

The report documents the correlation between three forms of social oppression—homophobia, racism and poverty—with the risk-taking behavior associated with HIV transmission. “One size fits all” prevention strategies do not account for the impact of social discrimination on self-esteem and one’s sense of individual agency, it says.

The report documents a strong correlation between high-risk sexual behaviors and experiences of social discrimination. People engaging in such practices were more likely to have experienced homophobia, racism and insufficient economic resources both in childhood and adulthood.

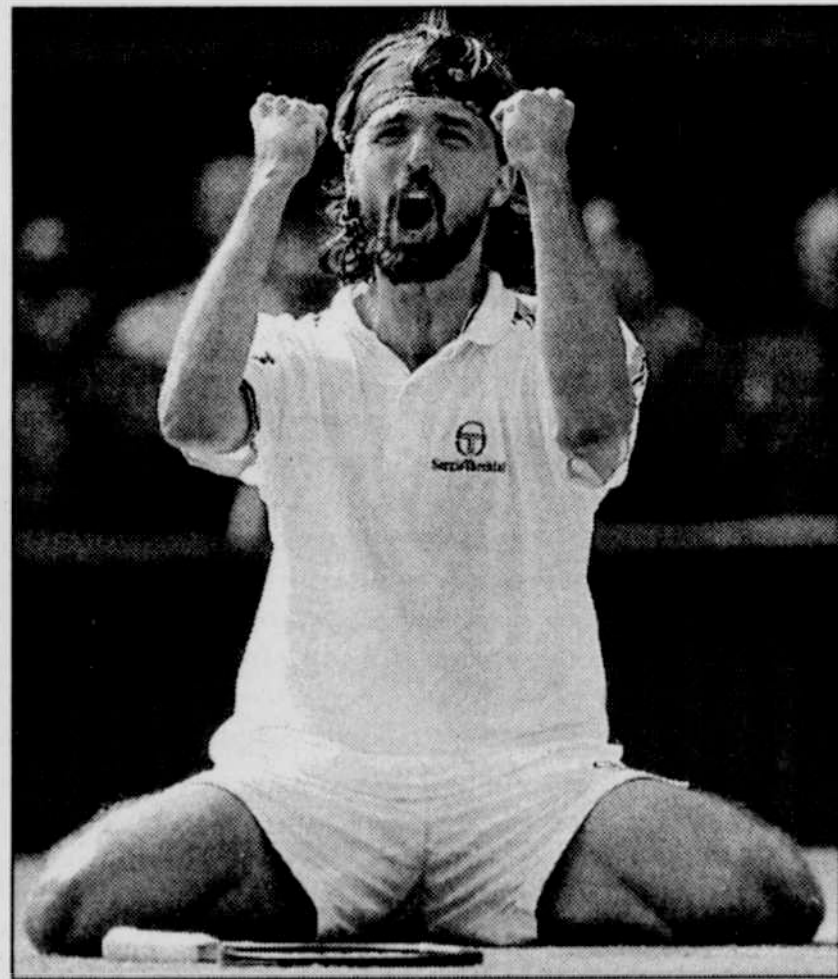
However, the presence of an openly gay adult role model during childhood, and the acceptance of one’s homosexuality by family members, correlated with lower incidence of high-risk behaviors. These resiliency factors have significant policy implications not only for HIV transmission but also for the Boy Scouts controversy and for safe schools initiatives to combat homophobia.

National media outlets largely have ignored or trivialized Wimbledon champ Goran Ivanisevic’s use of the word “faggot” during his appearance at a news conference July 9, according to the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

While criticizing a call by a line judge, he said: “Then I hit another second serve, huge. And that ball was on the line, was not even close. And that guy, he looks like a faggot little bit, you know. This hair all over him. He call it. I couldn’t believe he did it.”

The comment, which drew scattered laughter from the reporters in attendance, has received minimal coverage in the press. Only ESPN and the *Los Angeles Times* have covered the incident in any depth.

ESPN, after being contacted July 11 by



Homophobic tennis star Goran Ivanisevic celebrates his Wimbledon victory July 9

GLAAD, ran both a segment on its primetime *SportsCenter* program and a detailed article on its Internet site. *Times* columnist Diane Pucin addressed not only the incident but also the media’s silence regarding it, citing several outlets that either failed to report or buried Ivanisevic’s comment.

“GLAAD is concerned that an athlete can casually drop a word like ‘faggot’ in a high-profile media interview and not only is there very little media coverage of his comment, but several reporters in the room can be heard laughing

at it,” said Scott Seomin, GLAAD entertainment media director. “If Ivanisevic had used the ‘n-word’ to refer to a linesman, I doubt that press reaction would have been this muted. I hope the media do not have a double standard when responding to or reporting on public expressions of bigotry.”

CALIFORNIA

A child visitation dispute between a mother and her child’s paternal grandparents does not involve lesbian or gay parents but still has important implications for their families, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund said July 10. It urged the California Court of Appeal in an amicus brief to resolve the dispute with a case-specific analysis that allows respect for diverse families rather than a rigid formula.

“As the most recent figures from the census indicate, the American family is evolving, with more same-sex households than ever before,” said Myron Dean Quon, Lambda Western Regional Office deputy regional director. “Protecting these families, including the children in them, means focusing on real parent-child relationships rather than imposing narrow rules that make legal rights dependent on biological ties or using broad rules that allow outsiders to intervene in family life.”



Myron Dean Quon

Karen Butler, mother of a 6-year-old girl, is seeking termination of court-ordered visitation for her daughter’s grandparents, Charles and Leanne Harris. But Lambda says she misinterprets last year’s U.S. Supreme Court case *Troxel v. Granville* as a rigid ruling that makes parents’ rights absolute; in fact, that decision urges state courts to apply a case-by-case analysis to visitation disputes involving those who are not legal or biological parents.

In *Butler v. Harris*, Lambda discourages a ruling that would create an absolute parental veto against grandparents’ visitation rights under any circumstances. Such a decision would not take into account the complexities of family life and in other contexts could hurt gay and lesbian families.

MINNESOTA

A state district judge has ruled that a recent decision striking down the state’s sodomy law applies to every adult.

The decision means Minnesota is the third state this year to move away from antiquated laws that have been used against the gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans community. In April, a circuit court judge found that the Arkansas ban on consensual sex between adult, same-sex couples is a violation of the state’s constitution. And in May, Gov. Jane Hall signed a bill repealing Arizona’s sodomy laws.

The Minnesota ruling came in response to a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union. In May, State District Court Judge Delila F. Pierce initially ruled that the sodomy law is unconstitutional.

The ACLU then asked her to certify the ruling as a class action so that there would be no question that it would apply to every adult. The judge granted the ACLU’s request July 2. [M]

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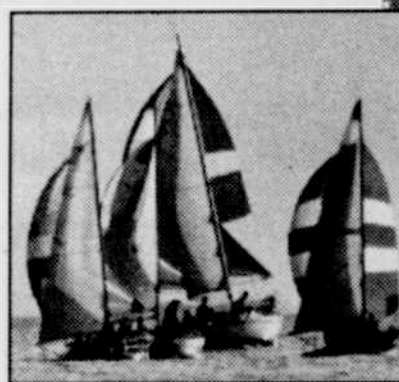
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