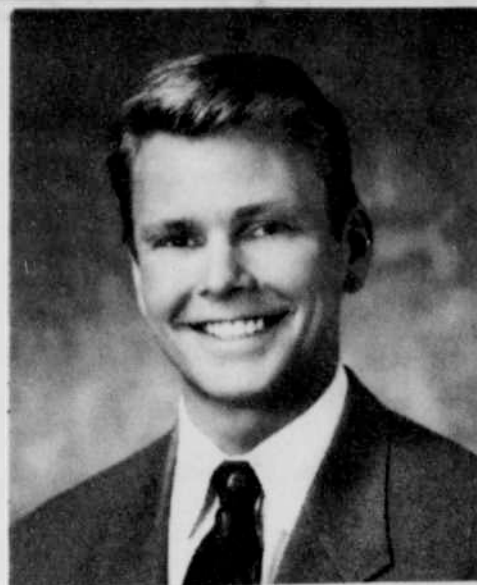


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world briefs

AUSTRALIA

The parliament of New South Wales (where Sydney is) passed legislation June 5 banning discrimination against transgendered people and granting transsexuals the right to correct their birth certificates, reported *Capital Q*, a gay weekly.

Sporting organizations were exempted from the laws, which were championed by state Attorney General Jeff Shaw.

BRAZIL

Brazil's health ministry will give away 5 million smaller-sized condoms to teenagers, the newspaper *Correio Brasiliense* reported on June 11.

"We have detected that underage sex is on the increase and... we have to have a product that is more suited to their situation," spokesman Lair Guerra de Macedo said.

BRITAIN

The London group Gay Men Fighting AIDS plan to decorate the city's main cruising area, Hampstead Heath, with 60,000 condoms.

The rubbers will be placed in luminous boxes along with safer-sex pamphlets and hung from trees.



In other news, Elton John has donated 4,000 of his cast-off outfits to a rummage sale that will raise money for the AIDS Foundation, the *Daily Express* reported on June 6.

BRITAIN

British Prime Minister John Major said on June 11 that the National Lottery Charities Board, which distributes millions of pounds of lottery profits every week, should stop funding gay and lesbian groups.

Speaking in parliament, Major called recent funding of the Leicester Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Centre (\$40,000) and the Gay London Policing Group (\$101,500) "ill-founded and ill-judged."

He also attacked awards to the Scottish Prostitutes' Education Group and the West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign.

The Lottery board's independence is guaranteed by law, so it does not have to yield to Major's opinions, according to Reuters.

CANADA

Following the May 9 approval by the House of Commons, Canada's Senate passed legislation June 6 to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation under the federal Human Rights Act.

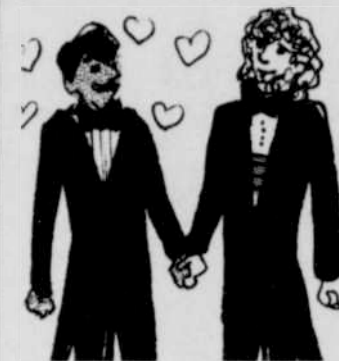
Like the Commons, the Senate also rejected an amendment to exempt religious institutions from the act's protections.

In reality, the Human Rights Act covers only the approximately 1 million employees of the federal government and federally regulated businesses such as banks, airlines, railways and broadcasters. Most provinces and territories protect other gay and lesbian workers. The four that do not are Alberta, Newfoundland, the Northwest Territories and Prince Edward Island.

The bill now goes to Canada's head of state, the representative of England's Queen Elizabeth, whose approval is considered a formality.

CANADA

A new national poll of 1,516 Canadian adults found that 55 percent believe partners of gay and lesbian employees should get company benefits. Support is highest in Québec (70 percent) and among people under age 34 (71 percent).



Forty-nine percent think gay men and lesbians should be allowed to get married. Support is higher in Québec, British Columbia and the Atlantic provinces and among people under age 34.

Only 42 percent of Canadians think gay men and lesbians should be able to adopt children. The figure rises to 55 percent in Québec and to 54 percent among people under age 34.

CHILE

Openly gay candidate Rolando Jimenez is running for a seat on the Santiago Municipal Council, representing the Santiago Centro borough.

He is supported by gay organizations, including the Movimiento de Liberación Homosexual. The election will be in October.

Twelve councilors will be elected from the Centro borough.

DENMARK

AIDS is now the top killer of Copenhagen men between ages 25 and 49, the *Danish Medical Journal* reported on June 11.

"This is a typical big-city problem," State Health Agency researcher Hedda Bille told Reuters. "Large conurbations attract social and sexual deviants."

ICELAND

On June 4, Iceland became the fourth country to legalize marriage-like registered partnerships for gay men and lesbians.

Members of the Althing, the parliament, voted 44-1 in favor of the measure. One MP abstained and 17 skipped the voting.

Public opposition was minimal, an Althing spokesman said. The law will come into effect June 27, on gay pride day.

As in Norway, Sweden and Denmark (and its protectorate, Greenland), registered same-sex couples will have all the rights of marriage except access to adoption and artificial-insemination technology. Unlike in the other nations, Icelandic gay and lesbian partners will be allowed joint custody of each other's biological children.

Some have criticized the new law for withholding full marriage from same-sex couples.

Actual same-gender marriage is not permitted anywhere in the world. It is expected to be recognized first in Hawaii or The Netherlands.

MALTA

The Mediterranean island-state of Malta will see its first gay-pride celebration June 29-30, reports the International Lesbian and Gay Association.

Events will include a film festival, a sculpture exhibit, a health forum, dancing, folk music, standup comedy and a drag show. For more information, phone 011-356-250-780.

TURKEY

Istanbul police harassed transgendered people before and during the Habitat II summit, reported the local gay group Lambda.

Habitat II brought together world leaders to study the future of cities and human settlements.

Transvestites and transsexuals were beaten, arrested, forced to remain in their homes, or prohibited from entering their homes, the group said. Lambda charged that one transsexual's house was torched by police.

Authors

Upcoming & Events

Fenton Johnson

Tuesday, July 9th at 7:30 pm

With the same sure storytelling voice that won him critical praise upon publication of his most recent novel, *Scissors, Paper, Rock*, Fenton Johnson tells the history of "how I fell in love, how I came to be with someone else, how he came to death and how I helped, how in the end love enables us to continue beyond death." In this poignant memoir, *Geography of the Heart* (Scribner), Johnson interweaves two fascinating stories: his own upbringing as the youngest of nine children of a Kentucky whiskey maker and that of his lover Larry Rose, the only child of German Jews, survivors of the Holocaust. With grace and affectionate humor, he follows their relationship through their first meeting to Larry's death of AIDS. Johnson is also the author of the award-winning *Crossing the River* and a contributor to the *New York Times Magazine*, where excerpts of this book have appeared.

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