



NEWSLETTER

Winter 2007
Annual Meeting Issue

In official relations with the American Public Health Association

What is "Good Enough?"

By Andy Miller, MHSE, CHES - Caucus Chair

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As the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign kicks into high gear and candidates begin vying for support from various communities, we in the LGBT community again find ourselves in the unique position-cultivated by some and vilified by others. I find it strange, and I can't think of another group that is treated the same way.

Even those candidates who try to embrace the LGBT community do so while keeping a careful distance. You know what I am talking about. It's easy to spot. Rudy Giuliani's support of gay rights, but not gay marriage rights. Hilary Clinton's speaking at a Human Rights Campaign (HRC) event affirming her support for our community, but failing to immediately denounce a statement made by a high-ranking military official calling gays 'immoral.' While Clinton did finally clarify and indicate she disagreed with the statement, I am sure it was after careful consideration

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The Human Rights Campaign to Sponsor Reception for LGBT Caucus

By Michael W. Plankey, Ph.D. Chair, Social Events

Every year, one of the high-points of the LGBT Caucus activities during the annual meeting is our ability to get out into the community at a local LGBT-health agency. We get to see first hand the work being done in the host city to impact LGBT health issues. This year, with the theme of the APHA annual meeting focusing on politics and policy, we are fortunate to be hosted by none other than the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). HRC will be sponsoring the host-city reception in Washington, DC, at 7 PM on Monday, Nov. 5, 2007 in the Equality Forum of the HRC office building located at 1640 Rhode Island Avenue, NW (at the corner of 17th Street, NW).

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EVENT DETAILS

Monday, Nov. 5th

1640 Rhode Island

Ave NW

Equality Forum of the

HRC Office Building

Washington, DC



Recent Articles Published in the *American Journal of Public Health*

Adapted from information provided by Olivia Chang

The articles below were published online April 26, 2007 by the *American Journal of Public Health* under "First Look" at www.ajph.org/first_look.shtml and appeared in the June 2007 print issue of the Journal. These are only a few of the LGBT-themed articles in this issue of the AJPH. If you did not receive the Journal, you can access all the articles at www.ajph.org/content/vol97/issue6.

Articles include:



Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender health issues getting short shrift at U.S schools of public health.



Early condom use bodes well for adolescents' sexual health



Survivors of childhood sexual abuse more likely to engage in risky behaviors



Racial/ethnic disparities persist in HIV's impact on homosexual men



Lesbians more likely to be overweight and obese

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender health issues getting short shrift at U.S schools of public health.

Aside from HIV/AIDS, health issues affecting the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender population are not likely to show up in research and lesson plans offered at schools of public health across the nation. Researchers mailed questionnaires pertaining to overall climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender faculty and students to 184 department and division heads at 35 of the country's schools of public health. Of the 102 respondents, 41 percent reported having at least one faculty conducting research on LGBT issues, the majority pertaining to HIV/AIDS. Fewer than ten percent offered an LGBT course in the last two years. [From: "Research, Curricula, and Resources Related to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health in U.S. Schools of Public Health." Contact: Heather L. Corliss, PhD, MPH, Children's Hospital, Boston, Mass., heather.corliss@tch.harvard.edu.]

Early condom use bodes well for adolescents' sexual health

Despite fears that early condom use encourages adolescents to be sexually promiscuous, a study found that those who use condoms the first time they have sexual intercourse are more likely to continue using condoms. The study's authors found that those who used condoms at "sexual debut" were 36 percent more likely to report condom use for their most current sexual encounter and half as likely to test positive for Chlamydia or gonorrhea when compared with those who did not use condoms at "sexual debut". [From: "Association Between Condom Use at Sexual Debut and Subsequent Sexual Trajectories: A Longitudinal Study Using Biomarkers" Contact: Taraneh Shafii, MD, MPH, University of Washington, Seattle, tshafii@u.washington.edu.]

Survivors of childhood sexual abuse more likely to engage in risky behaviors

Gay and bisexual men who were victims of childhood sexual abuse are more likely to engage in sexual behaviors that put them at higher risk of

Please see *Articles* on page 5

Winner of the 2006 Walter J. Lear, MD, Outstanding Student Award

By Andy Miller, MHSE, CHES

Allegra Raboff Gordon, MPH was named the fourth recipient of the Walter J. Lear, M.D. Outstanding Student Award at the APHA's 134th Annual Meeting in Boston, MA in 2006. Ms. Gordon presented her research entitled: "Gender nonconformity as a target of prejudice, discrimination, and violence against LGB individuals." The abstract for the presentation is as follows:

"Individuals who are perceived as transgressing normative gender roles and presentation are often subjected to prejudice and violence. Perceived gender nonconformity has been identified as a target of prejudice, discrimination, and violence against transgender individuals, but less is known about its role in antigay violence.

Project Stride is a longitudinal study of stress, minority identities and mental health in diverse lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) communities. 396 Black, Latino, and White respondents, aged 18-59, were interviewed in person. We assessed a history of major events over the lifetime, whether they were caused by prejudice, and the type of prejudice involved. Many prejudice events related to sexual orientation were interconnected with gender nonconformity. Of 133 participants who experienced one or more events involving prejudice based on sexual orientation, a quarter of them (n = 36) experienced gender nonconformity-based prejudice as part of or an antecedent to the antigay event. Through further analysis of these event narratives we will illustrate that perceived gender transgression was often explicitly targeted by the perpetrator in the course of the event, and such events frequently involved threats and/or violence."

To hear the recorded presentation, go the APHA Web site at apha.confex.com/apha/134am/techprogram/paper_132357.htm.

Ms. Gordon received a MPH (specializing in Sexuality) from Columbia University's Mailman School in 2006. She now works in the Research & Evaluation department of the non-profit Philadelphia Health Management Corporation, where she helps to manage the Community Health Data Base, a project that gathers local health data and provides technical assistance to health and human service providers to promote evidence-based program development. She also recently completed a program expansion feasibility study for an LGBTQA youth project in the region. An article based on Allegra's LGBT Caucus-sponsored 2006 APHA presentation is currently in preparation for publication.

The LGBT Caucus established the Walter J. Lear, M.D. Outstanding Student Award in 2003 to increase participation of students in LGBT-related research, and recognize their accomplishments. If you are interested in making a donation to fund the Walter J. Lear, MD, Outstanding Student Award, please contact the LGBT Caucus Treasurer, John Grima, at jfjtg@aol.com. ▲

*"Join us for the Annual Caucus Dinner on Tuesday, Nov. 7, and the presentation of the 2007 Walter J. Lear, MD Outstanding Student Award. Please visit us at the LGBT Caucus Booth in the Expo Hall at **Booth #957** to reserve your seat and buy a ticket (\$40)."*



Award winner Allegra Raboff Gordon, MPH.

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as to how her response would play with potential voters.

While I am grateful for the progress we seem to be making in the hearts and minds of the general public (Ann Coulter's free-wheeling use of a once acceptable gay slur has now earned her nearly universal scorn and contempt), I am struggling with what should be "good enough." Is it good enough that Giuliani, a major contender for the Republican nomination, supports gay rights generally, but not gay marriage rights, an issue we know plays a key factor in the health and stability of LGBT relationships? Is it good enough that Clinton supports the work of the Human Rights Campaign, but can't speak spontaneously in support of our community when confronted with a specific example of homophobic bigotry? Is it good enough that the major Democratic candidates all appeared on a gay-rights forum on the Logo Network, but none actually support marriage between two people of the same sex?

At the heart of this is not only each of our feelings about what is "good enough," but how it will translate to the work that many of us do to understand and improve the health of LGBT individuals and communities. If candidates are not going to take specific, meaningful positions on issues of improving LGBT health, then what should we be asking of them?

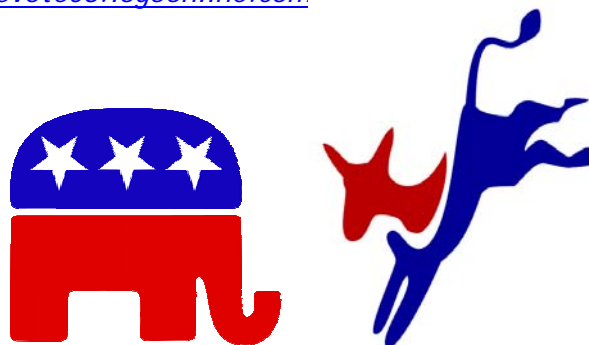
And our choices are not going to be easy. Do we support the candidate who is "good" on our issues, but not "great?" Or do we hold fast to our principles and risk losing the election to a candidate who is hostile to our issues? We know from recent history what that feels like and the hard-won ground we can lose under an unsupportive president. Do we elect people simply because they are willing to work with us, or do we withhold our vote until they promise to advance our issues? It is a moral dilemma that we will need to confront as we step into the voting booth.

But I do know one thing; I would love to be able to work on substantive issues that will make lives better in the LGBT community during the next four years instead of exhausting our energy and resources fending off yet another Constitutional amendment to restrict our freedoms.

If you were not able to tune into Logo to watch the Democratic candidates weigh-in on LGBT issues, you can check it out online at <http://visiblevote08.logoonline.com> ▲



You can still view the Presidential Forum hosted by HRC and the Logo Channel on the Logo Website at <http://visiblevote08.logoonline.com>



HRC from page 1

The Human Rights Campaign and the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association are working together on a new survey of hospitals - the Healthcare Equality Index. This survey will focus on hospital policies related to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender patients and their families. Topics covered include nondiscrimination policies, cultural competency training and recognition of families that are headed by same-sex couples.

Details on the project and a downloadable version of the survey are available at <http://www.hrc.org/hej>. The HRC contact person for this project is Tom Sullivan, e-mail: hei@hrc.org, 202-216-1594. ▲



Information about the HRC Healthcare Equality Index can be found on the HRC Web site at www.hrc.org/issues/hei.asp

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contracting HIV. The researchers found that of 862 randomly selected gay and bisexual men who were enrolled in a community festival, one in seven had been victims of childhood sexual abuse. Those who reported regular abuse were more likely to be HIV positive, to have engaged in sex for money and to be current drug users. Victims of childhood sexual abuse were not more likely to have a current sexually transmitted disease or to report practicing unprotected sex. [From: "History of Childhood Sexual Abuse and HIV Risk Behaviors in Homosexual and Bisexual Men." Contact: Seth L. Welles, Sc.D, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, slw58@drexel.edu.]

Racial/ethnic disparities persist in HIV's impact on homosexual men

HIV continues to hit black and Hispanic men harder than their white counterparts. A study of HIV diagnosis rates from 2001-2004 for gay and bisexual men found that among all age groups, rates were higher among black and Hispanic men than among white men, as was the proportion in which AIDS had developed within three years. The poorer outcomes for minority men might be tied to later diagnosis or lack of adequate access to treatment." [From: "Racial/Ethnic and Age Disparities in HIV Prevalence and Disease Progression Among Men Who Have Sex With Men in the United States." Contact: H. Irene Hall, PhD, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Ga., ixh1@cdc.gov.]



June 2007 issue of the AJPH

Lesbians more likely to be overweight and obese

Compared to heterosexual women, lesbians are more than twice as likely to be overweight or obese, putting themselves at higher risk for conditions such as diabetes or heart disease. Researchers compared population estimates of overweight and obesity across sexual orientation groups using data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth. The study's authors say their findings point to "an urgent need for weight-reduction interventions that target the high-risk group of sexual-minority women". [From: "Overweight and Obesity in Sexual-Minority Women: Evidence From Population-Based Data." Contact: Ulrike Boehmer, PhD, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Boston University School of Public Health, Boston, Mass., boehmer@bu.edu.] ▲

The "Down Low" phenomenon examined in Annals of Epidemiology

By Chandra Ford, PhD, MPH, MLIS

An article which discusses "the Down Low" phenomenon among black men is in the March 2007 issue of the Annals of Epidemiology. It can be downloaded directly from the journal's website at www.annalsofepidemiology.org.

Ford CL, Whetten KD, Hall SA, Kaufman JS, and Thrasher AD. Black sexuality, social construction, and research targeting the "the Down Low" ("the DL"). Annals of Epidemiology 2007;17:209-16. ▲

Don't Miss the Sunday Social!

Catch up with old friends or make new ones at the Caucus Social immediately following the Sunday Caucus Business Meeting.

This year, the National Coalition for LGBT Health is sponsoring this year's social! Come thank these two incredible Washington, DC-based LGBT health organizations and learn what the Coalition is doing to make an impact for our community. To learn more about the Coalition's work, go to www.lgbthealth.net. Refreshments will be provided. ▲

Annual Meeting Schedule at a Glance

All LGBT Sessions will be in with Washington Convention Center. Please check the APHA Meeting Schedule for room numbers.

Monday, November 5

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 10:30 - 12:00 AM | Health Disparities: Politics, Policy and Public Health (3102.0) - Oral |
| 12:30 - 2:00 PM | Mental Health in LGBT Communities (3230.0) - Oral |
| 2:30 - 3:30 PM | LGBT Health Disparities (3278.0) - Poster |
| 2:30 - 4:00 PM | Unequal Opportunity: Health Disparities Affecting Gay and Bisexual Men in the United States (3338.0) - Oral |
| 4:30 - 6:00 PM | Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Health (3420.0) - Oral |

Tuesday, November 6

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 8:30 - 10:00 AM | Substance Use and Substance Use Treatment Issues Among LGBT Individuals (4046.0) - Oral |
| 4:30 - 6:00 PM | LGBT Youth Research (4315.0) - Oral |

Wednesday, November 7

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 12:30 - 2:00 PM | LGBT Health Policy and Advocacy (5124.0) - Oral |
| 2:30 - 4:00 PM | Sexual Identities and Behaviors (5180.0) - Oral |

Schedule of LGBT Caucus Social/Business Events

Sunday, November 4

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 4:00 - 5:30 PM | LGBT Caucus of Public Health Workers Business Meeting |
| 6:30 - 8:30 PM | LGBT Caucus of Public Health Workers Social |

Monday, November 5

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 7:00 - 9:00 PM | Host City Reception - HRC, 1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW, Washington DC |
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Tuesday, November 6

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 6:30 PM | LGBT Caucus Annual Dinner w/presentation of Walter J. Lear Outstanding Student Award Skewers, 1633 P Street, Washington DC, 20036 (202) 387-7400 |
|---------|--|

\$40 - Drop by Booth #957 to reserve your spot and buy a ticket.

Wednesday, November 7

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 8:00 AM | Women's Breakfast - Location TBA (check the LGBT Booth #957 for details) |
|---------|--|

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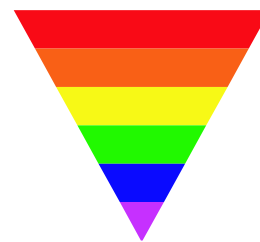
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