

Lesbian stereotypes essay wins award

■ **HONOR:** Margaret Butler will be rewarded for her achievement today

By Kristin Bailey
Student Activities Reporter

Three University students will be honored today for their work in one of academia's fastest growing disciplines.

The Bruce M. Abrahms Lesbian Gay Bisexual Studies Undergraduate Essay Award will be presented to first-place winner Margaret Butler, who is also the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Alliance co-director, and two honorable-mention winners at 4 p.m. in the Carson Gold Room.

Butler's essay, "Femmenism: A Good Thing?", beat 15 other contestants for a \$400 check and a \$100 gift certificate to Mother

Kali's Bookstore. Her essay explores the stereotypes of "femme" lesbians and whether these stereotypes are conducive to feminism.

"Within the lesbian community there's been this idea of role playing of butch and femme," Butler said. "This was seen by the lesbian movement as a reproduction of patriarchal values."

The award, sponsored by the Center for the Study of Women in Society since 1989, acknowledges first-class scholarship by undergraduates in gay and lesbian studies, said Judith Raiskin, Women's Studies Program director.

However, this year Bruce Abrahms, a San Diego attorney and University alumnus, offered to fund the award perpetually.

"He cares a lot about both aspects of what the prize is meant to foster — academic excellence and a hospitable climate," Raiskin said. "This contest is meant to create a more hospitable environment for lesbian and gay students and for those interested in lesbian and gay issues."


The study of lesbian and gay issues has been increasingly recognized over the past 15 years, Raiskin said.

"Since the mid '80s, there has been a huge amount of publishing in this field by scholars across the country," she said. "While these students are pioneers in this field, they are in dialogue with almost a generation of scholarship now. It's an acknowledged field in every discipline."

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Akin O. Owosekun
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MUP

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