

the Cove

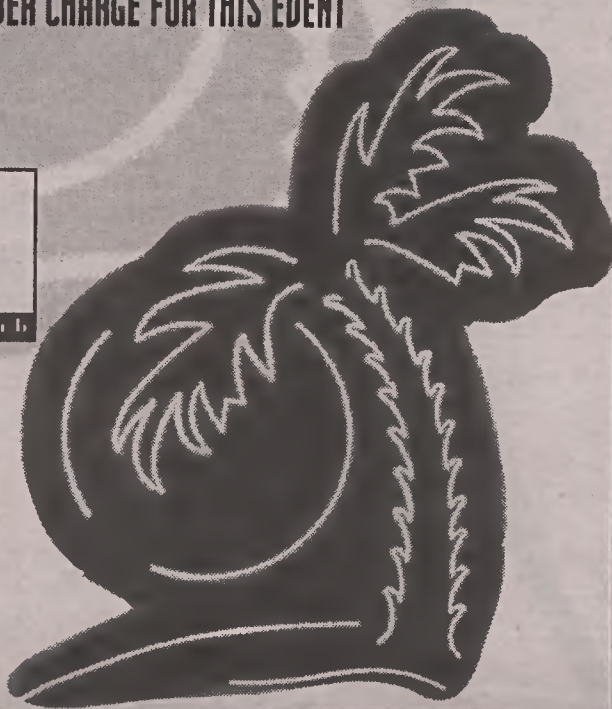
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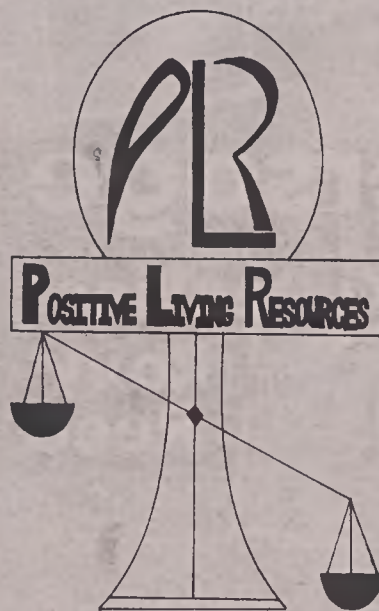
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glad notes

by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance
Against Defamation

Queer sense of studies

From the moment Mike Wallace began his March 22 *60 Minutes* report on queer studies, his bias was explicitly clear: "It may surprise you that before we begin this report on a growing field in academia, that we'd have to give you a parental warning, but you should be on notice that some of what you're about to see — indeed some of what is being taught on college campuses today — is for mature audiences only." Far from objective, Wallace and *60 Minutes* irresponsibly make the issue of queer studies far more sensationalistic and lurid than it actually is. His discomfort with the subject matter outweighs his journalistic integrity.

In the past few years, Wallace has expressed regret over his involvement in a 1967 CBS documentary called "The Homosexuals" that was the original "homosexuals behind potted plants" story, noting that at the time, he lacked the perspective to see gay people as anything more than stigmatized, marginalized, ashamed people. Hopefully, he will recognize that the same ill-informed bias was at play in this story.

Let CBS and *60 Minutes* know that this kind of sensationalistic journalism is beneath such an esteemed program. Contact: Andrew Heyward, News President, CBS Television Network, 524 West 57th St., New York, NY 10019-2902; fax: (212) 975-9387; Don Hewitt, Executive Producer, *60 Minutes*, 555 West 57th St., New York, NY 10019-2925; fax: (212) 975-2019.

Hope for lesbians

The March 25 episode of CBS' *Chicago Hope* featured a compassionate storyline about a lesbian whose partner is excluded from the decision-making process regarding her hospital care. On the episode, Rita McGrath's doctor, Dr. Jack McNeil (Mark Harmon), realizes her leg has become gangrenous and recommends an amputation. But Rita's partner, Dorothy Carlson (Jenny O'Hara), insists Rita would not have wanted it and refuses to agree to the surgery. When Rita's brother, Jeff (James McDonnell), approves surgery, Dorothy explains to Dr. McNeil and Chief of Staff Philip Waters (Hector Elizondo) that Jeff has never approved of her relationship with Rita. Waters informs her that hospital policy leaves decisions up to family members. Dorothy takes the issue to court, but loses because of Dr. McNeil's testimony, in which he says that amputation is the best course of action. As he is leaving the courtroom, Jeff approaches Dr. McNeil and says he's glad the court saw Rita and Dorothy's relationship the same way he did, saying "you can't just put a ring on your finger and call yourselves a family." Dr. McNeil, visibly upset by Jeff's comments, tells Jeff that Rita is really lucky to have someone who cares for her the way that Dorothy does and adds that he wishes he had someone so special. In the end, Jeff stops the amputation from happening. Although he still will not speak to Rita directly, he demonstrates some compassion and humanity.

This episode illustrates one of the most upsetting problems that exists for same-sex couples in our society who are denied the basic rights of family granted through civil marriage.

Thank CBS and *Chicago Hope* for including this heartfelt look at a serious issue. Contact: Leslie Moonves, Entertainment President, CBS Television Network, 7800 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036-2165; viewer response line: (212) 975-3247 or (212) 975-3248; e-mail: audsvcs@cbs.com; John Tinker and Bill D'Elia, Producers, *Chicago Hope*, c/o 20th Century Fox, 10201 W. Pico Blvd., Trailer 773, Los Angeles, CA 90035; fax: (310) 969-1222.

Politically ignorant

On the March 19 telecast of ABC's *Politically Incorrect*, host Bill Maher tackled the subject of transgenderism. Maher focused his negative remarks on Alex Myers, a transgendered man at Harvard University who has courageously and publicly come out on campus and advocated for inclusion of transgender in Harvard's anti-discrimination policy. In a display of his ignorance regarding transgendered people, Maher expressed amazement that Myers could gender-transition without hormonal therapy and surgery. Maher repeatedly questioned the validity of Myers' gender identity, referring to him as "she" or "it." His comments mocked Myers' physical appearance and commitment to his gender. Guest Sally Jesse Raphael repeatedly attempted to correct Maher, who often twisted what accurate information she provided for humorous effect. He expressed a belief that transgendered men are confused lesbians with masculine gender expressions. "This person is saying, 'I'm a man.' And he has a girlfriend. And they say they have heterosexual sex. I think if you dress like a man and have sex with a woman, you're a lesbian," he said. Maher also viewed Myers' transgender identity without hormones or surgery as a unique case, exposing his ignorance of the many other transgendered people who, like Myers, are coming out in increasing numbers everywhere.

Tell Bill Maher that there is certainly more than "one" of "these" transgendered persons in the world, and tell ABC that Maher's ill-informed and hurtful comments contribute to the discrimination that transgendered people and their families already face. Contact: Bill Maher, Host, *Politically Incorrect*, 7800 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036; fax: (213) 852-4517; [www: http://www.abc.com/pi/talkback/talk_index.html](http://www.abc.com/pi/talkback/talk_index.html); Jamie Tarses, Entertainment President, ABC, 2040 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, CA 90037; audience response line: (310) 557-7777; e-mail: netaudr@abc.com.

Primary Colors are bright

Kathy Bates plays the dynamic lesbian political player Libby Holden in *Primary Colors*, the movie based on the Joe Klein novel modeled generally on Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential run. Holden is a no-nonsense lesbian whose idealistic, though not naive, belief in politicians only leads to disaster. In her initial scene, she introduces herself and immediately hires a young woman, "the one who looks like Winona Ryder," as her assistant. The next time they are seen, it is clear that they are lovers and happy to be together.

Throughout the film, Holden's sexual orientation is no more significant than any of the other characters', and her relationship is portrayed as a matter of fact without any attempt to explain or justify its existence.

Let Universal and the producers know you appreciate this accurate portrayal. Contact: Universal
See GLAAD on page 25

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