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WORLD news



Trans champ Nadia Almada gets frisky on the U.K. version of *Big Brother*



UNITED KINGDOM

A transsexual bank clerk won Britain's fifth series of *Big Brother* Aug. 7, getting 74 percent of viewers' votes.

"There's no words that could show the happiness inside me," said Nadia Almada, 27, who collected about \$116,000. She was not out as a transsexual during the 70 days of filming.

Hundreds of people marched Aug. 7 at the 14th Gay Pride parade in Belfast, Northern Ireland. A band of protesters stood outside City Hall and called for the event to be banned because of "the offensive nature of this parade [and] what it promotes," demonstrator Jonathan Larner said.

But an organizer from the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association told the British Broadcasting Corp.: "A lot more people are coming out because they see our visibility and that we can walk the streets here. That gives these young, shy people—who have no other sorts of information—the courage to say who they are."

New recruits to England's and Wales' 43 police forces will answer a written question about their sexual orientation starting this fall.

A form will ask if the officer is heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual or would "prefer not to say," according to a report in *The Independent* daily newspaper. The Gay Police Association supports the move, saying it will help prevent marginalization of queer officers.

AUSTRIA

The Vatican shut down the St. Pölten seminary Aug. 12 because of a sex scandal. The school, which is located near Vienna, has been in operation since 1455.

The seminary's computers were found to contain kiddie porn, gay sado-masochistic porn, photos of sex with animals and pictures of students kissing and fondling each other and their male teachers. "A new beginning is necessary," the local bishop said.

Prosecutors have charged a seminarian from Poland with possessing and distributing child pornography. He could be imprisoned for two years.

THE NETHERLANDS

Representatives of police forces from nine nations, meeting early last month in Amsterdam, formed a Europewide support network for gay and lesbian officers. "Gaycop" also will offer legal assistance to gay police officers who experience discrimination on the job.

Members of the new group rode on the police boat in Amsterdam's Gay Pride parade Aug. 7. The parade takes place on the city's canals.

CHINA

The city of Hangzhou is testing gay men for HIV at gay bars each Saturday night, *China Daily* reported.

The first 60 rapid HIV tests, conducted voluntarily, found two cases of infection. Results are available in 20 minutes.

The testing is a joint project of the Zhejiang Provincial Health Bureau and Chicago's Howard Brown Health Center. Questioning of the men being tested suggested that only about 20 percent use condoms, the newspaper said.

INTERNATIONAL

A new poll has found that China is more open to same-sex unions than the United States. The Euro RSCG Worldwide survey also questioned people in the United Kingdom, France and Germany on a variety of sexual issues.

About 50 percent of Chinese women and 39 percent of Chinese men said same-sex partnerships should be accorded the same status as traditional marriages. In the United States only 38 percent of women and 31 percent of men agreed with that statement. In Germany, 67 percent of women and 45 percent of men agreed with the statement; in France, 48 percent of women and 35 percent of men agreed; and in the United Kingdom, 52 percent of women and 37 percent of men agreed.

Substantially more U.S. citizens—39 percent—agreed with the statement "my religious beliefs factor into my sexual behavior." Only 3 percent of the French, 6 percent of Germans, 15 percent of Chinese and 16 percent of Brits said that about themselves.

Asked if monogamy is natural to humans, 70 percent of Chinese said yes, compared with 57 percent of Americans, 44 percent of the French, 42 percent of Brits and 40 percent of Germans.

PORTUGAL

The majority of Portuguese people do not support same-sex civil marriage, a poll has found.

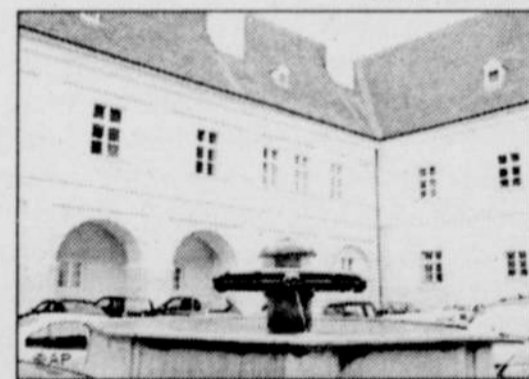
The scientific telephone survey, conducted in late July, found that 55 percent

of the population opposes gay marriage, 35 percent supports it and 10 percent has no opinion. The results were reported in the Aug. 8 issue of the daily newspaper *Correio da Manhã*.

Among those who favor same-sex marriage, 54 percent also approve of adoption by gay male couples and 62 percent approve of adoption by lesbian couples—if a child has been abandoned by his or her biological parents. Support for same-sex marriage polled higher than average among city dwellers (41 percent), people younger than 30 (68 percent), women (39 percent), college graduates (50 percent), wealthy people (46 percent) and people who have a job (44 percent).

NEW ZEALAND

About 18 percent of New Zealand gay men and 9 percent of lesbians say they've been



A sex scandal led the Vatican to close the 550-year-old St. Pölten seminary near Vienna, Austria