

**Soul by dj Eric Clark** (also 5/3), Progressive Video nightly by David Tutton, at 181 Beat, 4-8 pm, $5, at the El Rio (your dive). Call 441-8413.

*Sandy Van, Doug Holscaw & Danny Williams,* 9 pm, at Buckley's Bistro. Call 441-8413.

*Gay Comedy Night with Sandy Van, Doug Holscaw & Danny Williams,* 9 pm, $1, at the 'N Touch. Call 441-8413.

**Raise a Crow** donation, at Modern Times Bookstore. Call 431-8334.

**DJ Donna Rego** is the host of this evening's entertainment updates with "That's San Francisco," 7:30 pm, free, on the air, with Phillip R. Ford. Call 285-8799.

**Tom Ammiano's critically acclaimed Saturday Night Show** returns to Studio Rhino; benefit for Rita Rockett;rales at Les Habsburg's, 10:30 pm, $1, at the N Touch. Call 441-8413.

**A Lesbian Party:** A night dedicated to the experience of female/lesbian life and community. Live via satellite interview with Nancy Kingsley in the title role — plays one night only with David Lean's *A Passage to India,* 4:27 at the Castro Theatre. Call 441-8413.

**12th Anniversary of a Legend:** music of traditional and contemporary Latin America (bilingual), 7:30 pm, free, at Modem Times Bookstore. Call 431-8334.

**Lesbian/Gay Open Poetry Reading,** hosted by Barbara Christian will discuss what it's like to be a gay male coming-out comedy host. 7 pm, no cover; 9 pm, at Rail, 10:30 pm, $5, at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

**Filipina Feminists:** poetry from Latin America (bilingual), 7:30 pm, free, at Modem Times Bookstore. Call 431-8334.

**Gay Comedy Night** with Sandy Van, Doug Holscaw & Danny Williams, 9 pm, $1, at N Touch. Call 441-8413.

**Phil Payton** 415-474-8746.

**Lesbian/Gay Open Poetry Reading** poets will discuss what it's like to be gay, $5, at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

**Tom Ammiano's Writhe returns to Theatre Rhino May 2**

Call **ROD'S PLACE**

You can choose a man you want to "get off with" SAUCE MONDAY-FRIDAY

DINNER SATURDAY-SUNDAY

Press for the fantasy of your choice

- All American
- Jocks
- Daddies
- Uniforms
- Squeeze

NEW FANTASIES DAILY

$2.00 plus toll, if any. MUST BE OVER 18

415 976-7637

**Mixed Reviews**

**The Critics Choose Favorites**

Art. The Frans of Edward Munch: Mirror of His Life, number two, most assuredly an enormous experience with virtually every element, most promising technique over his long career; some examples in this exhibition drawn from the prestigious Egoien collection; 4/18 through 5/7 at the Palace of Legion of Honor.

Call 750-8444.

Film. "Congo" — the film surprised everyone, including director Richard Attenborough, and introduced audiences to kids Kingsley in the title role — plays one night only with David Lean's *A Passage to India,* 4:27 at the Castro Theatre. Call 441-8413.

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A winning team !!!

Sentinel USA joins the Golden Gate Business Association in announcing the GGBA Directory of Businesses and Professional Services 1986.

New expanded edition. Publication date: June 1, 1986.
There is growing evidence of a significant connection between AIDS and alcohol and drug abuse.

Substance abuse is an issue we can no longer afford to ignore.

Drugs and alcohol don't cause AIDS. AIDS is caused by a virus. But there are at least three ways in which alcohol and drugs can increase your chances of getting AIDS.

First, alcohol and drugs depress the immune system and make you more susceptible to disease.

Alcohol, marijuana, speed, cocaine, poppers, and other recreational chemicals lower your resistance to disease. In some research studies, poppers have been implicated in increasing the risk of KS. Drugs and alcohol weaken your health. They increase stress rather than relieve it and help the AIDS virus overcome your body's defenses.

Second, alcohol and drugs reduce your ability to stick to judgments about what's safe and what isn't.

A huge majority of gay men in San Francisco have given up Unsafe Sex. For the relatively few who haven't yet, studies demonstrate a strong correlation between alcohol and drug use and Unsafe Sex.

Third, sharing IV drug needles transmits the AIDS virus directly from the bloodstream of one infected person to the bloodstream of another.

If you do take the risk of using IV drugs, don't share needles! It's a direct route for the transmission of AIDS. There are thousands of IV drug users in America with AIDS, and probably other thousands who are still incubating the virus and who are contagious. Don't share needles!

According to experts who treat substance abuse among gay men, we have had a major epidemic of substance abuse in our community for years—so much so that most of us have accepted substance abuse as a routine part of gay life. What was once routine, however, is now deadly.

If you want confidential and gay-sensitive information about substance abuse for yourself or for a friend, help is available. Contact 18th Street Services, 2152B Market Street, 861-4898, or call the AIDS Foundation's AIDS HOTLINE, 863-AIDS, for a referral.

Remember:

- Sharing needles is dangerous. Don't share needles.
- Alcohol and drugs depress the immune system. Protect your health.
- Getting high can lead to Unsafe Sex and exposure (or re-exposure) to the AIDS virus.

Now is the perfect time to take a fresh look at your own use of alcohol and drugs—and to get some help (often free) to find out if you have a drinking or drug problem that may increase your chances of getting AIDS.

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