



HeartBeat

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays




PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Issue 58 July-August 2003

P.O.V.'s 'Family Fundamentals' Explores Cultural Divide Over Homosexuality



From the director of *Licensed to Kill* & *Coming Out Under Fire*



What happens when three Christian families have children who "become homosexual?"

Official SUNDANCE Selection

★★★★★
A mature, graceful & extraordinary accomplishment.
FilmThreat.com

"GRIPPING!"
Village Voice

"INTELLIGENT!"
An intimate chronicle."
Boston Globe

"DRAMATIC...RAW!"
Religion News Service

an ARTHUR DONG film
www.deepfocusproductions.com

What happens when fundamentalist Christian parents have children who are homosexual? *Family Fundamentals*, a new film having its national broadcast premiere on public television's P.O.V. series, is filmmaker Arthur Dong's personal attempt to answer that explosive question. Armed with a digital camera, Dong takes viewers into the private and public lives of three families who have responded to gay offspring by actively opposing homosexuality. *Family Fundamentals* is a battlefield report from America's profound and disquieting culture war over gay issues.

▽ SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2-4:30 PM

Video screening and discussion

We will show the video "Nightline: A Matter of Choice, Part 4 Gay Teens." This is from a Nightline series about gay life and, more specifically, the acceptance or lack of acceptance of gays by heterosexuals, hosted by Ted Koppel. The entire program is too long for the time allotted, so we will show a portion and save time for discussion to follow.

▽ SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 1-5 PM

The annual PFLAG picnic

Bring food to share and drinks. We'll be in the shelter at the Rose Garden in Priest Point Park. To get there from I-5, take the "City Center/ Port of Olympia" exit. That will put you on Plumb St. Plumb crosses 4th Avenue and then State Avenue. At State it changes to East Bay Drive. Follow East Bay along the water and watch for signs to the park on your right. Note that we start an hour earlier than our regular meeting time and go later.

UCAN OPEN HOUSE

United Communities AIDS Network will have an open house celebration to welcome the community to their new office at 147 Rogers St. N.W., Olympia.

The celebration takes place Thursday, July 10 with tours from 4 to 5 p.m. and their annual meeting and awards from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

For more information, call UCAN at 352-2375.

Arthur Dong's *Family Fundamentals* makes its broadcast premiere on Tuesday, August 26 at 10 p.m. on PBS. P.O.V. 2003 continues through September 2 on Tuesdays at 10 p.m. on PBS stations nationwide.

Please join us for a special Olympia preview screening of

Family Fundamentals

Sponsored by PFLAG Olympia and First United Methodist Church of Olympia

Sunday, July 27
at 7 p.m.

in The Gathering Place Room at
First United Methodist Church
1224 Legion Way SE

"My goal in *Family Fundamentals* wasn't to produce a documentary about religion, but rather to look at the conflicts that arise from the intersection of sexuality, politics, and conservative Christian convictions," states filmmaker Arthur Dong.

There will be a special screening and discussion co-sponsored by PFLAG-Olympia and First

United Methodist Church of Olympia in the Gathering Place Room in the church on Sunday, July 27 at 7 p.m. Admission is free. Please join us.

See more information about the film at
http://www.deepfocusproductions.com/page_html/film_FF0.html

May I Help You, Sir?

Thoughts on gender perception and identity

By Bekah Cardwell

It has happened to me in Safeway, Walmart, Target, Action Power & Equipment and numerous other places that I have visited. "May I help you, sir?" Apparently I confuse people. The most intriguing experiences have been in womyn's bathrooms. Some womyn look at me, then turn around and look at the bathroom door to make sure they are in the right one. I say to them, "Yes, I am a womyn." Their confusion is annoying because they are questioning my intelligence by assuming that they are in the wrong bathroom, which translates that I must be in the wrong bathroom.

My gender is not easily detected by the untrained eye. I suppose I should say that the untrained eye is actually trained by our social restrictions and misgivings. Ever since I was a little girl I wanted to be a boy. I only wanted to be a boy because my upbringing told me that only boys get to marry girls.

I was told that only boys get the best and most fun jobs, like being a professional football player or other such things. I grew up frustrated. I wasn't a boy.

I knew I was gay and I knew that being

a female was a dilemma in our sexist society. As a boy I would not be as objectified and horrified. As a male I would be able to enjoy sex and not have to worry about pregnancy. I realized my intense angst toward my girl self. How could I become a boy?

My Christian upbringing scared me. It told me that what I am is wrong. Being gay was considered despicable, according to my youth retreats and Bible studies. The only alternative was for me to be a boy. But how? I was still a girl no matter what. My birth certificate proved that. In order to be able to fantasize about my inner boyness I created a character. This character was male, the male me. His name was Craig (I'm not sure why). Craig had the greatest clothes, the best hair, and all the girlfriends he could handle. I would shop in Spiegel and JC Penney catalogs for his fictional wardrobe. He made me legitimate. I could at last be a boy. Of course, fantasy can only go so far. I became bored with the inner workings of my mind. I wanted all of those things that Craig had.

I came out to my family when I was 24. My mom was disappointed but her love

has never left me. My siblings didn't seem to care, I will always be their sister and they will always love me. I was thrilled to have such a weight lifted from me. At this time I

had long blonde hair; big hair. This big hair helped to hide the real gay me. My friend convinced me to chop it off. "What do you have to hide?" she asked. Exactly — what do I have to hide?

I was nervous. I looked around the salon's floor and saw all of my "blanket" lying there. I was free! My hair was short. I began wearing more masculine type clothes. I shopped in the men's section of department stores. I wore boots, and hats, and Hanes t-shirts, and ugly flannel button-ups. I was my own boy.

I have no real angst when called sir. My angst comes from the disgust that maybe others feel when they believe they have been "tricked." I have found that womyn tend to be more offended when they find out that I am a female, as opposed to men. I feel bad for the men who fall all over themselves to apologize. The females who call me sir or get confused when they see me in the bathroom have been more likely to feel agitated than apologetic. Maybe they had to question gender identity and wonder how many other times they have been confused. Of course, not everyone is bothered by being "tricked."

I'm thrilled with who I am and how I look. It doesn't bother me that people have certain ideas of what things should be like; after all, so do I. At times I am self conscious, but then I smile and remember that I don't have to live in my head anymore. There is nothing wrong with a little confusion here and there.



Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

MEETS at 2PM on the second Sunday of each month in The Gathering Place parlor of First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE, at Boundary Street, Olympia. It is handicap-accessible.

DIRECTIONS: From Sylvester Park on Capitol Way and Legion Way, go 12 blocks east on Legion Way to Boundary Street. Turn left around the church. Park in side lot at 5th Avenue and Boundary, and enter upper front door. Meeting place is across the lobby.

Letters, articles and requests for literature are welcome.

Mailing address:

PFLAG Olympia; PO Box 12732; Olympia, WA 98508-2732

For information or to discuss personal matters with an understanding parent and experienced PFLAG member, CALL the PFLAG Olympia

HELPLINE: (360) 866-0511

E-mail: info@pflag-olympia.org/

Website: <http://pflag-olympia.org/>

"Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you." — Carl Sandburg

- ▼ Are you lesbian, bisexual, gay, queer, trans, etc.?
- ▼ Are you a survivor of sexual, emotional, verbal, physical violence?
- ▼ Are you looking for a support group?

Safeplace is starting groups soon.

Please call 754-6300 and press "star" 121. Leave a message for Casey if you are interesting in attending.

PFLAG State Conference

Sept. 6

Bellevue Community College

The Bellevue chapter will host the 2003 Washington Statewide PFLAG Conference. Please mark September 6, 2003, on your calendars. This all-day and evening (optional) event will take place at Bellevue Community College.

The Keynote Speaker will be Robert N. Minor, Ph.D., Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Kansas. A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Minor received a Ph.D. in Religion from the University of Iowa in 1975. His current research is on gender studies and the relationships of religion, gender, and sexuality. At the University of Kansas, one of his popular courses is "Religious Perspectives on Selfhood and Sexuality." His most recent book is "Scared Straight: Why It's So Hard to Accept Gay People and Why It's So Hard to Be Human." In 2002 it was named a finalist for both a Lambda literary award and the Independent Publisher Book Award. In little more than a month after its

publication, Menstuff.org, a men's issues web site, named it "Book of the Week." In addition to his keynote speech "New Strategies in LGBT Activism", Minor will be conducting two 75-minute workshops at the conference: "Understanding Homophobia" and "Dealing with Religion When You've Tried Everything and Nothing Seems to Work". On Sunday, September 7, Dr. Minor will be conducting a four hour workshop titled "Personal Growth of Non-Heterosexual People Beyond Coming Out".

Accommodations

The Days Inn in Bellevue, only ¾ mile from Bellevue Community College, is offering a special rate to conference attendees. On Friday and Saturday nights the price is \$66 per night for one queen bed or \$76 per night for two queen beds, subject to availability. Their address is 3241 156th Ave NE, Bellevue, 98007 and telephone number is 425-643-6644; toll-free 1-800-329-7466.

Registration information

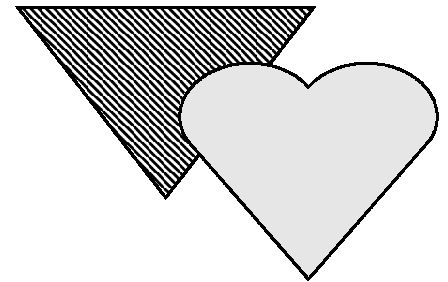
Complete schedules of workshops and other events, along with registration forms, can be found on the Web site at www.pflagwashingtonstate.org.

The cost if you register before August 1, is \$50 (after August 1 it's \$65), which includes a continental breakfast, box lunch, the keynote speaker and four workshops. The cost for students is \$35. There is no charge for the Friday evening social event at First United Methodist Church in Bellevue.

There will be a buffet dinner after the conference followed by an hour-long performance in the BCC theatre by the Seattle Men's Chorus' a cappella group Captain Smartyants. Cost is \$20 (a real bargain—dinner and a show!)

Plug-a-book

There's nothing like a good book, and we have a great selection in the PFLAG library. If you check one out and you love it and you want to share that wonderful experience with others, please submit a short book review (500 words or less) to the newsletter. E-mail reviews to newsletter@pflag-olympia.org or mail to HeartBeat, P.O. Box 12732, Olympia, WA 98508-2732.



Buy PFLAG-Olympia Gear

printed with the "Been Out Lately" graphic from the billboard campaign

- t-shirts
- sweat shirts
- coffee mugs
- mouse pads
- BBQ aprons
- tile coasters
- canvas tote bags
- boxer shorts



Buy yours now on the web

http://www.cafeshops.com/pflag_oly

Let them know where the money comes from - and support PFLAG!

You can order beautiful PFLAG checks in rainbow colors, checkbook covers and return address labels from Message!Products in Minnesota. 10% of your purchase comes back to PFLAG National.

To see the items and order on-line, go to <http://www.messageproducts.com/> And click on "Social Organizations."

Or order by phone:
1-800-243-2565.

PFLAG Responds to the Supreme Court's Sodomy Ruling

On June 26, 2003 the United States Supreme Court ruled that Texas' "sodomy" law was unconstitutional, thereby overturning all remaining sodomy laws in the United States. The case was brought by two Texas men who were arrested in one of their homes, held in police custody for more than a day, convicted of moral turpitude and fined. The court was asked to strike down the Texas sodomy law for two reasons — first, that it is an unconstitutional invasion of privacy; and second, that by singling out gay people, it violates the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

"The Supreme Court made history today. PFLAG lauds the highest court of the land for striking down state sodomy laws that were discriminatory and unconstitutional. This wide-ranging decision is a landmark in the battle for civil rights and fairness. This ruling will allow our country's GLBT citizens to live their lives and enjoy their relationships without government intrusion, arrest and prosecution.

Moreover, the decision recognizes that such laws fuel anti-gay bias and open the doors of persecution, discrimination and the denial of basic rights such as parental custody, equal opportunity in employment and public service, and basic privacy. This is a great day for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people and their families and friends — and for all fair-minded Americans."

— **Sam Thoron; PFLAG National President**

"Millions of American citizens are thrilled by the ruling of the highest court in the land. Today the Supreme Court honors our nation's commitment to fair treatment for all by declaring that sodomy laws are unconstitutional. These laws have been used for years as a weapon against gay men and lesbians, causing them to live in fear of prosecution and public disgrace. Today's ruling is a definitive movement forward in the progress toward full equality for all citizens. PFLAG now challenges legislators to go further by passing legal protections such as employment non-discrimination regulations and comprehensive hate crimes laws."

— **David Tseng; PFLAG Executive Director**

For those of you who have internet access, we recommend this June 27th Los Angeles Times article for background information on the sodomy law: "Banishing a Medieval Ghost" by Andrew Sullivan.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/opinion/la-oe-sullivan27jun27,1,1492746.story>

NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Please check the membership types you prefer:

Individual \$25 Supporter \$100

Household \$40 Educator \$250

Senior/Student/Low Income \$15 Advocate \$500

New Renewal

Active (attend when I can) or Supporting (seldom attend)

Membership \$ _____

Add this amount as my tax-exempt gift \$ _____

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AND GIFT \$ _____

I want Olympia's bi-monthly newsletter *HeartBeat* (which is mailed in an envelope with no identified return address).

I want the national quarterly *PFLAGpole* newspaper (which is not mailed in an envelope).

DATE: _____ PHONE: _____

Signed _____

PRINT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PFLAG Olympia, P O Box 12732; Olympia, WA 98508-2732

PFLAG is a tax-exempt non-profit 501(c)(3) organization
not affiliated with any political or religious institution.

The PFLAG Mission

To promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends through:

- ▼ support, to cope with an adverse society;
- ▼ education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and
- ▼ advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

HeartBeat is a free publication of the PFLAG chapter in Olympia, Washington, published six times a year. The editors are Alec & Gabi Clayton.

Unsolicited articles are welcome and are due by the 15th of even-numbered months. The editors reserve the right to reject or edit material.

The deadline for the next issue is 8/15/2003

Mail submissions to:

HeartBeat

P.O. Box 12732

Olympia, WA 98508-2732

Or email to: newsletter@pflag-olympia.org