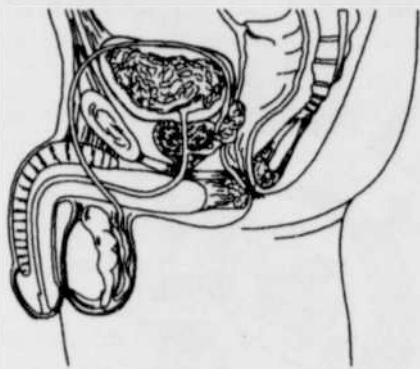


trated on HIV-positive men who have anal sex, but the influence of HPV has also been seen among HIV-negative men who have anal sex, according to Sue L. Goldie, assistant professor of health policy at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Anal cancer is hard to detect because there are few symptoms. Approximately 44 percent of people who contract anal cancer die within five years. It is estimated that 35 out of every 100,000



HIV-negative men will get anal cancer. The rate nearly doubles for those who are HIV-positive.

Pap smears became a regular part of women's health care in the 1960s. At that time the rate of cervical cancer was about 40 per 100,000 women. The rate is now down to eight per 100,000.

The test costs about \$25. It can detect both cancer and the abnormal cell changes that are likely to lead to cancer.

Researchers say more studies are needed. However, Joel Palefsky, professor of laboratory medicine at the University of California at San Francisco and co-author of the study, says

he expects Pap smears to become a regular part of medical care for men who have anal sex.

The U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling last month in a case involving a Maine dentist who refused to treat an HIV-positive woman except in a hospital. The high court let stand a lower-court ruling in favor of the patient. This was the second trip to the Supreme Court for the case.

In September 1994, Sidney Abbott informed Dr. Randon Bragdon that she had HIV but no AIDS symptoms. Bragdon determined that Abbott had a cavity, but insisted it would have to be treated in a hospital, not his office.

Abbott sued Bragdon under a provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act that bans discrimination in public accommodations, including doctors' offices. That time, the Supreme Court ruled that HIV is a condition covered by the ADA. The case was sent back to the lower court for a new hearing.

A federal appeals court ruled once again in Abbott's favor. Bragdon again appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that medical professionals should be allowed to determine when a "reasonable accommodation" is outweighed by risk. The Supreme Court rejected Bragdon's review request.

■ Compiled by KRISTINE CHATWOOD

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TEXAS SHOWDOWN

Despite appeals by President Bill Clinton—and perhaps because of inaction by Gov. George W. Bush—the James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Act died May 14 before it could reach the floor of the state Senate.

The bill, named after a Jasper, Texas, man who was dragged to death behind a vehicle because he was African American, had previously passed the Texas House.

Proponents who worked most closely on the measure say Bush could have used his influence to bring it to a vote, but chose not to because the legislation contained explicit protections for gay men and lesbians.

The bill was tied up in a Senate committee and did not reach the floor for a vote. A filibuster on the Senate floor by Democrats also failed to get the bill to a vote.

"I am disappointed with the Senate Republicans' resistance to an open and free debate on hate crime legislation," says state Rep. Senfronia Thompson, a Democrat from Houston and the author of the House version of the bill.

Thompson had successfully maneuvered the measure through that chamber with only minor compromises. (The phrase *sexual orientation* was replaced by *sexual preference* as part of a House compromise.)

"I wish Governor Bush would have shown some leadership on this issue," Thompson says. "Senators told us that the governor was using his influence to break the impasse. If that was using his influence, Lord help us if he becomes president."

Darrell Verrett, Byrd's nephew, lobbied legislators for more than a week for passage of the bill. Byrd's mother, Stella, also supported the bill but was too ill to travel to the Capitol in Austin.

"My family came to the Legislature for closure," Verrett told reporters. "What we got was a closed door."

Dianne Hardy-Garcia, executive director of the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, adds: "I am utterly and completely saddened that George Bush has shown his true colors on our issues. I had always hoped that deep down he was a good guy. Although I'm saddened by it, at least people know what kind of man he is."

Bush spokesperson Scott McClellan did not return a call requesting a comment from the governor. Instead, he faxed a copy of an Associated Press story about the bill's failure.

In it, Bush said the inclusion of sexual preference was not the sticking point for him. He said he simply wanted to wait to see what action the Senate took.

"If something doesn't go somebody's way, they'll say, 'Oh, it was just presidential politics,'" Bush said. "I'm getting used to it."

All other things aside, Hardy-Garcia says the filibuster attempt was an important show of support for the gay and lesbian community. It caused an 11-hour delay which meant that hundreds of unrelated bills also facing a legislative deadline died because no action could be taken on them.

"I was never prouder than...when our senators decided to filibuster," she says. "No one has ever fought for us that hard."

Clinton, who was in Austin recently, met and talked with Hardy-Garcia and members of Byrd's family about the hate crimes legislation.

"It was fairly amazing that he met with us," says Hardy-Garcia, adding that during the meeting the president promised to "do everything possible" to get the bill passed.

She says Clinton then immediately stepped onto a stage at Bergstrom Airport and spoke about the bill.

■ Reported by GIP PLASTER

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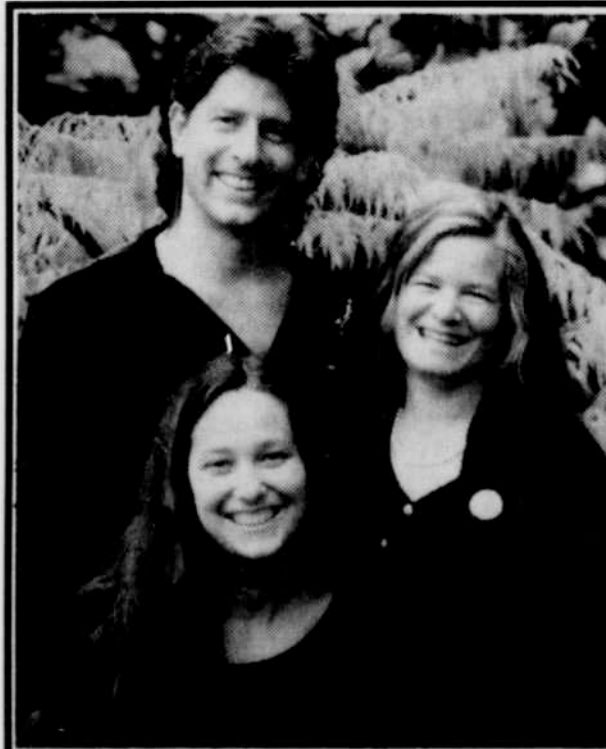
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