

many of the tracking cities. For instance, in New York City anti-gay bias crimes have decreased 2 percent since 1993, but violent crime overall decreased 39 percent during the same period. Anti-queer violence peaked during the months of May and June, when most pride celebrations occur.

Federal hate crime statutes do not presently allow for prosecution of offenses motivated by a victim's sexual orientation, but the 1994 Victims of Crime Act, which secured federal funds for anti-violence organizations across the country, permits longer sentences in cases where anti-gay bias is a factor.

Although crimes against bisexuals and transgendered people have been included in past reports, this is the first year the words appear in the document's title. In related news, a coalition of bisexual and transgender activists recently won the support of several major sexual minority organizations in its efforts to expand the Hate Crimes Statistics Act of 1990, which requires the FBI to track bias-motivated crimes, to include crimes targeting transgendered and bisexual people.

Pro-active measure faces tough audience

Hands Off Washington, an organization dedicated to fighting legislation that limits or denies the civil rights of any citizen of that state, has begun collecting signatures for Initiative 677, a

Washington Citizens for Fairness



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measure to ban employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. Backers have until July 3 to gather 179,248 signatures in support of their proposal, in order to get the issue on the November ballot.

Although the thrust of I677 is a ban on job discrimination, according to the *Tacoma Morning News Tribune*, the initiative contains a proviso that employers would not be required to give benefits to the partners of their employees. Laurie Jenkins, Hands Off Washington board president, explained, "We wanted to make it clear that there weren't any other issues in here.... It's not about marriage. It's not about benefits. It's just about employment discrimination."

The initiative faces a big challenge, meanwhile, to overcome the negativity generated in the wake of recent successful efforts by conservative state legislators to ban same-gender marriage. Gov. Gary Locke vetoed the measure, and the Senate failed to override the veto. Now the bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Bill Thompson (R-Everett) is lining up votes to bypass the governor and send the question to voters during a special June 3 election to decide on funding for a new football stadium.

Rep. Ed Murray (D-Seattle) wants to defeat the anti-marriage measure and said he believes he and his colleagues have enough votes to keep it from reaching the ballot, but he admits that some of those votes might have been lost since House Speaker Clyde Ballard (R-East Wenatchee) threw his weight behind the ban.

Nature vs. nurture: Round 10

In 1973, researchers at Johns Hopkins University published an account of an infant boy whose penis had accidentally been cut off and who was subsequently raised as a girl; the child appeared to have accepted the new identity, and the case has long been used as evidence of the pliability of sexual identity and the influence of socialization. However, on March 14 the *New York Times* reported on a follow-up study by doctors at the University of Hawaii and the Victoria, B.C., Min-

istry of Health showing that far from being satisfied with his reassignment, the boy renounced his female identity at the age of 14 and chose to live as a man, eventually undergoing extensive surgery to reconstruct his mutilated genitalia.

Researchers Dr. Milton Diamond and Dr. H. Keith Sigmundson published their findings in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* in order to set the record straight and also to present an argument for the importance of prenatal events, like hormone exposure, in building a sexual self. They are using the case study to call for changes in the treatment of babies born with ambiguous genitalia, a condition caused by chromosomal or hormonal abnormalities that is found in about one in 1,000 births.

The subject of the study, identified only as John, is now in his 30s and married to a woman, whose children he adopted.

California legislature draws Lou Sheldon's ire

Legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in California's public schools, known as AB101 or the Dignity for All Students Act, passed the Assembly Higher Education Committee by an 8-6 vote on March 18. Committee members debated matters relating to armed forces training units, affirmative action and school facility use, and agreed on amendments clarifying the measure in regard to these three issues. The bill, authored by openly lesbian Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Shelia Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) with the intent to curb widespread physical and verbal harassment of gay and lesbian students, will encounter its next test in the Assembly Education Committee in April.

Meanwhile, anti-queer activist the Rev. Lou Sheldon, head of the Traditional Values Coalition, condemned the Assembly's "pro-gay" agenda, identifying nine bills which he said promote homosexuality, according to The Associated Press. Among the proposals he opposes are measures that would require companies seeking public contracts to provide domestic partner benefits; allow unmarried couples to adopt children; and add sexual orientation to employment and housing nondiscrimination laws.

Hawaii brings in big guns

The State of Hawaii has hired attorney Charles J. Cooper of the Washington, D.C., firm Cooper & Carvin to appeal the December state Supreme Court ruling that state government offered no compelling reason to justify sex discrimination in its marriage laws, reports the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*.

Dan Foley, legal counsel for the three couples who sued in 1991 for the right to marry, faulted the state's selection, citing Cooper's history of taking anti-gay positions in court: In 1986, as U.S. assistant attorney general for the Reagan administration, Cooper wrote an AIDS policy memo that allowed employers to fire HIV-positive employees based on fears that they could spread the virus, even if the fears were irrational; and in 1994 Cooper authored a brief to the Supreme Court in defense of Colorado's Amendment 2.

Cynthia Quinn, special assistant to Hawaii Attorney General Marjery Bronster, told reporters the state hired Cooper for his appellate expertise in constitutional law and that it does not believe he has an anti-gay bias. She said the state would continue to argue the case without diminishing lesbians and gay men.



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