

Rainbow SIG Newsletter

Volume 6, Number 2, Spring 2000

These articles appeared in the Spring 2000 edition of Lesbigan SIGnals.

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NAFSA Conference Site Selection to be Discussed

By Bo Keppel, East Stroudsburg University (Co-Chair, Lesbigan SIG)

It was brought to my attention that NAFSA was in negotiations with Salt Lake City for the 2003 conference. I informed the SIG Advisory Board about this and a lengthy e-mail discussion ensued. The outcome of the discussion was the letter drafted by Joe Murnan you see printed below and a decision to discuss conference selection at the annual meeting in San Diego. In preparation for that meeting with the membership, I would like to share with you some of the issues involved and points of view expressed. We will then be able to focus our discussion at the meeting.

Some history: In 1994 a resolution was approved which set up a procedure whose purpose was to prevent holding NAFSA conferences in cities or states with laws that discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, national origin, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, political opinion, immigration status, or disability. One year later SIG members were angered to learn that NAFSA had signed a contract for Phoenix, obviously ignoring the resolution.

Now, with consideration of Salt Lake City as a conference site, we are once again concerned about whether NAFSA will follow the current procedure (revised since 1994) which states In states with such laws, NAFSA will use its discretion (in consultation with the Diversity Committee) in considering cities with strong records of non-discriminatory practice. While Utah does have an anti-sodomy law on its books, Salt Lake City could hardly be called a city with a strong record of non-discrimination. After all, it was the Salt Lake City school board which banned ALL extracurricular activities held in schools rather than allow students to form a Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network chapter. Advisory Board members were unanimous in agreeing that a letter must be sent immediately to the Conference Selection Committee with copies to the President,

Executive Director, President-Elect and Diversity Committee Chairperson. Subsequently we received several responses from Bill Barnhart, President, indicating he fully supports the NAFSA resolution to avoid discriminatory sites. He suggested that the revised resolution may have been how San Antonio was chosen, since Texas is a state with discriminatory laws still on its books.

In preparing to write the letter to NAFSA, Joe Murnan spoke by phone with the GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network) Western Regional Administrator who urged us not to push for a boycott of Salt Lake City, noting that

- incredible strides have been made in the State of Utah regarding GLBT issues
- the Salt Lake City Gay Straight Alliance IS meeting
- the mayor, city and state department of education have been positive about the chapter
- he would be the first to urge a boycott if there was any discrimination based on sexual orientation

Several members of the Advisory Board felt strongly that the SIG ought to boycott the 2003 conference were it to be held in Salt Lake City, and that if the SIG did not boycott, they personally would have to do so. Others felt that the SIG should not boycott, as members might be required to attend as part of their job responsibilities, and that the SIG should seize the opportunity to conduct some consciousness-raising sessions, meet with legislators, demonstrate, etc.

In terms of taking a position with NAFSA in regard to site selection, some Advisory Board members felt that not drawing a line in the sand was the better course. One member indicated that the wording laws which discriminate against anyone on the basis of...sexual orientation, applying to every state, since none permit gays to marry, this is clearly discriminatory as non-gays are allowed to do so. Should we draw the line at sodomy laws, even though they may also apply to straights? Or should we draw the line at other egregious laws, resolutions and constitutional amendments?

Others responded that if we don't draw a line we might instead be faced with trying to measure levels of discrimination, something that may be impossible to do. How would we go about deciding if a state or city's attempts to become less discriminatory are enough?

At this point in the discussion, Joe Murnan contacted Peggy Pusch who had been involved in the development of the original site selection resolution. Here are her thoughts:

I chaired the task force that drew up the guidelines for conference site selection and language for a resolution that was eventually passed by the Board of Directors. We worked long and hard to make sure that any conference site that is chosen be in a location that respects the diversity of our members while maintaining fiscal responsibility to the association should conditions change in a location that has been

selected. The task force was created in response to the possibility of laws being passed (there was a referendum coming up in a proposed state) that are prejudicial to gays, lesbians, and transgendered people. That was the concern we were addressing at the time and should continue to be sensitive to in the future.

Further, she said that the conference department tends to explore locations that are large enough to handle conferences the size of NAFSA's, especially those with strong support by local NAFSANS. She urged the SIG not to draw a line in the sand, as it may be a line we will have to live with when we do rather not.

We will keep those of you on Rainbow informed of any other responses to our letter, as well as any decisions on the site for the 2003 conference. (We would encourage all of you to sign on to Rainbow to be part of this and other discussions.) I know you will give these issues full consideration prior to the SIG's annual meeting in San Diego where we will discuss them further, and come to some agreement (or agree to disagree) on the SIG's position on Salt Lake City specifically and on site selection process in general.

February 22, 2000

Ms. A. Renee Battle

Senior Director

Conferences and Meetings

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Dear Ms. Battle:

We recently heard that NAFSA is considering Salt Lake City as the site of the 2003 National Conference. The consideration of Salt Lake City has given the Lesbian SIG and its members pause as the State of Utah still has laws on its books, Utah Code 76-5-403, which are prejudicial to same gender relationships. We are writing to you on behalf of our SIG members to voice our strong concern that, given NAFSA's respect for diversity, Salt Lake City is not an appropriate choice for a national conference site.

NAFSA has long had a tradition of holding its annual conferences only in locations that respect the diversity of its individual members. In October of 1993 the NAFSA Board of Directors approved the following resolution, regarding conference site selection:

1. That NAFSA neither sign a contract for a national conference nor hold national conferences (subject to item #4 of these guidelines) in cities or states with laws that discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, national origin, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, political opinion, immigration status, or disability.

2. That a statement indicating NAFSA's position regarding discrimination (as listed in the previous statement) be added to any documents sent to hotel chains and conferences/tourist/business councils who solicit our conference business (e.g. we will not hold a conference in a city or state that discriminates against....)
3. That a watch list of states and/or municipalities that anticipate passing a discriminatory referendum be maintained with the assistance of BPIE, Lesbian SIG, and the Committee on Women International, who also will be asked to review and comment on or add to this list.
4. That the following guidelines be used to decide on an appropriate response when a state or city, where NAFSA has signed contracts for a conference, subsequently adopts discriminatory legislation.
 - a. that due consideration be given to the financial and human resources that have been invested in preparation for the conference,
 - b. that a conference not be relocated within 18 months of the conference dates,
 - c. that at nineteen or more months prior to the conference dates, a decision be reached about moving the site, by the Board of Directors, based on a realistic review of the costs incurred in relation to the NAFSA financial resources.

Utah is one of sixteen states that continue to have laws on their books that we consider prejudicial to same gender relationships. According to Lambda Legal Defense the following states continue to carry these laws on their books: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.

We encourage NAFSA staff to consider this information as they look at sites for future conferences and other NAFSA meetings. We also encourage NAFSA to double its efforts in considering only those sites that are respectful of NAFSA's diversity.

Sincerely,

Bo Keppel
Co-Chair, Lesbian SIG
East Stroudsburg University
Jo Murnan
Co-Chair, Lesbian SIG
Hariri Foundation

cc: Ms. Marlene Johnson, Executive Director & CEO
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Mr. Bill Barnhart, President
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Ms. Kay Thomas, President Elect
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Mr. John Eng-Wong, Diversity Committee Chairman
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

San Diego Here We Come!

by Susan Carty, Indiana University

NAFSA is planning its 52nd annual conference from May 28 to June 2, 2000. The conference will take place at the San Diego Convention Center and the San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina will serve as the headquarters hotel.

ACCOMODATION

A few SIG members will be staying at a B&B called Keating House (tel: 800-995-8644; Web: www.keatinghouse.com).

Also, the Park Manor Suites Hotel is the site of our SIG social event (tel: 619-291-0999 or 800-874-2649; Web: www.parkmanorsuites.com).

SIG SOCIAL EVENT

SIG Business Meeting

Please plan to attend our annual business meeting on Wednesday, May 31st at 1:45 p.m. Location has not yet been assigned, but it will be listed in the final conference program.

Join us on Wednesday, May 31st from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Top of the Park Penthouse at the Park Manor Suites, 525 Spruce Street -- a 10 minute drive/45 minute walk from the convention site. Cash bar with hors d'oeuvres provided by the SIG. Come and min gle.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Scheduled workshops and sessions cover an incredible variety of topics and issues. Please make note of the two sessions described below. Your SIG colleagues seek your input and support with the following sessions:

Just How Multicultural Are We? GLBT International Educators Speak Out

Thursday, June 1, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m.

Abstract: International educators are generally welcoming of individuals from widely diverse backgrounds, groups, or cultures. Is our field, however, as accepting of those of different sexual and gender identities? Join us as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered international educators share their experiences and offer suggestions for making international education more inclusive.

Bo Keppel [contact information at right] still needs anonymous "case studies" from those of you whose sexual orientation and/or gender identity cause problems in your workplace, who must remain closeted in order to remain employed or at least must be overly cautious about who knows your sexual orientation or gender identity. She suggests two ways to contribute and remain anonymous:

1. Send your "story" by e-mail; she will copy it immediately and eliminate the sending address.
2. Phone Bo, tell her what you are calling about and she won't ask your name.

Poster Session: SECUSSA Forum for Underrepresented Groups in Education Abroad

Friday, June 2, 8:30 - 10:45 a.m.

Abstract: Underrepresented groups in education abroad actually represent the majority of students in higher education. The challenge to be proactive in serving a diverse student body is well represented in the ideas, research, and creative approaches of this poster session. (GLBT study abroad issues will be included.) Julie Trimpe invites others to join her in displaying information and speaking with attendees. What materials do you have that we can share with colleagues about pre-departure information, in-country resources, reentry issues, etc.? She is requesting materials to show how study abroad offices are including GLBT-related information in your materials and orientation sessions, i.e. your pre-departure guides that include a section on GLBT issues, etc. Are you able to join Julie at the poster session? If not, you can contribute for a display? Contact Julie by phone [Tel/Fax: (202) 265-1895 or toll free: 877-265-1447], e-mail her at Jtrimpe@iesabroad.org, or send display materials to her at 2027 Park Road NW, Washington DC 20010.

San Diego on the Web

Check out information about San Diego as well as some live camera shots of some beautiful scenery and some of its most famous residents at the sites below:

San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau -- www.sandiego.org/

All San Diego Travel Guide -- www.sandiego.cc/sandiego/

LiveNet San Diego BayCam -- live.net/sandiego/

Shamu Cam -- www.shamu.com/ca/shamu-cam/

The Legacy of Matthew Shepard

By Kathleen Sideli, Indiana University

When I learned I would be NAFSA's official representative at this year's NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education conference in Indianapolis, it wasn't yet confirmed or announced that Judy Shepard, the mother of Matthew Shepard, would be a plenary speaker. Once I was at the conference and saw the session listed in the program I wondered whether the plenary would be well-attended, given its topic, 'The Legacy of Matthew Shepard'. You can imagine my surprise to enter a ballroom that had at least 2,000 people in attendance, with hardly a seat left available for latecomers and with at least 25 other conference sessions going on simultaneously. It boggled the mind.

The crowd waited with quiet patience, intuitively sensing that the somber topic deserved a peaceful atmosphere not normally present during the frenzied moments leading up to a conference plenary. Judy Shepard was joined at the podium by Dr. James C. Hurst, Vice President for Student Affairs and Professor of Psychology at the University of Wyoming. With a calm and soothing voice, which frequently cracked as he forced back the tears which kept coming to his eyes, he brought all of us back to the horrible events of October 1998. He made the crowd relive the events, day by day, as he explained how his life became inextricably entwined with the lives of the Shepard family. He did this by explaining image by image the video we would be seeing which was a composite of news footage shot during the days following Matthew's attack.

He wanted us to focus on certain elements -- the compassion and suffering visible on the faces of the students marching silently down the streets of Laramie during their vigil for Matthew, the faces full of hatred of the few bigots who marred those days with their prejudice and their insults, the site out on the prairie where Matthew was gruesomely beaten by those who would eventually face life in prison for his death, the beautiful testimonials of Elton John who went to Laramie to dedicate a concert for the Matthew Shepard Foundation in June of 1999 and of Peter, Paul and Mary who gave a special concert on the anniversary of Matthew's death last October. Peter was emotional as he spoke about Matthew's life and death and the ongoing need for humanity to cultivate tolerance, love and peace. By the end of Dr. Hurst's presentation and the completion of the video, it was evident that everyone at the plenary was emotionally touched.

And then Judy Shepard took the stage. The crowd gave her a long standing ovation just for the courage it took for her to be there with us. And then she comforted us. She was amazing in her composure. She came with a simple message. She let us know how important a role we have in reaching out to GLBT students on our campuses and in affecting the attitudes of all our students regarding sexual orientation. She thanked us if we had already made headway in the GLBT arena. She encouraged us to do so if we hadn't.

Judy Shepard explained why she felt compelled to be at the conference. She has just begun visiting college campuses as a way to continue the legacy of her son. She told us

about his life, about how he learned, when he went to high school in Switzerland, that the world is made up of different cultures and individuals and that the diversity and richness of humanity made him optimistic and excited about life's potential. She talked about how welcome he was made to feel through the various support services available at the University of Wyoming. She talked about his gentle nature, his love of theater, his openness and his love for his family. She considered him more than a son, he was her friend. She then talked about the horror it was to live through those long days when she and her family had to make their way from Saudi Arabia to his bedside, not knowing along the way whether they would arrive in time and whether he would recover from his wounds. She keeps asking herself and asked us how anyone could destroy a human life out of such blind hate and rage.

Her voice throughout was gentle and personal, as if there were only a few people in the room. She read to us the text that she had read at the sentencing trial of one of Matthew's killers. It was difficult for her to read it. It was difficult for us to listen to it. It was powerful since it made her son real to all of us. And it was painful since it put a face on what they all suffered; she made us relive his agony at being murdered just because he was gay. She reminded us that he was just one of many who have been killed because of their sexual orientation.

She confessed she never dreamed that she would be thrust on the national scene in this way. To date she has received 10,000 letters, many with donations for the Foundation, and 100,000 e-mail messages. And she apologized for not responding to them but also expressed how positively overwhelmed she feels given the unexpected support she had received worldwide. She takes solace in that support and encouragement since it tells her that the world is ready to reject hate crimes. I remembered that our SIG donation was among those many letters and it felt good to know that we had reached out to her.

Judy Shepard shared with us the two dreams she holds onto. The first would be that every well-known and visible GLBT individual in a position of power and influence, and even those with everyday ordinary lives, would let the world know their sexual orientation. She explained that the GLBT youth of today need to know who they can look to for their role models so they will not be ashamed of who they are. And she said she dreams about the day when once a year people would somehow let the world know that their lives have been touched in a positive way by someone gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. She feels that if everyone realized just how abundantly and richly people are affected by GLBT individuals, people would stop fearing that which they do not understand.

Throughout the 75 minute experience that day, I felt as if all my friends and colleagues in our SIG were there with me. And I knew that what we have been doing within NAFSA is valuable and important, despite occasional criticism or lack of comprehension from our own colleagues. We must continue to bring our message to as many people as we can. If we don't, who will? That, after all, is the legacy of Matthew Shepard -- fighting for social justice, working for GLBT equality and helping to prevent hate crimes. To give

meaning to his brief life, we need to work not only towards preventing such a horror from occurring again but also to ensure that all GLBT individuals have the same rights and respect as other citizens in our society and around the world.

Sweden Allows 'Gay Marriage' for Foreigners

Reuters, March 16, 2000

Sweden plans to allow non-Swedish gay couples to enjoy the same rights as same-sex partnerships between Swedish citizens, the Ministry of Justice said on Thursday. If parliament approves a legal amendment, gay couples where one of the partners has been a resident of Sweden for at least two years will be able to register the partnership, regardless of nationality, starting this July 1. Swedish homosexuals are already allowed to register partnerships, entitling them to the same legal rights as married heterosexual couples, except child adoption. "The purpose of the amendment is to remove an unnecessary limitation and make it possible for foreign citizens to enter into partnerships in Sweden," Justice Minister Laila Freivalds said. Until now at least one of the partners had to be a Swedish citizen resident in Sweden.

Lesbigay SIG Web Development

By Julie Trimpe, IES

Scott Van Der Meid and I are working on revising the SIG Web site. Specifically, I am in charge of adding a new student section and plan to have it up before San Diego so that we can announce it in sessions and have advisors/students start using it. The purpose of this student section is to have an Internet site that GLBT students can turn to for pre-departure, in-country, reentry, etc. information (as the page will be subheaded). By having a site with important information and links for students, advisors can include this Web address in their materials and orientation sessions for students. What we have on the SIG Web site now is great, but it is geared toward study abroad advisors.

To keep the process moving, please think about the following information you or your students can contribute:

- Web links and bibliographical resources geared toward students -- especially pre-departure and in-country (preferably ones are not already on the SIG site)
- An overview of issues or points that students should be aware of for each subheading (pre-departure, in-country, reentry...)
- Student testimonials for each subheading (pre-departure, in-country, reentry...)
- Your ideas and suggestions on what should be included in the student section

Please send along your brainstorming suggestions. Thanks!

Contact Information: Julie Trimpe, Regional College Relations Manager, 2027 Park Road NW, Washington D.C., 20010, IES, Tel/Fax: (202) 265-1895; Toll Free: (877) 265-1447; E-mail: Jtrimpe@iesabroad.org

Congressman Pushes for Gay Partners Immigration Bill

Associated Press, February 15, 2000

Ben Googins and his boyfriend, Elias Rodrigues Martins, traded a telephone call for Valentine's Day, a short one at that. With Googins living in Manhattan and Martins in Brazil, phone bills average \$650 a month.

And they have three months to wait until they see each other again.

"We just want to be together and build a life together like any other couple," Googins said Monday.

That is more difficult than it sounds. While U.S. immigration laws allow heterosexual married couples to sponsor their partners for citizenship, the laws don't permit gays and lesbians to do the same for their partners because there is no legal ly recognized marriage for same-sex couples.

Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-Manhattan, introduced a bill on Monday that would change that, although even supporters admit it stands little chance of passing in the current Republican-led Congress. Nadler's Permanent Partner Immigration Act of 2000 would allow a U.S. citizen in a permanent relationship to sponsor his or her partner for immigration.

Nadler called the bill "simply a matter of common sense and fairness."

"Why do we allow the government to tear apart committed and loving couples just because of who they love?" Nadler said.

The issue has been talked about for years in the gay and lesbian community, but Nadler's bill is the first to deal with the topic, said Lavi Soloway, chairman of the New York City-based Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force.

"We look at it as the very beginning of an important dialogue in Congress," Soloway said. "We're hoping to attract a core of support and to begin building a broader coalition. But we're realistic to know that this bill isn't going to pass right away."

A telephone call placed to Rep. Lamar Smith, the Texas Republican who is chairman of the House subcommittee on immigration, was not immediately returned Monday.

Nadler's bill would introduce the term "permanent partner" into sections of immigration law dealing with legally married couples. Permanent partners would have to demonstrate that they were in an intimate, committed relationship. Each partner must be over 18 years old. Certain other restrictions would apply.

Thirteen other countries currently provide immigration rights to same-sex partners, including England, France, Canada and South Africa, Soloway said.

For now, Googins and Martins, both 25, keep in contact as best they can and try to save money to be together. Googins waits tables in midtown Manhattan. Martins is a student. He'd like to work, but with unemployment in Brazil hovering around 30 percent, finding work is difficult.

SIG Resources Highlighted by SECUSSA Forum on Underrepresentation

By Kathleen Sideli, Indiana University

NAFSA's Section on U.S. Students Abroad just launched, through its Web site, materials to support the work of the Forum on Underrepresentation in Education Abroad. The Forum has been in existence for a number of years to bring professionals together who are concerned not only about making education abroad available to all qualified students but also about how to meet their special needs. The issues surrounding GLBT students have naturally fallen within the Forum's focus on diversity. Carol Lebold (U Mass Amherst), who chaired the session entitled "Emerging Out of the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Mentality in Education Abroad" in Denver, is the SECUSSA liaison to the Forum. She has revitalized this group and, in addition to chairing a meeting in San Diego for all individuals interested in issues of under-representation, she is chairing the poster session (described on page 2). Carol also coordinates the Forum's new Web site -- launched on March 30 -- with Amy Kidd Raphael, University of Pennsylvania. They included a link to the Lesbigan SIG's Web site and Julie Trimpe, a SIG member, contributed one of the articles in the newly revived Forum newsletter.

Julie's article "Gaining Visibility: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT) Student Issues", recounts how she presented her graduate thesis results at NAFSA Region VIII's conference last fall. She opens her article with the question, "Are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students underrepresented in study abroad? It is difficult to say. We do know from anecdotes shared by the GLBT student community that they certainly are participating. What we do not know is how many. Yet, the "underrepresentation" issue with this student population is not about numbers, but about

visibility, an issue within our larger society due to heterosexism and homophobia which continues to exist." To see the new site, including Julie's article, see: <http://www.nafsa.org/secussaforum>.

Queer History of Russia and Eastern Europe

by Geordie Jones, Indiana University

The history of sexuality is a new area of scholarly inquiry. It grew out of feminist examinations of women's history as well as the development of both masculinity studies and gender studies. Existing work on gay and lesbian history tends to focus on the United States, Britain, and, to a lesser extent, the rest of Western Europe. One possible explanation for this stems from the fact that many historians investigating homosexuality link the development of homosexual identity, as opposed to homosexual behavior, to processes of modernity dating to the Victorian era. Despite this focus on the West, some scholars have begun to look at other times and places in order to broaden their understanding of homosexuality. Such a trend exists in both Russian and East European historiography. This article attempts to give an overview of some of the sources and developments to date in the field of Russian and East European gay studies for those people who may be interested but are unfamiliar with the topic.

The earliest scholarship dealing with homosexuality in Russia is that of Simon Karlinsky.¹ Karlinsky authored several articles that attempted to bring to light Russia's gay history. Initially, rather than focus specifically on one particular time period, Karlinsky outlined the more general existence of both homosexual behavior and identity within the Russian experience. Karlinsky's work simultaneously pointed out a tradition of homosexuality in Russia and underscored the need for more intellectual investigation into this subject matter. Although his work does not necessarily provide the most in-depth discussions, it serves as an excellent starting point for anyone interested in the subject of gay and lesbian history in Russia.

Laura Engelstein has produced the best scholarship dealing with Russian gay and lesbian history. Although she deals specifically with gay and lesbian issues, she also manages to tie this subject to a larger discussion of the dynamics of sexuality in turn-of-the-century Russia. This is particularly true of her monograph, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siecle Russia*, and is also apparent in other articles.² When dealing with early Soviet ideology, Engelstein provides a thorough explanation of how and why Soviet attitudes developed as they did. For anyone interested in pursuing this subject, Engelstein's work provides a good vantage point from which to begin exploring other sources.

Russian scholars have also conducted research on gay and lesbian issues. The most well known scholarship of this type is that of Igor Kon.³ Kon explains contemporary (post-communist) attitudes toward "sexual minorities" by giving an overview of how th

ese attitudes were shaped by the Soviet experience. His work serves as a useful source for those interested in more recent gay and lesbian issues. His utilization of opinion polls makes for a very informative read. Kon provides a mixed bag of both positive and negative reactions and developments in the 1980s and early 1990s, all of which are well grounded in detailed and solid research. Kon's work cannot be categorized as gay and lesbian history per se, but instead falls under the broader umbrella of gender studies. However, it stands as an excellent background for anyone wanting to learn more about Russian (and Soviet) attitudes toward homosexuality.

Recently, Laurie Essig published a monograph that deals directly with the issue of gay and lesbian experiences in Russia.⁴ Like Kon, she remains largely concerned with contemporary attitudes and developments. In addition, she attempts to explain a strong Russian gay and lesbian political agenda -- going so far as to define a "Queer" segment of Russian society, a term that is politically loaded. Her book is both interesting and useful in terms of augmenting previous scholarship and breaking new ground. Moreover, it demonstrates what a rich topic gay and lesbian issues can be for scholars of Russia and Eastern Europe.

While no single book attempts to provide an overview of Eastern European gay and lesbian history, there are several articles that treat this issue either through specific region-based case studies or other types of comparison. Interestingly, while this area of research has been growing, almost all of the scholarship concentrates on the post-socialist period. Many Western scholars have become interested in how gays and lesbians experienced the collapse of communism and are curious to see what, if any, role homosexuals will play in rebuilding various East European societies. Contemporary books examining gay and lesbian rights in an international context are useful as a starting point for concerned scholars and individuals who are unfamiliar with this topic.⁵

The primary exception to the post-socialist focus found in the current scholarship is the case of East Germany. Several works attempt to address the East German situation by going back to the 1980s or earlier.⁶ Some works look at the experience of Nazism as a source of later East German attitudes. As more scholars become interested in gay and lesbian issues, other aspects of East European gay and lesbian history will come to light.

The experiences of Russian and East European gays and lesbians constitute a major new arena for interested scholars. Despite the growth of such research, much remains to be done. We need to study not only what life was like for homosexuals in these countries, but also how people in each society understood and responded to gay and lesbian individuals. My own research thus far has examined how certain members of cultural elites in Russia during the early part of the twentieth century attempted to use art and literature to construct and advance a distinct gay and lesbian identity. However, my interest in gay and lesbian history is limited neither to Russia nor to the early twentieth century. I plan to do further research that looks at the Russian and East European gay and lesbian experience from a comparative perspective.

1. See for example his "Russia's Gay Literature and History (11th-20th centuries)" *Gay Sunshine* 29/30 (1976): 1-6, or his "Russia's Gay Literature and Culture: The Impact of the October Revolution" in *Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, (New York: Meridian, 1990).
2. *The Keys to Happiness Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siecle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992). See also "Soviet Policy toward Male Homosexuality: Its Origins and Historical Roots" *Journal of Homosexuality* 29, 2-3 (1995).
3. For example his "Sexual Minorities" in *Sex and Russian Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).
4. Laurie Essig, *Queer In Russia: A story of sex, self and the other* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).
5. For example, Barry D. Adam, et. al. eds., *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics: National Imprints of a Worldwide Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999) or Donald J. West and Richard Green, eds. *Sociolegal Control of Homosexuality: A Multi-nation Comparison* (New York: Plenum, 1997).
6. See for example the work of Katrin Seig, Christina Schenk, and Denis Sweet or Jurgen Lemke, *Gay Voices from East Germany* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

Editor's Notes: Geordie Jones is a graduate student in the Indiana University Department of History. This article originally appeared in the Newsletter of the Indiana University Russian & East European Institute.

Outfront Sponsors U.S. Campus Speaking Tour

By Susan Carty, Indiana University

Tsitsi Tiripano, a prominent member of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), spoke to groups of students on more than a dozen college campuses during a March national lecture tour sponsored by Outfront, Amnesty International's Program on Human Rights and Sexual Identity. She told her own story and responded to questions.

In 1996, Tiripano (not her real name) was volunteering at a GALZ stand at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair when she and other volunteers were attacked and their literature burned. Police offered no protection.

People in her hometown saw photos of Tiripano at the incident, and she returned home to an angry crowd. She said her friends and neighbors are "still saying vulgar things and pointing their finger at me. I'm always haunted by that sad and tragic day."

"African women are oppressed and victimized in the name of culture," she said. "If they find out you're a lesbian, you're beaten and thrown out of the house. Some end up committing suicide because they have no means of support and empowerment."

To combat this treatment and provide support for homosexual and transgendered people in Zimbabwe, GALZ was founded in 1989. In 1993, Tiripano joined as the first black member. GALZ programs now include social education, human rights activism, providing support for people who have HIV or AIDS and counseling and outreach to rural areas.

"We want to go to rural areas, because in rural areas there are still people living in the closet," said Tiripano. "We go there and people say 'I was so scared, but now I just feel like I can say 'I'm gay.'"

In rural areas, GALZ also wants to talk about the prevention of HIV transmission and counsel those who have HIV or AIDS, Tiripano said. She said she is interested in learning more about how to do this. "AIDS is everywhere; AIDS is with everyone, even straight people," she said. "We want money so people living with HIV and AIDS can buy condoms. We want pamphlets from organizations so counselors know how to handle it when someone comes to them and says 'I have HIV/AIDS.'"

More information about Amnesty International's Outfront can be found at

www.amnestyusa.org/group/outfront

The GALZ Web site can be found at
www.icon.co.za/stobbs/galz.htm.