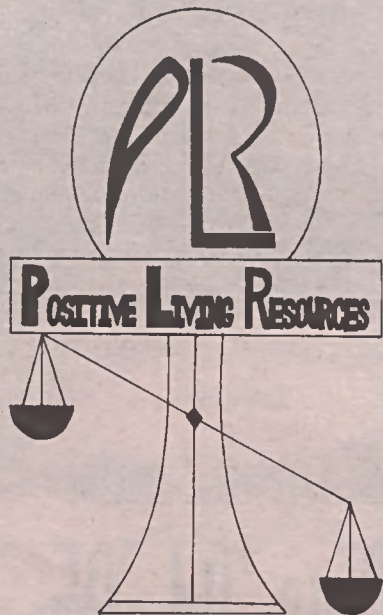


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Ann Landers' good advice

In a recent Ann Landers advice column, Ann gives sage advice to a gay man who had been invited to the wedding of his partner's ("Tom's") sister. His mother-in-law, however, "sees this as strictly a family event, and has told Tom that she would rather I not attend." He is struggling with whether he should honor his relationship and the wishes of Tom's sister, or respect what he feels to be the hurtful request of the mother. "I really don't want to make her miserable on such an important day," he concludes. Ann responds, "You have been invited to this wedding by the bride. This is HER day, and her wishes should prevail. By all means, go and be sure to ask Tom's mother to dance."

While Ann Landers has given mixed support to lesbian and gay relationships in the recent past, she should be applauded for recognizing that the discomfort of the mother is her problem and that she is the one who should have to confront it — not the rest of the wedding party.

Thank Ms. Landers for this pearl of wisdom. Contact: Ann Landers, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., #700, Los Angeles, CA 90045-5600.

Babylon 5 probes gay marriage

In a recent episode of the science-fiction series *Babylon 5*, two male crew members are sent on an undercover mission to Mars as gay newbies in order to infiltrate the society there. As they were given their falsified identification, their contact, Captain Jack (Donovan Scott) told them that "most of the resistance travel light, travel alone. So to get travel permits for the two of you together...you're [going to pretend to be] a young, married couple on holiday to Mars for their honeymoon." The two characters, Dr. Stephen Franklin (Richard Biggs) and Marcus Cole (Jason Carter), assumed the roles with total nonchalance with Marcus saying to Stephen, "Well, shall we go,

darling?" They argued about in-laws and other day-to-day issues and showed casual affection for one another, down-playing the fact that this was a gay couple and choosing instead to deal with the characters as just another married couple.

Babylon 5, by introducing the issue of same-sex marriage so casually, sends a message to its audience that same-sex marriage need not be such a big issue. They also present a more accepting and inclusive society in the future, unlike shows such as *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*.

Thank the WB for *Babylon 5*'s candid portrayal, and encourage them to continue to fold lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender elements into their plots. Contact: Jamie Kellner, President, WB/Warner Brothers Network, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522; fax: (818) 972-0864.

WomenSport illustrates homophobia

In the spring 1997 issue of *WomenSport*, *Sports Illustrated*'s long-awaited woman athlete-oriented magazine, Olympic softball team member Dot Richardson describes her years of hurt and disappointment, caused by people's presumptions that as an athletic woman she must be a lesbian. Richardson states that the stereotyping of female athletes as lesbians "has been one of the biggest hindrances to the development of women in sports" because parents don't want "insinuations" so they keep their daughters off playing fields.

While Richardson claims to have moved beyond judging her lesbian teammate ("Wasn't she still a good ballplayer, a good teammate, a good person?"), her article stereotypes lesbians as women who "wanted to be [boys]," denies lesbian sexuality as "not really sex," and calls being labeled a lesbian "poison." Richardson maintains that it's the possibility of being called a lesbian that keeps gifted women athletes from developing, not her and society's homophobia and discomfort with women who happen to love other women and who challenge gender stereotypes.

Write *WomenSport* and tell them that including an anti-lesbian article is a cowardly way of denying lesbians a level playing field in the

See GLAAD on next page

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