

# Out and About

news from and for Colgate's LGBTQ Community

Issue No. 2

December 2005

## My Story ...

by Riley Croghan '09

Everyone has a story, and one thing I've learned is that until you know someone's story, you don't really know that person. Around the end of my senior year, part of my story became somewhat widespread. Rumors of a gay student at an all-male, religiously affiliated school where no one had come out before were bound to make good gossip.

Labels are a tricky thing for me, but I'm sure of my orientation: I like guys. I find myself shifting behind and in front of various labels. Depending on the day, my *MySpace* profile lists my orientation as gay, bi, or, my personal favorite, "no answer." I spent four years in an environment where everyone was assumed to be heterosexual. At Gonzaga, there was no room for "no answer." While everyone was presumed straight, many guys acted gay, if only for a laugh. It was a confusing mix of homophobic friends who would sleep four in one bed on overnights for sporting events and preppy guys who threw around the word "faggot" while in the same breath telling their buddy how attractive he looked with his new haircut. Whether we admitted it or not, homosexuality fascinated much of the school. Yet, there wasn't much to be captivated about. I never met an openly gay student. In fact, most of the students assumed because no one was out, there must not have been any gay students.

I knew of my orientation years before I went to high school, but didn't share that part of my story until senior year. My time at Gonzaga had conditioned me to expect the worst. After spending three years of talking about how hot girls were, how could I say I didn't think guys were all that ugly?

I got into my buddy's car after buying a sub at Quiznos, and was shaking uncontrollably. Ian hopped into the front seat and I into the back. "Ian," I began, "I just wanted to let you know I think I'm bi." Without pausing in fixing his rearview mirror, he looked back and said, "Well, that was pretty random."

Another friend got into the passenger side, and I told him the same thing. Damon responded without missing a beat, "Whatever floats your boat, man." Since

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## PFLAG's TIPS for a HAPPY HOLIDAY

*Holidays are typically stressful, for a variety of reasons, and coming out or being closeted can increase everyone's stress levels. Speaking truthfully, with love in your heart for yourself, your family, and your friends, trumps everything. Following are PFLAG's tips on how to approach the coming holidays.*

### *If you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender...*

- Don't assume how others will react to news of your sexual orientation or gender identity - you may be surprised.
- Realize that your family's reaction to your news may not be because you are GLBT. The hectic holiday pace may cause family members to act differently than they would under less stressful conditions.
- Remember that "coming out" is a continuous process. You may have to "come out" many times.
- Don't wait for your family's attitude to change to have a special holiday.
- Recognize that your parents need time to acknowledge and accept that they have a GLBT child. It took you time to come to terms with who you are; now it is your family's turn.
- Let your family's judgments be theirs to work on, as long as they are kind to you.
- If it is too difficult to be with your family, create your own holiday gathering with friends and loved ones.
- If you are transgender, be gentle with your family's pronoun "slips." Let them know you know how difficult it is.

### *Before the visit...*

- Make a decision about being "out" to each family member before you visit.
- If you are partnered, discuss in advance how you will talk about your relationship, or show affection with one another, if you plan to make the visit together.
- If you bring your partner home, don't wait until late into the holiday evening to raise the issue of sleeping arrangements. Make plans in advance.
- Have alternate plans if the situation becomes difficult at home.
- Find out about local GLBT resources.
- If you do plan to "come out" to your family over the holidays, have support available, including PFLAG publications and the number of a local PFLAG chapter.

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## My Story (continued from page 1)

then I've come out to most people I knew in high school, and received shockingly similar responses. Perhaps the best was my friend Zack's reaction: "You're bi? Well, with strikingly handsome guys such as myself in the world, I completely understand."

Some people I've told have turned their backs on me. Far more have come to accept me for what I've always been. I'm incredibly lucky to have had such reactions. Perhaps the world is changing, or perhaps I've just been careful whom I've told. Maybe Gonzaga isn't such a hard place to be gay, after all. So many people elsewhere have had negative responses. People who are barely even teenagers have been thrown out of their homes. They've even been murdered, just for sharing something about themselves that they shouldn't have to hide.

I started thinking about labels, and for years I haven't been able to decide which one might suit me best. As long as I know who I have feelings for, and how deeply I feel them, a label isn't really necessary. You may have your own ideas about what homosexuality and bisexuality really mean, but that can't compare to knowing someone who is bisexual, and how that small part of them fits in with everything else in their story. Sexuality matters so much where it shouldn't, and is ignored when it needs to be addressed. For now, we all have our own labels, whether we hide from them or not. But perhaps deep down, everyone's sexuality is as much a question as an answer.

## Gayspeak by Marla

"Wow! He sounds so gay!" Although this statement may cause your "PC radar" to go off, it probably also makes you wonder, does sexuality influence variations in speech? Scientists are far from a definitive answer to this question. Yet, there has been substantial research done in the area. So, what does it mean to "sound" gay or lesbian?

Gay speech is stereotyped as being similar in some ways to that of a heterosexual woman. Women tend to have a wider tonal range, use certain adjectives such as "adorable" or "sweet" and phrases such as "oh dear!" more than heterosexual men. Gay men are thought to take on some of these qualities. They are also stereotyped as having a lisp, which, among other things, involves slurring "s" sounds and speaking with a higher pitch.

In one study, people listened to four gay men and

## Bisexual and Questioning Support Group

sponsored by Counseling and Psychological Services

A new support group at Colgate to help participants explore a variety of issues related to sexual orientation.

Topics will include same-sex attractions, issues of self esteem, multiple identities, and coming out to self, friends, and family, as well as other topics related to these issues. People of all nationalities, races/ethnicities, genders, and religions are welcome.

### To register:

Email Hsiao-wen Lo at [hlo@colgate.edu](mailto:hlo@colgate.edu) or call Rose Novak at 228-7385 to schedule a brief individual meeting.

four straight men reading the same two passages. The listeners were able to distinguish with 100% accuracy the sexuality of the readers based purely on differences in their voices. However, there were no significant empirical differences in pitch among the readers. Thus, the general speculations about gay men speaking in a higher pitch are purely stereotypical. There has also been research done on speech in lesbians, but no significant differences have yet been found.

The second feature of language that may cause listeners to make judgments on the sexuality of the speaker is the use of slang or other words used almost exclusively by the gay community. There are dictionaries, such as *The Queen's Vernacular*, which outline some of these words; for example: "fluff" (the passive partner in a lesbian relationship) and "fruit fly" (a woman who seeks the company of male homosexuals, usually for sexual reasons).

Why has stereotypically gay speaking emerged? There are a few answers for this. One is that "gayspeak," as it has been called, is used as a type of code. Non-heterosexual people have the choice to present themselves as non-heterosexual or not, and speech is one way to choose to be distinguished. In a way, the ability to switch between gay speak and other forms of speech is a way of code-switching, or using the form of communication that you feel the most comfortable with in a given situation.

Another reason this way of speaking may have

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## *tips for a happy holiday (continued from page 1)*

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### *During the visit...*

- Focus on common interests.
- Reassure family members that you are still the same person they have always known.
- If you are partnered, be sensitive to his or her needs as well as your own.
- Be wary of the possible desire to shock your family.
- Remember to affirm yourself.
- Realize that you don't need your family's approval.
- Connect with someone else who is GLBT—by phone or in person—who understands what you are going through and will affirm you along the way.

### *If you are a friend or family member of someone gay...*

- Set up support for yourself. It is important to realize you are not alone. Find the phone number of the nearest PFLAG chapter.
- Take your time. Acceptance may not come instantly, but be honest about your feelings.
- Don't be nervous about using the "correct" language. Honesty and openness creates warmth, sincerity, and a deeper bond in a relationship. If you are not sure what is appropriate, ask for help.
- Realize that the situation may be as difficult and awkward for your GLBT loved one as it is for you.

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## *Outreach*

Hamilton Central School has a new student group, thanks in part to Colgate's LGBTQ Supporters and Rainbow Alliance. *HCS Advocates* was formed last year with the help of James DeVita '00, Richard LeBeau '06, and Jack Skelton '05. All three provided consultation to Jake Poole, a junior at HCS, to set up the initial organization, provide a SafeZone training workshop to HCS students, and begin fundraising efforts for a trip to a national Gender PAC conference in Washington, DC.

With the devoted efforts of HCS students Sophie Rotter, Laura Crandall, Anna Knecht, Susanna Devis, and Mike Quakenbush and teachers Jessica Barnum, Gina Torre, Nan Washburn, Harry Jarcho, and Terry Monty, *HCS Advocates* now has 20 members, as well as the support of the school's administration and faculty.

The group works to bring acceptance to all social groups, but concentrates on gay tolerance, stereotyping, and gender roles. English teacher Donna Moren is the faculty advisor to the group. On November 4, *HCS Advocates* held its first fundraiser - an Italian buffet at the school cafeteria, which was well attended by HCS parents, students, and teachers, as well as many Colgate Supporters. For more information, contact Richard LeBeau '06 at rlebeau@mail.colgate.edu or Jake Poole at hcsadvocates@gmail.com.

### *Before the visit...*

- Practice in advance if you are going to be discussing your family member's sexual orientation or gender identity with family and friends. If you are comfortable talking about it, your family and friends will probably be more comfortable too.
- Anticipate potential problems, but do not assume the reactions will always be what you expected.
- Consult with your GLBT loved one when coordinating sleeping arrangements if he or she is bringing home a partner.
- If your family member is transgender, practice using the correct pronouns.

### *During the visit...*

- Treat a GLBT person like you would treat anyone else in your family.
- Take interest in your family member's life. He or she is still the same person.
- Don't ask your GLBT family member to act a certain way. Let her/him be his/her natural self.
- If your GLBT family member is bringing a partner, acknowledge that person as you would any other family member's partner and include that person in your family traditions.
- Ask your GLBT family member about his or her partner if you know he/she has one.

Excerpted from Mariana Caplan's book *When Holidays are Hell...! A Guide to Surviving Family Gatherings*, published by Hohm Press (Prescott, AZ, 1997, 1.800.381.2700; contact PFLAG at 1726 M St. N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20036, phone 202.467.8180, email: info@pflag.org, Web: www.pflag.org)

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## *Be a Supportive Consumer*

The Human Rights Campaign's *Buyer's Guide* gives us an easy way to support equality with every dollar we spend. The *Guide* provides information on companies that support equality and tools to effect corporate change in our everyday lives. The Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2005 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) found that a record 101 companies scored a perfect 100 percent – more than seven times as many since the first CEI was published in 2002.

To view the *Guide* in its entirety, go to <http://www.hrc.org> and click on "Shop or Stop? Buyer's Guide for Equality Released." The free downloadable pdf document includes an explanation of the methodology and calculations used. In 2005, the LGBTQ market was estimated to yield \$610 billion worth of buying power – use *your* power to make a better world!

## Gayspeak (continued from page 2)

emerged is the construction of multiple identities. Gay people do not represent one single social group. They are from many different social classes and cultures. So, although much of the research on speech has been done on middle class white men, it is important to remember that homosexual individuals may use language to construct many different identities.

Language that would be appropriate for an African American gay man may not be appropriate for a white gay man or an African American straight man. It is in this way that a unique identity can be formed.

So basically, one *can* “sound gay;” this has been concluded through much testing. Of course, it is extremely important to note, as with all minority groups, not everyone in the group will speak the same way. There are plenty of gay men who do not speak in a stereotypically gay way. This fact in itself opens the door to further research addressing questions such as how speech differs at different levels of acceptance of one’s sexuality (does language differ for people who are out versus those who are not?) and why is it that only certain members of the gay community speak in a certain way? Hopefully, these questions will eventually be answered in spite of the political touchiness of the subject.

## Upcoming Events

Look for 2006 Spring Semester events in the next issue of *Out and About*, including information on LGBTQ alums coming to campus for talks and dinners.

### Contact:

#### Supporters

James DeVita, CLSI - 7863

[jdevita@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:jdevita@mail.colgate.edu)

Ken Valente, Associate Professor of  
Mathematics and CORE - 7247

[kvalente@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:kvalente@mail.colgate.edu)

#### Out and About Newsletter

Chris Hoffman, Grants Assistant - 7451

[choffman@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:choffman@mail.colgate.edu)

#### Advocates

[aharper@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:aharper@mail.colgate.edu)

<http://bostwick.colgate.edu/advocates/>

#### Rainbow

[rlebeau@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:rlebeau@mail.colgate.edu)

[RainbowAlliance@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:RainbowAlliance@mail.colgate.edu)

<http://groups.colgate.edu/rainbowalliance>

#### Other Campus Resources:

Counseling & Psychological Services - 7385

Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Alliance - 7863

Sexual Crisis Resource Center - 7070

Dr. Merrill Miller - 7750

Blackboard - LGBTQ Supporters

## Film at ALANA - 7:30 PM

**December 8 - Saving Face:** In this art house hit from 2005, a Chinese-American lesbian living in Manhattan is shocked when her single mother shows up on her doorstep pregnant. To help her mom save face and avoid the taboo in the Chinese community of an unmarried pregnant woman, she helps her mom find Mr. Right. However, when her mother tries to return the favor, sexual orientation, culture, and family collide.

## Colgate Advocates Explore the Big Issues

Topics discussed at the weekly *Advocates* meetings during the Fall 2005 semester included:

- The Don't Ask, Don't Tell (Don't Pursue, Don't Harass) policy of the United States government (and how most other developed nations no longer have this policy; while England actively pursues LGBT servicemembers, the U.S. prohibits them)
- LGBT involvement in the Catholic Church and what it means that homosexuals will no longer be accepted into seminaries.
- LGBT involvement as leaders in other religions' clergy.
- LGBT issues in England, Spain, and France (where the mayor of Paris is openly gay)
- Same-sex marriage: Where is it legal? (Denmark, The Netherlands, Spain, Canada, South Africa, and Massachusetts)
- LGBTQ laws and legislation in the United States: *Advocates* members researched their home states and other states to find out about laws concerning adoption rights of LGBT parents, birth certificate laws (can a new one be obtained after gender reassignment?), LGBT custody of children in divorce/separation, donor insemination, hate crimes laws and anti-discrimination policies, marriage or domestic partnership rights, school policies, sodomy laws, and surrogacy.
- Recognizing that bisexuals are often a marginalized group within the LGBTQ community, we wanted to educate ourselves on how to make *Advocates* a more bisexual-friendly group. We discussed Kinsey's model of the fluidity of sexuality, psychologists' research on bisexuality in men, and culminated our discussion by inviting two bisexual guest speakers (one in a heterosexual committed relationship, the other in a homosexual committed relationship) to talk with us about their personal experiences.
- HIV/AIDS in America, England, and worldwide, specifically the man who tested positive for HIV in 2002 and then tested negative two years later—is there a cure to the HIV virus?
- The moral and legal codes regarding HIV-status disclosure in general, and, in particular, the case of a medical student in Georgia who knowingly infected at least two people with HIV.

To join *Advocates* email list, contact [aharper@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:aharper@mail.colgate.edu)

## People in the News

Sheryl Swoopes aims to keep winning

by Tom Musbach

*WNBA star Sheryl Swoopes has many rare accomplishments — three successive Olympic gold medals, three Most Valuable Player titles in the pro women's basketball league and four championships with her team, the Houston Comets. On Oct. 26, 2005, she became one of the few elite athletes to come out during her professional career.*

*In an exclusive interview just days after her announcement, Swoopes talked about what she believes about her sexuality, her concerns about the WNBA and her forthcoming season with the Comets.*

**Your coming out has been huge news this week. Why did you do it?**

Because I'm tired. I'm tired of having to be somebody that I'm not, tired of having to pretend and live a lie and not be able to show my real feelings.

**Those are good reasons. I've read in some of the coverage this week that you also just signed an endorsement deal with Olivia, the lesbian travel company. How did that come about?**

The endorsement had nothing to do with me making the decision to come out. I'm at a point in my life where I was just ready to do it.

I had already signed up to go on an Olivia cruise long before the endorsement deal came about. I think they just kind of looked at it and said, "Sheryl Swoopes? No, it can't be." And then I sat down and had a talk with Amy Errett, the CEO of Olivia, and we talked about the cruise and how much fun it would be. And then we talked about me possibly being a spokesperson for the company. At first I was like, "I don't know if I want to do it, because I just want to go and enjoy it and relax and be low-key. I'm not doing this [cruise] because I'm trying to get something out of it."

And then the more I thought about it, I saw this could be a great opportunity for me to endorse Olivia and let the world know who I am and be free. Hopefully it's going to be a great relationship.

**You have said that you don't believe you were born gay, which, as you said, may confuse many people. How do you believe you came to be gay?**

I think there are a lot of people — gays and lesbians — who believe you are born that way. I think there are also a lot of people who believe it's a choice. And, for me, I believe it was a choice. I was at a point in my life where I had gone through a divorce and was not in a relationship, and the choice I made happened to be that I fell in love with another woman.

It might confuse some people, and some people may not understand that, but I think in life, no matter what it is that you're doing, you always have a choice and you make that

choice and you have to live with that choice. And it just happened that, you know, my partner and I were really, really good friends, and the more we hung out, the more we did stuff together, my feelings grew stronger and stronger for her, and it got to a point to where I said, "I can't fight this any more."

**Can you name one or two others who are your sports heroes?**

Serena Williams. I just think she is an incredible talent, obviously, on the tennis court. But for me I always try to look at people's lives and see what they're doing in the community and how they're making the world better. ... She has taken herself through so many different avenues and in different directions. Those are things that I want to be able to do — whether that's now, while I'm also playing, or when I'm not playing any more. She's definitely a role model.

**As you return next season as the reigning MVP and one of the few openly gay players in the WNBA, what concerns do you have — if any — about how you'll be treated in the league, by players, coaches or officials?**

You know what? There is no concern as far as how the league will treat me. I have spoken with the president of the league and she was very encouraging and very supportive and told me, "Sheryl, your sexual preference has nothing to do with who you are on the court and who you are off the court. What you choose to do is your business and we're happy for you; we're proud for you. That's the most important thing — your happiness." So I know that the league is behind me and they are going to support me.

I guess my biggest concern would be the fans. I just don't want them to look at it and think that I'm a different person. I'm still going to be the same basketball player; I'm still the same person off the court; I'm still the same mom. ... I take a lot of pride in being a role model and being somebody that young girls and even women can look up to. So I hope it's not something that will change.

**How homophobic do you believe the WNBA is?**

I don't know if I would say it's homophobic. I don't think that it's a secret that a huge fan base of the WNBA comes from the gay and lesbian community. I think it becomes a tough issue for the WNBA when it comes to marketing, because if you market only to the straight community, then you're offending the gay and lesbian community. If you market to the gay and lesbian community, then you're afraid that you might be turning away the others. This is my opinion: Whether the WNBA markets to the gay and lesbian community or not, they're still going to come out and support us. I just think it's unfortunate that we don't market more toward the gay and lesbian community because there is a huge fan base there.

*continued on page 6*

*Planet Out's interview with Sheryl Swoopes  
(continued from page 5)*

Have you personally experienced within the WNBA any incidents that you would call homophobic?

Me personally? Absolutely not.

You have a partner and an 8-year-old son, and you live in Texas, where voters will soon decide whether to amend the state Constitution to prevent same-sex couples from any sort of legal recognition. How do you feel about the upcoming vote and how it might affect your family?

Well, the fact that it is up and coming, and me coming out now, obviously, is going to be a big concern to me. To sit here and discuss it is probably not what I want to do, simply because I haven't had time to think about it. Obviously I want to be comfortable with my family, I want to be comfortable at home, and I definitely think it will be an issue. But it's just not one I'm ready to discuss right now.

All right. What will you be focusing on in the upcoming season?

Trying to win the championship! That's what it's all about. But the fact that I've done this and made the decision to be open about who I am and about my lifestyle, I think will just make it that much easier to go play and focus on basketball and not have to worry about anything else. I'm going to do my job — and I'd like to think I do my job pretty well — and I hope other people can respect that and not get sidetracked or overwhelmed or look at my sexuality and think I'm going to be a different person on the court.

Well it's clear you do your job very, very well, and I wish you the best of luck in the coming season.

Thank you very much.

*from PlanetOut.com; original at <http://planetout.com/news/feature.html?sernum=1252> (edited for length)*

*Ed Note: On 11/8/05, Texas joined 17 other states with constitutional amendments denying marriage to same-sex couples. The amendment in Texas not only prohibits marriage, but also threatens civil unions and domestic partnerships that are widely supported by most Americans.*

### **Colgate "Chosen"**

For the first time, Colgate will be listed in the upcoming *Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students* (formerly titled "Best of the Best: An Official LGBT Guide to Higher Education.") The college guidebook will feature profiles of LGBT practices and student perspectives from 100+ colleges across the US, and will highlight the "absolute best" that Colgate and other campuses have done and continue to do for LGBT students through policies, practices, and student initiatives. The publication date is set for August 2006.

## **WORLD AIDS DAY REPORT CARD**

On December 1, The Human Rights Campaign released its second annual report card reflecting the United States' response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic to mark World AIDS Day. The report card rates the U.S. government's response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in four key areas: prevention, treatment and care, research, and global AIDS. Sadly, the administration and Congressional leadership failed to improve since last year's grades, and even dropped to an F in treatment and care.

"Failing marks are inexcusable, especially considering its more than two decades after the epidemic began and we're the world's ... wealthiest country," said Joe Solmonese, Human Rights Campaign president. "Every hour two young Americans are newly infected with HIV. At alarming rates, HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects people of color. It's past time to put adequate resources toward preventing new infections, giving treatment and care to every individual affected, and increasing research dollars to find a cure."

**Prevention: F** -- As AIDS ravages minority communities, the Administration and Congressional leadership continue their failure to adequately respond to the epidemic among vulnerable populations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found that approximately 46 percent of African-American men who have sex with men in five major US cities are HIV positive, and almost two-thirds of those infected do not know their status.

Minority Americans make up about 71 percent of new AIDS cases, and newly diagnosed cases among men who have sex with men is up by 8 percent. Yet the only federal funding stream for sexuality education in our schools insists upon teaching unproven abstinence-only programs that fail to teach youth how to protect themselves from HIV and spread misinformation.

Congress has also consistently banned the use of federal funds for needle-exchange programs that leading scientists support and is currently trying to cut funds to the CDC for HIV-prevention programs.

**Care and Treatment: F** -- This year has been a disaster for federal HIV/AIDS treatment and care programs. After consistently flat-funding most of the program for five years, creating enormous strain, Congress let the Ryan White CARE Act expire on September 30 and has yet to reauthorize it. Both the House and Senate have passed billions in cuts to Medicaid, the nation's largest payer of HIV/AIDS.

Budget shortfalls continue to force states to institute cost-containment measures such as waiting lists for their AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAP). Meanwhile about 600 new patients are added to ADAP each month and still a CDC study determined that there are 211,000 people who are eligible to receive antiretroviral treatment in the United States who are not receiving it.

**Research: D** -- The most recent version of the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill contained a less than 1 percent increase to the National Institutes of Health, the smallest percentage increase since 1970. This means there will be limited funds available for new research.

## Report Card (continued from page 6)

Moreover, our nation's leaders routinely undermine scientific research by ignoring research that shows the effectiveness of prevention methods such as needle exchange programs and comprehensive sexuality education and instead pursue policies in the prevention realm that reflect ideological, rather than scientific, viewpoints.

**Global AIDS: C --** The highest mark on the report card goes to Global AIDS as Congress passed and the President signed the Assistance for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act this year. This landmark legislation will enhance the capacity of nations to provide basic care and support to orphans and other vulnerable children affected by the AIDS pandemic.

We also continue to praise the goals of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the United State's vital contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. However, this year the United States will not fully meet its funding commitment to the Global Fund, and the U.S. government has mandated that at least one-third of contributions to international programs must be devoted to abstinence-only programs that are seriously flawed and leave little control to local experts.

*Original at <http://www.hrc.org> under "The Latest News from HRC"*

### Quote of the Semester

"Hi, I'm a prospective student that just passed through Colgate for a tour this week and was taken over by the school's bold and beautiful efforts to create a safe space. What is most admirable is the Supporters Network you have created. When I got back to my school, a small boarding school in New York, all we could think about was how we could model these same efforts at our school." [via email to James DeVita]

## Get Informed!

**Human Rights Campaign Foundation** - works for LGBT equal rights - <http://www.hrc.org>

**PFLAG** - Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons - promotes the health and wellbeing of LGBT persons, their families, and friends through support, education, and advocacy - [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

**GLAAD** - Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation - promotes and ensures fair, accurate, and inclusive representation of gay and lesbian people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation - <http://www.glaad.org>

**GLBT Historical Society** - <http://www.glbthistory.org>

*Out and About*

## What Everyone Should Know

by Joe Madres '08

When advocating the appreciation of those different from us, we must keep in mind why it is so necessary. Members of the queer community have contributed to the world in ways the general public rarely knows. At times, some have completely changed the course of human history. Yet, historically, many of these amazing individuals are not recognized for their efforts or are condemned for their differences despite the contributions they have made. Here follows one such story of the greatness of a gay man overlooked because of his sexuality. While it may seem fantastical, it is historically accurate.

Alan Turing is currently known as one of the most genius cryptologists in world history. During World War II, he was an essential member of the team that eventually broke the German code known as Enigma. His work in mathematics greatly impacted the field, and after the war ended, he was invited to the National Physics Laboratory in London to design the world's first computer. Known then as an Automatic Computing Engine, Turing's design not only revolutionized the way numerical data was treated in the sciences and mathematics, it made him a forerunner of computer science. In 1951, he became a Fellow of the Royal Society of London.

A year later, during his work on mathematical patterns in biology, Turing was reported to the police about a homosexual affair and subsequently was arrested for violating British homosexuality statutes. He agreed to be administered estrogen injections in lieu of imprisonment so he could continue his work. His sexuality quickly became public knowledge, making him a social outcast and changing the way his colleagues worked with him. His security clearance regarding projects such as the computer was taken away, and he was forced to undergo psychotherapy and hormone treatment.

Alan Turing soon fell into a state of severe depression. In 1954, he was found dead from potassium cyanide poisoning with a half-eaten apple contaminated with the lethal chemical by his side. It was concluded that the poison was self-administered. Even though he was one of the most influential figures of the modern age in several academic fields and through several crucial times in world history, Alan Turing committed suicide because of society's atrocious reaction to his sexuality.

Some great minds affect our lives in ways we can never fully realize, and they are not given the recognition they deserve. Out of this category come the stories of people such as Alan Turing, whose personal tragedy should remind us that everyone, no matter what their differences, can change the world.

*"When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world, and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing."*

Adrienne Rich, 1986

## Fall 2005 in review ...

Colgate Advocates and the Rainbow Alliance co-sponsored the following events and activities both on and off campus during the first semester of the 2005-2006 academic year:

### LGBTQ Film Series:

Kinsey – September 15

Monster – October 13

Bad Education – November 10

Saving Face – December 8

### Safe Zone Training Sessions:

September 20th (30 people); October 16th (10 people); November 10th (26 people) -- **Breakdown:** *Class of 2009* (16); *2008* (19); *2007* (9); *2006* (5); *Staff* (3)

### Events:

**National Coming Out Day** - T-shirts and a Coop table where info about LGBT life at Colgate was disseminated.

**Kinsey Sicks at the Palace** - America's favorite dragapella beautyshop quartet returned to Colgate after a two year absence to perform the show *I Wanna Be a Republican!* The show received rave reviews from the approximately 175 people in attendance.

### Networking:

- Trips to Syracuse for "An Evening With Danny and Paul" from *The Real World* (regarding the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy) and to the **Syracuse club scene** to get a taste of the more-bustling-than-it-used-to-be LGBT culture in Central New York

**Supporters sponsored two LavBag Presentations:** Oct 13 - "Queer at Colgate: Perceptions of LGBTQ Students (professors Bill Jellison and Ken Valente); and Nov 17 - "WhyGet Involved?" (Richard LeBeau '06 - *see story below*)

### Why Get Involved? Exploring Gay and Bisexual Men's Experience of the Gay Community

Richard T. LeBeau '06 and visiting assistant professor of psychology William A. Jellison conducted a study that explored the psychological benefits of social and political involvement in the gay community among gay and bisexual men.

Previous research has suggested that increased involvement in the gay community is related to a more positive gay identity. However, how gay individuals conceive of a gay community and what attracts them to participate in these communities remains largely unstudied from a psychological perspective. Gay and bisexual male participants, who were recruited through the Internet from various regions in the United States, completed self-report measures of attitudes toward the gay community, community involvement, disclosure strategies, psychological well-being, and open-response

items assessing benefits of participating in the gay community.

Results indicated that those who first experienced the gay community through formal clubs and groups (e.g., coming out support groups, university gay-straight alliances) not only had more positive experiences, but also had an overall more positive sense of well-being and a more positive gay identity, than those who were exposed to the gay community initially through friends, bars and clubs, or the Internet.

In addition, compared to those who reported social benefits, gay and bisexual men who reported benefiting through the gay community via activism and advocacy reported significantly more positive attitudes toward the gay community (e.g., greater collective self-esteem, greater community consciousness, greater community importance), and emphasized more positive aspects of the gay community during interactions with their heterosexual counterparts.

These results reinforce the importance of involvement in the gay community as being important to the formation of a positive gay identity and higher well-being, as well as suggesting the importance of the formal gay community (e.g., community centers) in psychological development.

For more information on this study, email Prof. Jellison at [wjellison@mail.colgate.edu](mailto:wjellison@mail.colgate.edu).

### LGBT leaders meet over movement's future

More than 200 leaders in government, business, and the nonprofit world gathered recently in Seattle to explore the future of the international LGBT community's continuing fight for equality, and how the movement's leaders can be more effective in pressing for change.

Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire was the keynote speaker. *SmartBrief* covered key meetings for Outlines, the official blog of the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund.

LGBT leaders from Poland, Canada, Germany and Sri Lanka urged U.S. LGBT groups to pressure the government here to include LGBT rights in efforts to expand human rights around the world. Four leaders of major U.S. LGBT advocacy groups expressed the need for activists to adopt a common language to talk to America about equality, and some urged the movement to build alliances with other progressive causes.

In addition, attendees passed two resolutions calling on "all nations and governments to adopt a vocal, clear, and consistent policy on international human rights abuses against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people that includes a call on other countries to abolish sodomy laws," and urging "all LGBT legislators and all other LGBT public officials to be open and honest about their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression."

You can sign up for the electronic newsletter *Gay and Lesbian Leadership SmartBrief* (the source of this story) at: <http://www.smartbrief.com/lgbt/index.jsp>.