

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said if Webster's murder was anti-gay in nature, it would be the first such death in British Columbia history.

Almost 2,000 people marched Nov. 18 through the West End, Vancouver's gayest neighborhood, which abuts the huge, well-known park, chanting, "Justice will be done."

According to the newspaper *Xtra! West*, it was Vancouver's largest-ever gay protest. "It was on par with the [1981] bathhouse raids in Toronto or the San Francisco community's response after [gay City Supervisor] Harvey Milk was murdered," longtime activist Don Hann said.

Canada has a third openly gay member of Parliament—sort of. Libby Davies told the *Vancouver Sun* she is in a same-sex relationship but doesn't consider herself a lesbian.



Libby Davies

"I don't particularly think we need to put people into boxes or to put labels on things," she said. "It's who you meet and how you feel about a particular individual or person, and that's how I feel about it."

Davies' previous lover, who died, was male. Suburban Vancouver MP Svend Robinson and Montreal MP Real Menard are openly gay.

SOUTH KOREA

A woman who was a man until three years ago has become a major star in South Korea, the *Wall Street Journal* reported Nov. 23.

Harisu Ha—with her impeccable figure, full lips, tight skirts and high heels—has taken the nation by storm with a movie, a dance album, an autobiography and numerous endorsements, all in the past 10 months.

Gay activists are surprised. "Most homosexuals have to hide their sexual identity at work for fear of being disadvantaged, while most transsexuals are disowned by their families and unable to get [respectable] jobs," said Lim Tae Hoon, president of Seoul's Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Federation.

Ha said hard work made the difference. "I think I have paved the way for [social] minorities, that it is possible to achieve anything if you work hard," she told the paper.

But some activists have a different take.

"People only like Harisu, not transsexuals," said Kim Jong Hwi of the Haja Center arts and music school. "Her debut hasn't led to the understanding of sexual minorities. It proves that if you're pretty, anything is possible."



Tchugunnyi Skorohod

TURKEY

Turkey quarantined a transsexual prostitute with AIDS Nov. 9.

She had worked in a state-approved brothel and tested positive during a routine examination. Authorities think she might have had sex with up to 5,000 people since her last HIV test.

Turkey opened its state-supervised brothels to gay, transvestite and transsexual prostitutes a year ago in an effort to stem unregulated prostitution and the spread of HIV.

FRANCE

French media giant Lagardere has launched the nation's first gay television show on its Canal Jimmy cable network.

Good as You debuted Nov. 11. The magazine format offers news, politics and investigative reporting along with segments on fashion, art and music.

UNITED KINGDOM

Some people say they choose to be gay, according to a new survey by ID Research for Britain's Channel 4 News.

About 5.5 percent of lesbians and 2.4 percent of gay men said they decided to be gay, while 65.5 percent of gay men and 46.3 percent of lesbians think they were born gay.

More than 10,000 people were questioned. The survey also found gay men are more likely to be construction workers, police officers or firefighters than they are to be hairdressers or preachers.

SOUTH AFRICA

Martin Nel of the gay Internet site www.q.co.za has launched a boycott of AllAfrica.com for publishing "homophobic rubbish passed off as journalism." He plans to file grievances with the Human Rights Commission and the Advertising Complaints Commission alleging the material violates South Africa's constitutional ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation.

RUSSIA

The rap duo Tchugunnyi Skorohod (Cast Iron Footman) debuted their new video, "Faggots Are Coming," on MTV Russia's live *Hush Hour* program Oct. 25.

Prior to the premiere, the men opened some beers, took off their boots and put them on a table for host Vasily Strelnikov to sniff. The song says that gays control Russian life and the media—"lewd homosexuals boss over everything"—and that if a straight man wants to get a job, he has to let a faggot screw him in the ass.

The video shows simulated acts of male anal intercourse with the participants' faces hidden by smiley-face symbols. "Compared to Tchugunnyi Skorohod, Eminem with his homophobic rap is a quiet child," Gay.ru reporter Tanya Ofigevshaya said. [M]

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.

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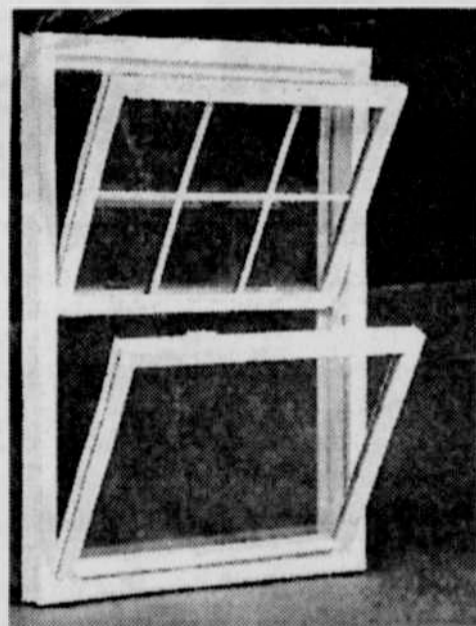
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