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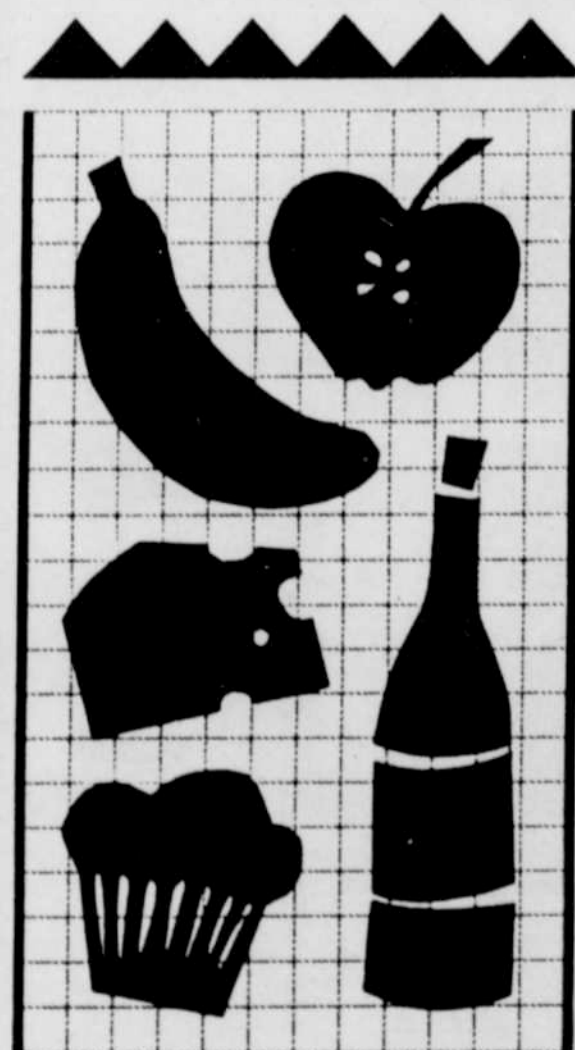
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Just briefs

B Y W C M c R A E

Gays slump in polls

Recent nation-wide polls have shown a drop in support for gay issues. According to a Gallup poll conducted in September, only 33 percent of adults think gay sex should be legal, while 54 percent think it should be illegal. Thirteen percent have no opinion.

The poll results show an 11 percent drop in support of legalizing sex between consenting adults of the same gender in just the past year, and represent the lowest poll support for the legalization of gay sexuality since Gallup conducted its first poll on the subject in 1977.

A November poll by *Newsweek*/Gallup indicated that a majority of Americans support quarantine of AIDS patients. A *Time* magazine poll indicated that a majority of adults think homosexuality should be taught to 12-year-olds in school, but think that the children should be taught it is immoral, according to the *Washington Blade*.

MHRC awards

The Metropolitan Human Relations Commission will hold its Annual Awards Luncheon at noon, January 9 at the PSU Red Lion. Stevie Remington, Executive Director of the Oregon Chapter, ACLU, will receive the Russel A. Peyton Human Relations Award. Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center will be given the Sonja Hilton Award for service to the disabled. Cascade AIDS Project will be awarded a Commission Special Recognition Award. For further details, see Out About Town.

Mrs. Grundy moves to Seattle

Due to alarm about the spread of AIDS, the British government decided late last year to launch an AIDS-education television advertising campaign, and to send educational leaflets to every household in the country, reports the *Windy City Times*. However, an AIDS-education blitzkrieg in the Seattle area has run into opposition-cum-squeamishness.

The Seattle-based Northwest AIDS Foundation prepared a 30 second ad, directed primarily at a gay audience and designed to discourage unsafe sex. The ad, which shows four young men walking through traffic, contains the words "safe sex."

Only one Seattle television station, KING-

TV, an NBC affiliate, was shameless enough to run the ad.

New immigration law perpetuates old discrimination

The Federal government's recently passed, and much ballyhooed, new immigration law will grant immunity to aliens who have lived in this country since 1982, unless they are gay. Legislators did not alter the wording of the former law barring immigration of gay men and lesbians.

Under the new law, the Immigration and Naturalization Service can still exclude all gay men and women from entry to the US on the basis of being afflicted with a "psychopathic personality." This exclusion applies to all people who visit the country, do business here, or who intend to immigrate.

Roberts puts teeth into handicapped law

Dentists in Oregon were warned that charging extra fees or refusing service to AIDS patients is a violation of state handicap anti-discrimination laws, according to an advisory statement issued by Mary Wendy Roberts, State Commissioner of Labor and Industries. Roberts' decision was hastened by an *Oregonian* news story about a Portland man, Chuck Houston, who revealed he had been asked to pay a significant surcharge for dental care after he had disclosed being HIV antibody test positive.

Roberts' statement reads in part, "The same law that prohibits restaurants from charging more for a meal served to handicapped guests also protects AIDS victims who must seek den-

tal care." Roberts' statement, a dental association policy statement, and a Center for Disease Control booklet entitled "Preventing Transmission of Hepatitis B, AIDS, and Herpes in Dentistry" will be mailed to all 1756 Oregon Dental Association members.

Jenkins to preside over ECCO

Franklin Jenkins has been elected president of the East County Coordinating Organization, an umbrella group for all community groups in unincorporated East Multnomah County. Jenkins is a founding member of Mount Hood Community Mental Health Board of Directors; he chaired the East County Annexation Study; he serves on the Multnomah County Citizens Involvement Board by appointment of the County Commission. Jenkins is also advisor to Windfire, a support and social group for young gays and lesbians.

Word from gai Paris

A friend writes from France, commenting on the *gai* life. "Gays here call themselves 'homos,' 'gai' is more a written than spoken word, particularly for the straight masses. To the average Frenchman, 'gai' still means 'happy.' Gays use 'pede' [from pederaste] as we in *Les Etas Unis* use faggot; OK within the family, but an insult on the street. No AIDS literature to speak of in the bars. No condom machines, as in Switzerland. Phillippe told me every French boy he's tricked with has been cooperative but amused when he requests they use a condom. The French are such fatalists to begin with — they don't need a disease to perfect their mentality." •

Stolen Kisses

A gay prisoner and his lover have prevailed against discrimination in visiting privileges, but bias against gays continues in Oregon prisons.

B Y W C M c R A E

Wesley Johnson, an inmate at Oregon State Correctional Institution near Salem, and his lover William Stone of Portland, are now able to kiss and hold hands during routine prison visits, due to a clarification of visitation rules. Johnson filed a complaint against prison officials after he was placed in "security lock-up" for kissing Stone's hand at the end of a visit in late November.

Stone claimed that Johnson, who has been incarcerated since late August, had previously been warned that he could hug, but not kiss, his lover during visits. At the end of the November 20 visit, however, Stone said that Johnson became "very emotional" and kissed his hand. Prison guards and the superintendent on duty then seized Johnson, and charged him with "sexual activity." Johnson was disciplined with 15 days in "security lock up" and threatened with "six months in the hole," according to Stone.

OSCI *Procedures for Visits* allows as "Expected conduct while visiting" as "Inmates may embrace and kiss a visitor briefly and/or shake hands with visitors upon meeting, and at the time of leaving."

Johnson contacted the ACLU, and filed a complaint that present application of the so-called "physical contact rule" discriminated against gay prisoners. Ed Reeves, ACLU appointed attorney, said that enforcement of the rule was "clearly discriminatory" and constituted a "special rule for gay people."

Counsel for the State eventually agreed, and clarified the physical contact rule to allow same

sex partners to hold hands, embrace, and kiss without threat of discipline. Scott McAllister, legal advisor to OSCI, said that prison officials will continue to "encourage" gays not to kiss, though OSCI superintendent Richard Peterson claimed prison staff would "give protection to the degree we can" to gay couples during visits.

Larry Roach, Director of Program Services at OSCI, contacted Johnson and assured him that he would have the same privileges during visits that a straight couple would enjoy.

Johnson is now allowed to have physical contact with his lover, but he feels there are other aspects of prison life that continue to discriminate against gay prisoners. During a telephone conversation from OSCI, Johnson said that when prisoners are incarcerated, they are asked if they are "homosexual." If they respond affirmatively, they are asked if they will attempt to have sex while in prison. Regardless of the answer, the "A-Hs" ("Admitted Homosexuals") are put into Unit One, the "gay ward." According to Johnson, there are about 20 "A-Hs" in OSCI, all of whom are subjected to "protective custody." All cells in OSCI are built for two prisoners. Prisoners who do not admit to being gay are put into double occupancy cells. However, "A-Hs" are jailed alone. Johnson claims that the practice "imposes isolation" and is "like being in solitary."

According to Johnson, prison officials claim that "protective custody" is necessary for the safety of the gay prisoners. However, Johnson feels that "isolation" is just another way the prison justifies discrimination against gay prisoners.

And at that point, a prison guard terminated our conversation, a less subtle, though certainly effective, form of discrimination. •

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