



Cheryl Gallant stuck her foot in her mouth during an argument in Canada's House of Commons

Health Network and Sigma UK. It received 1,290 valid responses.

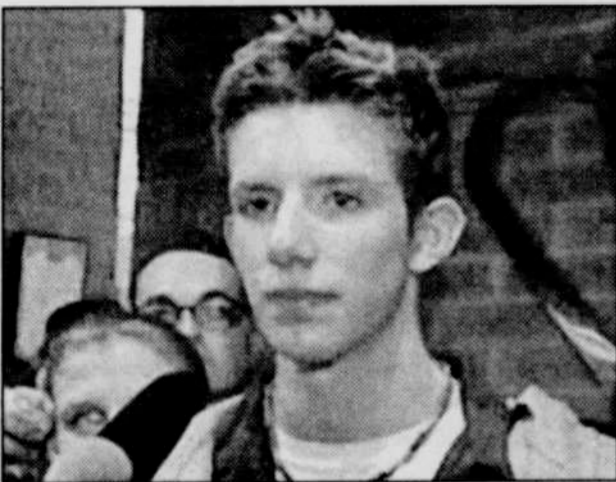
Among other findings: 41.5 percent of those surveyed had unprotected sex in the past year, and 10 percent wished they were not gay. A total of 60 percent had taken an HIV test; 5 percent of that group had tested positive and 93 percent negative.

**CANADA**

Canadian Alliance party Member of Parliament Cheryl Gallant, who represents the Ontario riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, made a remark April 10 in the House of Commons that is being called anti-gay.

During an argument among former alliance leader Stockwell Day, Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham and others, she reportedly shouted to Graham, "Ask your boyfriend!" Party chief Stephen Harper later ordered Gallant to apologize, according to news reports.

Speaking on the Commons floor April 16, she said: "Last Wednesday in this house, I made a remark that, on reflection, was inappropriate and that I regret making. If anyone was offended by the remark, I offer my sincere apologies."



Marc Hall

The Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador legalized adoption by gay couples April 11.

The new laws will take effect in June. "We need a great variety of potential families, and I think taking applications from anyone who is interested is the best way to find those families," Judith Grove, Adoption Council of Canada executive director, told the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

A Catholic student in Oshawa, Ontario—denied the opportunity to take his boyfriend to the prom because the church considers gay sex sinful—has filed suit at the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, claiming violations of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Ontario's Education Act.

Marc Hall, a 17-year-old senior at Monsignor John Pereyema Catholic Secondary School, pleaded his case April 8 before the Durham Catholic District School Board, to no avail. A spokesman told reporters, "The behavior associated with a homosexual lifestyle is not consis-

tent with church teachings and our values as a Catholic school system."

Board chairwoman Mary Ann Martin added: "The catechism accepts homosexuals as persons who should be treated like any other person.... However, the catechism notes that homosexual behavior is unacceptable and cannot be approved."

The archdiocese voiced support for the board's decision.

"People have a choice as to whether they attend a Catholic school or not," spokeswoman Suzanne Scorsone told the *National Post*. "For people to choose to be practicing Catholics [is to] acknowledge the rightness of the teachings."

Announcing his lawsuit, Hall said: "My school board said that they cannot condone a homosexual lifestyle. I am sorry, but I don't have a lifestyle, I have a life."

"I do not believe that religious belief is a justification for discriminating against me, and I do not agree that my religion, the Catholic Church, has a policy against gay people going to dance. But it's not a matter of what I believe. It is a question of rights."

**CHINA**

More than 1,000 sex-change operations have been performed in China since the first one in 1986, according to the Xinhua news agency. "The fact is, nowadays Chinese people have become more tolerant of transsexuals," the April 7 report said.

Official estimates place the transsexual population at 400,000. Xinhua said having a sex-change operation means transsexuals have "realized their lifetime dream to live as their real selves."

Before surgery, an individual must undergo a psychological exam "to make sure that the change will not adversely affect his or her life or mental health." Candidates also must have permission from their family and employer and from "public security authorities."

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Gay U.S. Rep. Jim Kolbe, R-Ariz., denounced South Africa's AIDS policies April 8 in Cape Town.

The nation refuses to provide anti-HIV medication, alleging it is toxic, and President Thabo Mbeki has said he doubts HIV is the cause of AIDS. A court recently ordered the government to provide one drug, nevirapine, to HIV-positive mothers and their newborn children to prevent transmission of the virus to the babies.

Kolbe, chair of the House appropriations subcommittee overseeing foreign operations, said: "It is tragic that we have such a lack of leadership on the part of central government to deal with this problem. I'm very discouraged to see that the government has decided to appeal the decision of the [Constitutional] Court here to allow the distribution of nevirapine. They have not been able to demonstrate one bit of evidence that shows it is not a safe drug.... It is a tragedy of unspeakable magnitude." □



Jim Kolbe

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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