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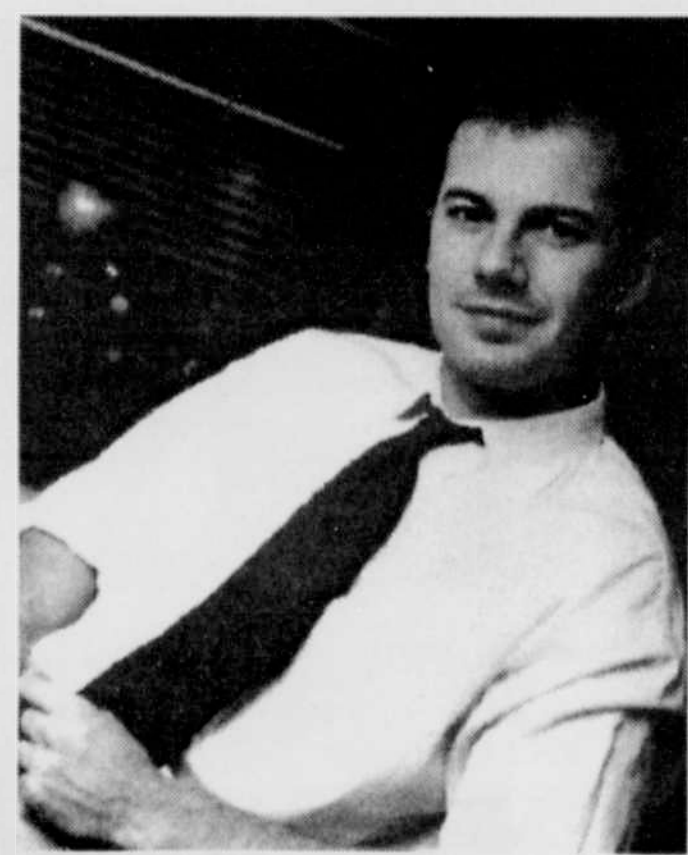
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**TWENTY-THIRD AVENUE
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invites you to an evening with
Andrew Sullivan



author of
**Same-Sex Marriage:
Pro and Con,
A Reader**

Wed., May 7,
7:30 pm

1015 NW 23rd Avenue, 224-5097

PHOTO BY CHRIS CARROLL

world briefs

ARGENTINA

Argentina's second Lesbian, Gay, Transvestite, Transsexual and Bisexual National Conference, held March 28-29, was a success despite delegates being booted from their conference space and Christian groups threatening "a human chain" to keep attendees from entering their hotel.

The conference took place in northern Salta province.

Two highlights of the gathering, participants said, were a spontaneous gay pride march—the city of Salta's first—and a protest at a gay disco which had banned local drag queens.

The Christian "human chain" never materialized, but "political pressure" got the conference evicted from its space at the local university, said correspondent Alejandra Sarda. The entire conference was moved to the gay bar Nosotros.

Among much else, conferees decided to launch a national campaign for an antidiscrimination law. Organizing meetings will be held in Rosario in July and Buenos Aires in November.

AUSTRALIA

In a case that mirrors the Jamie Nabozny case in Wisconsin, a 14-year-old Sydney student is suing his former school for failing to protect him from homophobic abuse.

Christopher Tsakalos is also taking action against 50 students he says assaulted him, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported.

Tsakalos says he was bashed by groups of up to 20 youths, had scissors held to his throat, and had his family home defaced with anti-gay graffiti.

On April 21, Tsakalos enrolled in a new school after several weeks of studying at home because the New South Wales Department of School Education said it could not guarantee his safety anywhere in the system.

In a deal worked out before the state Supreme Court, the department promised to educate students and staff at the new school against homophobia and take special steps to meet Tsakalos' unique needs.

Last year, gay student Jamie Nabozny won \$1 million in damages from the Ashland, Wis., school district for its failure to protect him from anti-gay attackers.



Following a 10-year campaign by gay activists, Tasmania's House of Assembly voted March 27 to legalize gay sex. The bill now moves to the upper house of Parliament.

Tasmania is the lone remaining state to ban sodomy; it punishes private gay sex between adults with up to 25 years in prison.

Among those now supporting the measure's repeal is state Attorney General Ray Groom.

"I have mellowed, I suppose," he said. "It has become a negative for Tasmania."

Last month, Australia's High Court accepted an activist lawsuit against the ban.

The court said homosexuals need to know whether the state ban or federal privacy protections take precedence in Tasmania.

Federal legislators enacted a sexual privacy law after the U.N. Human Rights Committee ruled in 1994 that Tasmania's ban violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Australia is a signatory.

In related news, Groom has given the go-ahead for this year's Hobart Queer Film and Video Festival.

The event was banned in previous years.

CANADA

The British Columbia Teacher's Federation voted March 19 to fund an anti-homophobia and anti-heterosexism program.

The funding may include such things as providing staff, office space and resources to develop workshops, policies and curriculum recommendations.

The program will be funded completely from members' dues.

KUWAIT

Kuwait University may dismiss Prof. Alia Shoaib for saying that lesbianism is rampant among students and that she saw two women having sex in a university toilet, reported London's *The Guardian*.

Shoaib made the remarks in a casual conversation with a student who then published them in a local magazine.

In recommending Shoaib's firing, university president Fazia Khorafi, a woman, said homosexuality does not exist in Kuwait.

"Ours is a Muslim society and homosexuality is against Islam," she said.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti novelist Leila Otham is facing obscenity charges for her book *The Departure*, which includes two gay-themed short stories—one about two girls in a lesbian relationship and the other addressing homosexuality among immigrant workers.



SWAZILAND

The formation of Swaziland's first gay group has caused an uproar, reported the Africa Information Afrique news service.

Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini responded by calling homosexuality an "abnormality and sickness" and declaring that the government will not accept homosexuals unless society does so first.

Former Prime Minister Prince Bhhekimp, who is also a chief, threatened to evict gay men and lesbians from his region of the country because "homosexuality is regarded as satanic in Swaziland."

He added, however, that if homosexuality is permitted by the Swazi constitution, then he would have no objection to his subjects joining the new group.

The association, GALESWA, is led by 21-year-old Mangosuthu Dlamini (no relation) who recently spoke on national television about his efforts.

That appearance "incited the wrath of the majority of the nation," AIA said, and cost Dlamini his job with a security firm.

"It is a pity that many homosexuals are leaving the country for South Africa," Dlamini told AIA. "This is because their rights are guaranteed in that country's constitution."

South Africa is the only nation in the world that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation via its constitution.

VIETNAM

Officials in Ho Chi Minh City expressed horror April 7 following news reports of the nation's first same-gender wedding.

The ceremony, held at a local restaurant, reportedly united an Australian Vietnamese man and his Vietnamese boyfriend. More than 100 guests reportedly attended.

"It should be publicly condemned," Nguyen Thi Thuong, vice-director of the city's state-run Consulting Center for Love, Marriage and Families, told Reuters. "Public opinion does not support this."

The *Nguoi Lao Dong* newspaper quoted a police spokesman as saying: "If we'd known about it, we would have stopped it. But we can't fine them because we don't have any laws to punish them."

Compiled by Rex Wockner