

Breast cancer prevention controversy continues

The use of tamoxifen to prevent breast cancer in women who are at high risk for the disease is still in dispute, according to a paper published in the *Journal of Women's Health*, Volume 4, Number 1.

The debate among experts continues at a time when the National Cancer Institute is slowly reactivating the Breast Cancer Prevention Trial, a 16,000-patient randomized study of the use of tamoxifen in the prevention of breast cancer in women at high risk. According to Dr. Leslie C. Ford, a physician with the National Institutes of Health's National Cancer Institute, the trials are even more crucial now that scientists have sequenced the BRCA1 gene, a risk factor that carries a lifetime risk of breast cancer that can be as high as 85 percent.

In a story from the *PRNewswire*, other experts concur in the use of tamoxifen, but raise concerns about its adverse side effects. Among these is the increased risk of endometrial [uterine] cancer. They further caution that tamoxifen may be associated with other serious medical problems, including fatal and nonfatal thromboembolic disease.

Kristine Chatwood

Texas GOP blocks lesbian nomination

An openly lesbian public utility commissioner may have lost her position when Texas Senate Republicans blocked a full vote on her nomination.



The appointment of Sarah Goodfriend is subject to Senate confirmation this session because former Gov. Ann Richards made the appointment while the legislature was in recess. Under Texas state law, Goodfriend's appointment to the six-year term, which began in October 1993, will end with the close of this legislative session if she is not confirmed before then.

The *Washington Blade* reported that a nominee of Republican Gov. George W. Bush was unanimously approved by the Senate in February.

State Sen. Teel Bivins (R-Amarillo) denies that Bush or anyone in the Senate opposes Goodfriend because she is a lesbian. According to Bivins, this is just a matter of the governor wanting to appoint his own people.

Despite the obstacles, Goodfriend continues to lobby to keep her job.

Kristine Chatwood

Gores entertain activists

Vice President Al Gore and his wife Tipper had 150 gay and lesbians activists over to their house on March 3.

Al Gore told the officers and members of the Human Rights Campaign Fund: "It's a wonderful thing to do what you're doing, and that's devoting your lives to others. This dedication is an outgrowth of the way you live your entire lives."

Tipper Gore said, "We very deeply share your vision of a society that is fair and free of discrimination for gay and lesbian people, and we want you to know that."

A pianist played show tunes as the homosexuals nibbled from a buffet.

D.C. street activist Michael Petrelis was not impressed.

"Who cares about invitations to the Gores' residence?" he said. "It is nothing more than a symbolic bone being thrown HRCF's way. I want an AIDS strategy from the administration, government-funded TV ads targeting gay youth to avoid AIDS, and [government AIDS honcho] Anthony Fauci put on the unemployment line. We don't need any more photo ops."

Rex Wockner

White confronts religious right in Florida

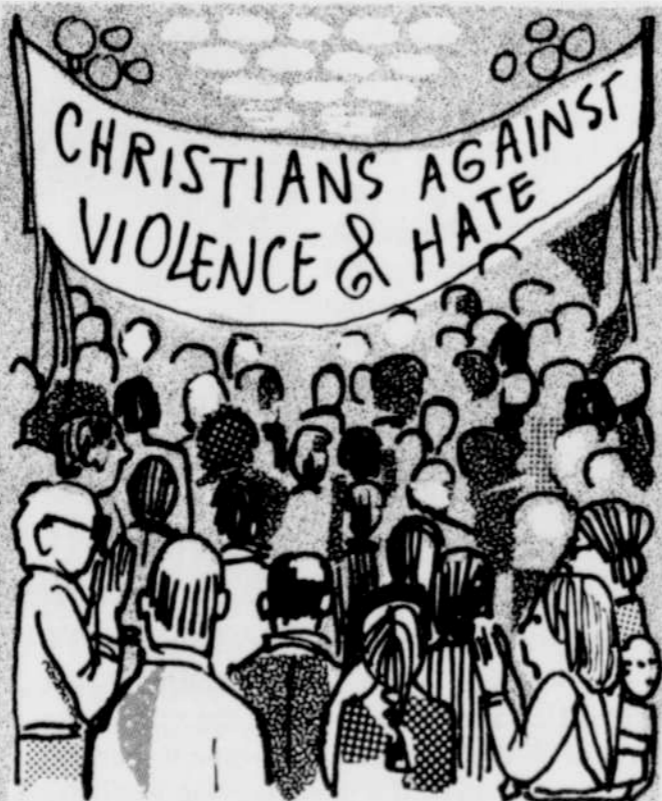
"When [Pat] Robertson came to jail, everything changed," said Mel White, recounting his struggle to get the religious right to stop extreme rhetoric which leads to violence against lesbians and gay men.

White seems no longer to be the pariah formerly shunned by religious leaders.

White traveled to Florida to confront Dr. D. James Kennedy at the second annual "Reclaiming America for Christ" conference in Ft. Lauderdale. He laid down his \$145 registration fee and simply walked in as a delegate on March 16. Conferees greeted his "really large badge reading 'Gay Christian Clergy,'" with startled questions.

A few hours later White was ushered into a meeting room with Kennedy, and a planned five-minute encounter stretched to nearly 30 minutes. "We had a much more strident discussion than I had thought we would have," White said. Later at the conference Kennedy reportedly told delegates he was opposed to violence against lesbians and gay men, and everybody else.

White was in the lobby of the convention center as Ralph Reed, head of the political organization the Christian Coalition, left after delivering a speech inside. He recounted how Reed bounded over and said, "I know you vicariously, and I wanted to meet you. I've been working behind the scenes with Pat [Robertson] to get you out of jail."



On Saturday, March 18, nearly a thousand gay men, lesbians and their supporters prayerfully gathered outside the convention center under the banner of Christians Against Violence and Hate. Police protection was heavy due to rumored threats of appearances by skinheads and the Ku Klux Klan. According to White, the hate-mongers never showed.

"We stood up to the religious right when they came to town," he said. "It does much for us in terms of our own sense of worth."

Bob Roehr



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Study director: Dr. David Rosenstein, Oregon Health Sciences University