

advising parents to talk with their children about bullying and to look for changes in their child's behavior.

"If we are to ever stop teen and adult bullying and harassment, we have to begin early," said Bond. "In order to stop this violent school-yard act, the help of all—including teachers, parents and professionals—is needed and wanted."

—SD

SWEATING OUT SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Two separate pieces of research on odors and how the brain processes them have strengthened the case that, at least for gay men, there is a strong biological component to sexual orientation.

The studies involved odors and pheromones, chemical signaling molecules that are processed through a set of receptors in the nose and nerve connections to the brain. Each of the two systems is separate but parallel. Smells are processed in olfactory regions of the brain, while pheromones are processed in hypothalamus, a more primitive portion of the brain that regulates sexual activity.

Earlier work by Ivanka Savic and colleagues at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, using brain imaging techniques, had demonstrated that when males were exposed to a testosterone derivative, the olfactory regions of their brains lit up, but not the hypothalamus. They were processing the molecular signals as smells and not in a sexual manner.

Males showed exactly the opposite pattern when exposed to derivatives of the female hormone estrogen. Females in the study showed the reverse pattern, as expected; they processed exposure to female hormones as smells and male hormones in the hypothalamus.

Savic repeated the experiment, this time throwing a group of exclusively homosexual men into the mix. She found that the brains of gay men processed the hormonal stimulus in the same way as females, not as males.

The study was published in the May 17 edition of the prestigious *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA*.

The findings are compatible with those made in 1991 by Simon LeVay. By conducting autopsies of the brain, he found that a small region of the hypothalamus in gay men was similar in size to that of women. That same region of the brain was twice as large in heterosexual men.

The second piece of evidence comes from a team led by Charles J. Wysocki at the nonprofit Monell Chemical Senses Center near Philadelphia. It was released early and will be published in the September issue of *Psychological Science*.

A different set of members from four population groups were recruited and told simply that the experiment was to assess their preference for body odors; there was no mention of gender or sexual orientation. They were asked to take a sniff from the numbered bottles, two at a time in various dictated combinations, and say which of the pair they preferred.

When all of the data were processed, gay men were the odd ones out. They clearly preferred the body odors generated by other gay men, with a lesser preference for that of heterosexual females. Heterosexuals males and females and lesbians preferred odors from heterosexual

males relative to gay males.

In a nose-to-nose comparison of the scents of heterosexual females and lesbians, the heterosexuals clearly were preferred by three of the four groups. Heterosexual males were more ambivalent, which may help explain the allure of girl-on-girl action in straight porn.

To Wysocki, the overall data suggest "that lesbians and gay males may produce an array of axillary [armpit] odorants that distinguish them from heterosexual. Furthermore, gay males may perceive the characteristic odorants different from their heterosexual counterparts."

—Bob Roehr

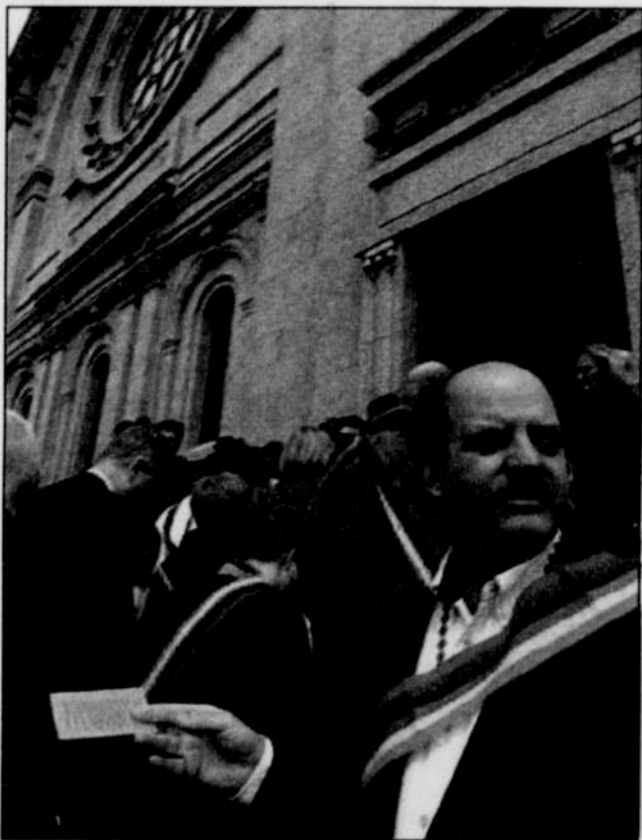
NUN, CATHOLIC PARENTS DEFY ARCHBISHOP

On Pentecost Sunday, a Roman Catholic nun, a Catholic couple married 44 years and a longtime gay civil rights activist defied Archbishop of Chicago Francis Cardinal George's ban on giving Communion to members of the Catholic gay group the Rainbow Sash Movement.

Members of the movement wear a rainbow sash during Mass signifying support for equal treatment of gay and lesbian people in church and society. Some American Catholic bishops have ordered that those who wear the sash be denied Communion. Other bishops, including Los Angeles' Cardinal Roger Mahoney, have not forbidden Communion to the sash wearers.

The sash wearers approached the altar May 15 at Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral and were denied Communion by associate pastor the Rev. Ron Kunkel. The sash wearers then returned to their pew.

Dominican Sister Donna Quinn, director of the National Coalition



Charlie LaPierre (right) greets Rainbow Sash Alliance supporters May 15 outside the Cathedral of St. Paul, Minn.

tion of American Nuns; Joseph and Barbara Parot of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays; and longtime Catholic gay rights activist Rick Garcia also attended the Mass. After the sash wearers were denied, Quinn, the Parots and Garcia approached the altar and received Communion. To the surprise of some, including the sash wearers, the four then approached the sash wearers and gave them a portion of their consecrated hosts.

"It is a scandal that the body of Christ would be denied to a baptized Catholic who approached the altar simply because of what he or she was wearing. I am still shocked and in disbelief that the priest would deny these people," said Quinn. "The Eucharist should not be used as a political tool, and that is exactly what Cardinal George has made it."

"There is something seriously wrong when people wearing a sash signifying fairness and equality are denied Communion while pedophile-protecting prelates are given honors and basilicas in Rome," Garcia noted, referring to the honors bestowed on Cardinal Bernard Law, who protected pedophile priests in the Boston diocese. "The bishops who have ordered this should be ashamed, but unfortunately, experience has shown most of them are shameless."

—SD

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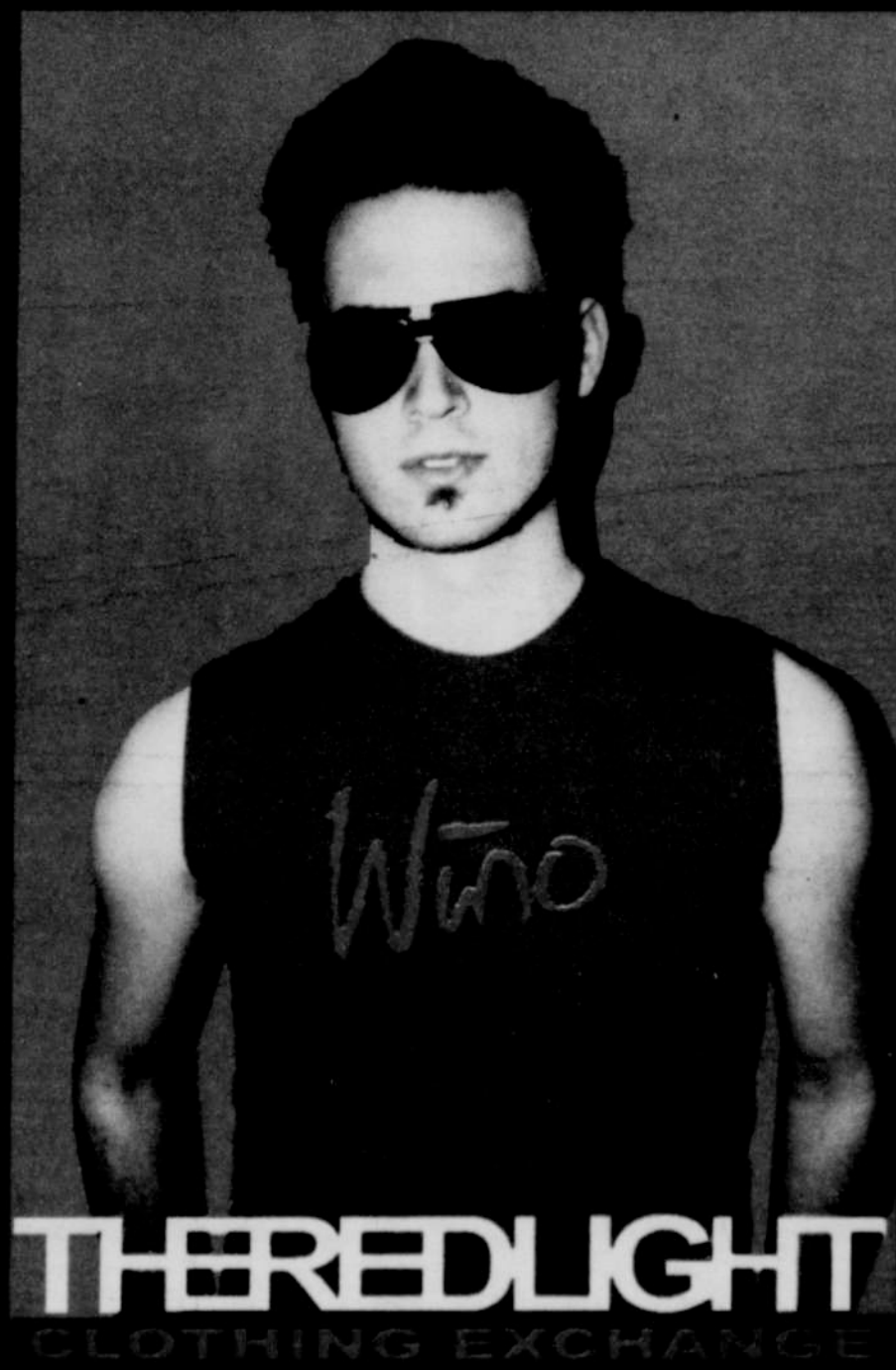
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