

NewsWatch

Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism at San Francisco State University

Spring 2001

Gays and Lesbians: In the Newsroom and Making News

WE'RE HERE
WE'RE QUEER
WE'RE ON DEADLINE

News Watch
Seeks The Good,
The Bad, The Ugly



News

The NewsWatch Project

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CIJ Executive Director

Eva Martinez

Editor

Dara Williams

Staff researchers and writers

Lisa Daniels

Robert Hernandez

Janine Sutherlin

Advisory Council

Cristina Azocar, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor

Eric Burkett, NLGJA

Martha Flores, NAHJ

Craig Franklin, KRON-TV, San Francisco

David Hawpe, The (Louisville, Ky.) Courier-Journal

Katia Hetter, NLGJA

Jackie Jones, NABJ

Paula Peters, NAJA

Jodi Rave, NAJA

Federico Subervi, UT Austin

Lynne Varner, NABJ

Veronica Villafaña, NAHJ

Ken Yamada, AAJA

Designer

Dug Waggoner

Editorial Office

409 - 13th St., 9th floor, Oakland, Calif. 94612

Phone 510-839-2807 • Fax 510-891-9565

newsproj@sirius.com • <http://newswatch.sfsu.edu>

Editor's Message

The first widely circulated gay periodical in North America, *One*, was first published in 1953. But it took seven years before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that *One* could be distributed through the mail. And it wasn't until 1981 that a major U.S. daily newspaper, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, hired an openly gay journalist, Randy Shilts.

Nine years later, a survey by the founder of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association showed that 59 percent of gay journalists were open about their sexual orientation to their newsroom colleagues. Today, that number has risen to 91.5 percent.

While visibility in the newsroom is a crucial component to ensuring fair, accurate, and relevant coverage of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities, it is only a first step.

Daily stories about LGBT communities are still lacking. NLGJA founder Roy Aarons released another study last year that shows, on a scale of 1 (too little) to 10 (too much), 87 percent of gay and lesbian journalists rated the extent of news coverage of gay and lesbian issues at 5 or below.

We need to improve these numbers. One way is to constantly remind ourselves of the advice of the late Charles Jackson, who mentored hundreds of journalists and was the editor of the *Oakland Tribune* and director of News Watch last year: practice open journalism.

He wasn't talking about "open" in the sense of sexual orientation. He meant journalism that is open to all, that

Watch

covers the movers, shakers and the moved and the shaken.

He challenged us to go into neighborhoods with which we are unfamiliar and find good stories to tell. He was telling us to be open minded, understanding, and know that our prejudices — *and we all have them* — will be challenged.

This issue of the News Watch magazine looks at one area of American society in which we need to do more to open the journalistic door. Besides the articles examining LGBT issues, News Watch has compiled a nationwide resource list of organizations you can turn to when covering LGBT communities. If there are some we left out, let us know.

We also need your eyes and ears open for examples of news stories that have positive or negative portrayals of LGBT communities, people of color and people with disabilities. When you see or read a news story and you find yourself nodding in agreement, or if it makes you pound your fist on the desk in frustration, use our tear-out form on page 14 for The Good, The Bad and The Ugly. Send the form and the journalistic work to us and we'll review it. The piece may be featured on our Web site or in a future News Watch magazine.

Keep the faith. Practice open journalism.

Dara Williams
News Watch Assistant Editor

PHOTO CREDITS:

On the Cover

- Harvey Milk
San Francisco's first openly gay county supervisor.
Courtesy of the Harvey Milk Academy.
- "We're Here, We're Queer, We're on Deadline"
Slogan from the first convention of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association.
Courtesy of NLGJA.
- Gay Pride Parade
Courtesy of the Louis Wolfson II Media History Center
- Announcement of the location of NLGJA's 2001 annual convention, which will be held in Dallas, Texas.
Courtesy of NLGJA.
- Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wisconsin, the first openly lesbian congresswoman in the country, stands with Attorney General Janet Reno and colleagues in Congress in supporting the Violence Against Women Act.
Courtesy of Congresswoman Baldwin.

On Air and Out — pages 4 & 5

- Raids in Miami
Courtesy of the Louis Wolfson II Media History Center.

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On-Air and Out: Archival Project Takes Historical Look at TV News Coverage of Gays and Lesbians

By Janine Sutherlin

Raids on “sex deviant hideouts” in the 1950s. A man on the street interviewee calls homosexuality “a damn disease” and getting rid of it “like taking aspirin for a headache.” A 1979 Emmy award-winning news special about “the gays.”

This is just a sample of past news coverage of gays and lesbians, which has run the gamut from bar raids to pride marches to AIDS and the uproar against Anita Bryant. But as attitudes toward gays and lesbians have shifted over the years, how much has news television coverage changed?

Steven Davidson, director of the Louis Wolfson II Media History Center, intends to find out in “Past Out: History of Television News Coverage of South Florida’s Gay and Lesbian Community as Compared and Contrasted with San Francisco and National Television News Coverage.”

“There is a real evolution of coverage into the later years, the 1970s and 1980s. You see stories about the positive economic impact the gay and lesbian community has and in the art scene. And you slowly begin to see a shift in perspective but you still

hear about those people,” Davidson said.

For the past two years, Davidson and his staff have been combing through local news coverage from the Wolfson Center’s vast moving images archive, the largest of its kind in the country.

“This project allows people to go back and see how different things were, how they changed since the 1950s, and how there is still far to go in terms of coverage. It gives a context of where we are. You have to be fair-minded and remember the times in which that reporting was going on as well,” he said.

“It has always been of interest to me how television news covers various issues, how the different eras and times affect coverage, and the effect that technology has,” Davidson said.

Davidson’s initial curiosity was funded by a \$5,000 grant from the Dade

Human Rights Foundation last August. The foundation gives grants to organizations that work to benefit the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

“We funded this project because it’s the first in the country of its kind to survey local news coverage of gay and lesbian events about us and how we’re perceived as well,” said Eddy McIntyre, grants committee chairperson



Raid at the Dive Bar on 79th Street, Miami, 3/2/57.

Significant Dates In LGBT History

Compiled by Lisa Daniels



1825
Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, founded modern gay movement, born Aug. 28.

1867
Writer Karl Maria Kertbeny coins term “homosexual.”

1870
First attempt to publish a gay magazine *Uring*, by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs.

1928
Radclyffe Hall writes “The Well of Loneliness,” the first undisguised lesbian novel.

1933
Adolf Hitler bans gay press in Germany.

1947
First U.S. lesbian magazine, *Vice-Versa*, published.

1953
The first widely circulated gay periodical in North America, *One*, is published. This publication is often considered one of the first major steps in the gay liberation movement.

1956
Daughters of Bilitis, a lesbian organization, publishes magazine, *The Ladder*.

and board member of the DHRF.

Davidson is collaborating with archivists at San Francisco State University and Vanderbilt University in order to compare local television news coverage of gays and lesbians in South Florida and San Francisco, using footage from Vanderbilt's Television News Archive as context for what was covered in the national news media.

John Lynch, director of the Television News Archive at Vanderbilt University, is compiling national footage for "Past Out."

"(The project) is a good cultural record at least where the media was and where the public was at the moment," Lynch said. "Memory is a funny thing. This will allow us to not see through the lens of memory, but what was said and thought of at the time."

"Past Out" is one of many projects Davidson has undertaken at the Wolfson Media History Center, where he has worked since its opening in 1987. Along with projects exploring the U.S. space program, the influx of Cubans into Miami and the civil rights movement, he conducts the popular Magical Bus/Video Tour of Miami, where passengers can see historical footage of the city while riding through town.

"Past Out" will be presented at several public screenings and panel discussions, including at the Dade Public Library and in San Francisco.

Accompanying some of the screenings will be panel discussions over the findings and the progress of gay and lesbians in the television news media. Panelists will include members of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association's South Florida chapter.

"It's always important to look at the past because if you don't, you're bound to repeat it," said Scott

Wyman, president of the South Florida NLGJA chapter and *Sun-Sentinel* reporter.

Helene Whitson, curator of the San Francisco Bay Area Television Archives, is compiling coverage of Bay area gays and lesbians for "Past Out," and will screen the project in San Francisco later this year.

"Moving images bring things to life," she said. "You can't taste it, can't smell it, but you can see (the people), can hear the voices, the emotion. We're putting together part of American heritage."

Davidson hopes the screenings will prompt others to dig through their own home movies and submit footage of gay and lesbian events. The next phase of the project would be to add the personal footage to the news footage.

"The videos will shed further light on television coverage," he said. "We'll get to see what life was like through their eyes. Television, no matter how enlightened, is still television's perspective."

Davidson hopes "Past Out" will be as educational for others as it has been for him.

"It's riveting to see what it was like and the views that were held and how they framed the news," he said. "It's been a learning experience, a real eye-opener."

Janine Sutherlin is a staff researcher for News Watch and a senior at San Francisco State University working toward her

bachelor's degree in both journalism, and French language and literature. She can be reached at: janeeners@onebox.com

The Louis Wolfson II Media History Center is located in the basement of the Miami-Dade Public Library. For more information, call 305-375-1505.



Raid at the Red Carpet Club, Miami Beach, 4/6/57.

1960 U.S. Supreme Court rules that <i>One</i> magazine can be distributed through the U.S. mail	1969 Stonewall riots: The Stonewall Inn tavern in New York City was the site of several nights of raucous protests following a police raid. Stonewall is regarded as the birth of the modern gay civil rights movement.	1970 First gay pride march commemorating Stonewall riots in New York City.	1972 <i>Gay News</i> , first gay news paper in the United Kingdom, founded.
1964 <i>Vector</i> magazine published.	1969 Gay Liberation Front and Gay Activist Alliance founded in N.Y.	1970 <i>The Lesbian Tide</i> begins publication with Jeanne Cordova as publisher.	1975 <i>The Lesbian News</i> founded with Jynx Beers as publisher.
1967 First issue of <i>Advocate</i> magazine published.		1971 "Gay Liberation Front Manifesto" published.	

Don't Forget The Context

By David Hawpe

When the Rev. Jerry Falwell brought his "God Save America" tour to Louisville, Ky., we covered it in *The Courier-Journal*. And we should have.

The Rev. Falwell is an important influence in American politics, and he has lots of followers in Kentucky and Southern Indiana where our newspaper circulates.

But I do wish we had taken the opportunity to give readers something more than the basic report from the preacher's appearance during the National Quartet Convention, at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center.

In particular, I wish we had looked into his comments on a 5-4 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, in late June 2000, allowing the Boy Scouts of America to ban gay scoutmasters and presumably, gay members.

Astonished by the close vote, the Rev. Falwell huffed, "Trying to force the Boy Scouts to accept gay Scout leaders to take the little boys hiking in the hills who would have believed there'd be four idiots on the Supreme Court who would even vote in that direction?"

The implication, of course, was that gays are more likely than heterosexual men to commit child sexual abuse.

Reading through more than 30 newspaper clippings on the court decision, which reversed a New Jersey Supreme Court ruling, I found no factual examination of the concern that lies at the bottom of the Rev. Falwell's public pronouncements on the issue.

No stories looking at the scientific evidence, which may or may not prove his point that gays shouldn't be left alone with Scouts in the woods.

I did read an Aug. 25 letter to *The Cincinnati Enquirer* from a man named Michael Wagner who didn't like a column written by Peter Bronson, criticizing the New Jersey justices for calling the Scouts' non-gay policy "little more than prejudice."

Mr. Wagner, who has worked with abused children for several years, told *Enquirer* readers, "The traditionally straight male adult (married, no children) is more likely than an openly gay man to be a sexual offender against young

boys." And he added, "So much for Mr. Bronson's attempt to drum up fear."

I don't claim to know who is right, Jerry Falwell or Mike Wagner. But I do know that it's part of a newspaper's obligation to help readers know what's true and what's false, with respect to such notions.

In August of last year, the issue surfaced again in the *San Francisco Examiner* when the California Supreme Court cleared the way for a San Leandro man's lawsuit against the Boy Scouts to go forward. Mario Juarez says the Scouts failed to protect him against molestation a decade ago.

"We're going to be seeking millions of dollars against the Boy Scouts because they knew better," said Charles Bonner, a lawyer for Mr. Juarez. "They knew the organization attracts pedophiles like a magnet attracts metal."

The *Examiner* story noted Mr. Juarez's claim that a study of the Scouts' educational program shows it has been effective in detecting molesters. The number of male Scout leaders barred for sexual abuse rose from 169 in 1987 (the year before the education effort began) to 209 in 1989.

What the story didn't do is put those numbers into context. The total is 209 out of how many? Do experts consider 209 a surprisingly large number? In how many of those 209 was actual abuse alleged? What is the experience in other groups and institutions, in which gays help to lead or serve a large number of kids?

In his blistering 40-page dissent last June, Justice John Paul Stevens charged for the court's minority that "the only apparent explanation for the majority's holding, then, is that homosexuals are different from the rest of society — that their presence alone, unlike any other individual's, should be singled out for special First Amendment treatment."

So are they? Few newspapers, in either sidebars or follow up stories, offered the facts that would support or invalidate Justice Stevens' implied premise.

When the *Capital Times* in Madison, Wisc., did a local sidebar it did quote Al Watrud, a Four Lakes Council assistant scoutmaster, who said, "On the one hand, it's a very positive thing because I think that an organization's morals or sense of values won out over the political correctness and volatility of this issue."

But he also insisted that the risk of a gay leader's



1981
Randy Shilts is hired at the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Shilts is the first openly gay journalist to be hired at a major daily newspaper.

1981
Capital Gay newspaper founded in Great Britain. The paper folded in 1995.

1981
Gay Press Association forms.

1982
Julian Meldrum starts first regular column on AIDS in *Capital Gay*.

1983
Gay News folds

1984
The Wall Street Journal permits use of the word "gay," referring to homosexuals, in stories.

1984
Gay Times Magazine begins publication.

1984
Berkeley, Calif., becomes first U.S. city with law recognizing domestic partners.

1984
On Our Backs magazine published.

1990
The lesbian and gay news magazine, *Outweek*, makes national headlines with story "The Secret Gay Life of Malcolm Forbes," which appeared after the death of the billionaire publishing tycoon.

committing sexual abuse or child abuse is no greater than that of a heterosexual's. He thinks the Scouts should follow the U.S. military's "don't ask, don't tell" approach.

He added, "I'm not in favor of sending my kid off to a camp-out with a drag queen or something like that, but that's a stereotype."

Coverage of this important news development, and the issues surrounding it, has been full of unexamined stereotypes.

We can do better.

David Hawpe is vice president and editorial director of The Courier-Journal in Louisville, Ky. He is a 1999 winner of national Walker Stone Prize for Editorial Writing, as well as the Anthony Lewis Media Award for Public Advocacy. He can be reached at: dhawpe@louisvil.gannett.com.

Civil Union Editorials Earn Pulitzer

On April 16, the *Rutland Herald* newspaper in Vermont, circulation 22,000, was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for a series of editorials in support of civil unions of same-gender couples. Editorial page editor David Moats was recognized "for his even-handed and influential series of editorials commenting on the divisive issues arising from civil unions for same-sex couples," the Pulitzer Prize board wrote.

The following are excerpts from some of Moats' award-winning editorials, reprinted with the permission of the *Rutland Herald*.

A brave ruling (Dec. 21, 1999)

The Vermont Supreme Court on Monday released its long-awaited ruling on same-sex marriage, finding that same-sex couples deserve the same benefits under the law that heterosexual couples do.

It was a brave ruling, characterized both by boldness and restraint.

The court was bold in recognizing that the Vermont Constitution is based on an inclusionary principle intended to guarantee that the benefits of government are not the exclusive domain of one group or another.

The court was bold in determining that there was no legitimate reason to exclude homosexual couples from the many benefits conferred by state and federal statute on heterosexual couples. ...

The court was bold in declaring that the extension of legal protection and security to same-sex relationships was, at its core, "a recognition of our common humanity."

But the court decided to let the Legislature decide how to guarantee equality for same-sex couples.

(Chief Justice Jeffrey L.) Amestoy wrote: "When a democracy is in moral flux, courts may not have the best or the final answers.

Judicial answers may be wrong. They may be counterproductive even if they are right. Courts do best by proceeding in a way that is catalytic rather than preclusive and that is closely attuned to the fact that courts are participants in the system of democratic deliberation."

Now the Legislature must figure out how best to guarantee the rights enunciated by the court. ...



An immediate question is whether domestic partnership, as distinguished from marriage, would be a second-class partnership. ...

As Amestoy understood, the United States is in the midst of "moral flux" regarding homosexuality and gay rights. He and

his court have laid down a fixed marker of high principle within that flux. It will be through the flux of democracy that the state will determine how to bring its laws into accord with those high principles. ...

The court's ruling may be frustrating to those who wished for an instant resolution to the issue of same-sex marriage. But in the long run Amestoy's restraint may push the state of Vermont to a fuller understanding of the rights the court was bold enough to recognize in its historic ruling.

A charitable view (Feb. 9, 2000)

The House Judiciary Committee heard moving testimony last week from one of the lawyers who brought the suit that led to the Supreme Court's decision requiring the state to provide equal benefits to gay and lesbian couples. ...

Gay and lesbian Vermonters have heard a full range of denunciation in the past several weeks. It is something they have heard all their lives, beginning with common school yard taunts and culminating in the passionate condemnations heard at the two public hearings inside the State House.

(continued on page 13)



1990 The American Society of Newspaper Editors announces the results of its first survey of gay and lesbian journalists at American newspapers. The survey's coordinator, then- <i>Oakland Tribune</i> executive editor Roy Aarons, reveals he is gay. The study, "Alternatives: Gays and Lesbians in the Newsroom," indicates newsrooms harbor	"palpable undercurrent of bias." In 1990, only one newspaper, the alternative weekly the <i>Village Voice</i> , offers domestic partner benefits.	1990 The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association founded by Roy Aarons.	1990 Coverage of the San Francisco Pride	Parade in the <i>Oakland Tribune</i> provokes protests. The newspaper features a front page photo of two men kissing.	1990 Journalist Robert O'Boyle chronicles his battle with AIDS for more than 18 months in the <i>Seattle Times</i> . His weekly column, "Living with AIDS" runs from June 1990 until his death in February 1992.	1990 TV journalist Paul Wynne chronicles his battle with AIDS in a seven-month series on KGO-TV, the ABC affiliate in San Francisco.	1990 Judy Grahn shares keynote speaker honors with Allen Ginsburg at Out/Write 90, the first national lesbian and gay writers conference.
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National News Coverage of Gays, Lesbians Increases, But Local Coverage Still Lacking, Study Shows

Latest Recognition Comes In The Form Of A Pulitzer Prize

By Dara Williams
News Watch Assistant Director

The newspaper industry's most revered honor, the Pulitzer Prize, has only twice been awarded to journalistic works devoted to gays and lesbians.

The most recent nod was in April, when David Moats, editorial page editor of the *Rutland Herald* in Vermont, won for his series of editorials last year supporting state legislation that would recognize civil unions for same-gender couples.

"It's long overdue," said Roy Aarons, founder of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association and former executive editor of *The Oakland Tribune*.

"I certainly think it would encourage others to get out front on tough issues, whether it's about gays or other minorities, and take the risk of taking unpopular views. That's what good journalism is," Aarons said.

While the frequency of national news stories about gays and lesbians has slowly increased in the past 10 years, local stories about their daily lives haven't been as popular, according to a study Aarons released last year.

The first Pulitzer Prize awarded for a series of stories about gays was in 1988. Jacqui Banaszynski of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch* won for feature writing. She wrote about two gay farmers in rural Minnesota and the responses of their families and the community as one died of AIDS and the other's illness progressed.

Previous Pulitzer Prize winners have written about the AIDS epidemic, but those stories were more broadly about the medical aspects, the illness among heterosexuals, or the spread of the disease in Africa.

Other stories about gays and lesbians that have grabbed the national spotlight include gay pride parades; Andrew Cunanan's killing spree; the murder of Matthew Shepard, a gay college student; the announcement by actor Ellen DeGeneres that she is a lesbian; and the state of Hawaii's effort to recognize same-gender marriages.

"If you were to include entertainment and advertising media, gays and lesbians are all over the place. Not necessarily in the type of depth we'd like to see but at least there's familiarity," Aarons said.

"I think the way things are moving there is a chance we will see some quantum improvements (in news coverage) in the course of (a) lifetime."

Coming Out

In a follow-up to his landmark 1990 study "Gays and Lesbians in the Newsroom," Aarons, and co-researcher Sheila Murphy, found that gay and lesbian journalists are finding greater acceptance in the nation's newsrooms.

Ninety-three percent of respondents were open about their sexual orientation in their newsrooms, up from 59 percent in 1990.

Despite some negative reactions that producer Rose Arce heard when she began telling colleagues she is a lesbian, she encourages journalists to be open about their sexual orientation.

"There is a tremendous value in coming out. When you come out, you achieve a level of honesty in your interaction with other people that ultimately brings you great joy and comfort in your work environment," said Arce, a producer at CNN and former vice president on NLGJA's board of directors.

"Once you're honest with people then you know what people really think, good and bad, and you can deal with that reality rather than your own paranoia," she said.

Arce wasn't always open. It was a process that took several years.

"It's very uncomfortable to be different in the newsroom regardless of what that difference is. Newsrooms are sadly not very diverse places," she said.

"The fallout was unpredictable," she said.

"What sticks out is people who told me they didn't understand how I could be that way, particularly people who I thought I was pretty friendly with," Arce said.

There was also a conservative colleague who clashed ideologically with Arce on issues of ethnicity and gender but was the easiest person Arce dealt with when discussing her sexuality.

"She turned out to have a gay stepchild. And I expected her to be awful to me and she turned out to be a very good friend," Arce said.

1991

Essence magazine's senior editor, Linda Villarosa, reveals to readers that she is a lesbian in an article about coming out that is co-written with her mother.

1991

The first edition of *Alternatives*, the NLGJA newsletter, is published.

1992

Deb Price, Washington editor for the *Detroit News*, begins writing the first column for general-circulation daily newspapers dealing exclusively with gay and lesbian issues. By 1996, the syndicated column reaches more than 100 newspapers through Gannett News Service.

1992

NLGJA's first national convention. About 300 lesbian and gay journalists meet in San Francisco. In a videotaped message, *New York Times* publisher Arthur Sulzberger, Jr. promises that the *Times* will offer domestic partners benefits.

1992

Italian clothier Benetton is credited with becoming the first major apparel retailer to advertise in a gay magazine.

1992

Reporter Garrett Glaser comes out on air while hosting PBS' gay magazine program "In the Life." He is credited with being the first television journalist to reveal he is gay on the air.

Still today, colleagues have adverse reactions to Arce being a lesbian and some have questioned her news judgment despite being a 15-year veteran journalist.

"The hardest thing to do I think is trying to sell coverage of gays and gay-related issues because it puts the focus on who you are and people often react by challenging your credibility even though you would never challenge their credibility that somehow related to their life," she said.

Journalists who are considering telling colleagues about their sexual orientation should be prepared for every possible reaction, Arce, 36, said.

"And be as forceful as you can be in your response to it. Accept the fact that it's an ongoing process," she said.

That process seems to be reflected in Aarons' most recent survey of 363 gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender print and broadcast journalists.

While many respondents felt comfortable about being open with their sexuality, general derogatory comments about gays and lesbians from colleagues are still too common, the study showed.

Fifty-three percent of respondents heard one or more such comments from colleagues, down from 84 percent in 1990. At the same time, 62 percent said their organization has a written policy prohibiting discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation, up from 19 percent in 1990.

News Coverage

The follow up study, "Gays and Lesbians in the Newsroom: 10 Years Later," which was released last fall at NLGJA's national convention, also examined the opinions that lesbian and gay journalists have of news coverage of their communities.

Forty-four percent of respondents rated mainstream news coverage of gays and lesbians good to excellent, up from 32 percent in 1990.

"You still have 52 percent who find it fair to poor. We haven't reached a majority yet," Aarons said. "I wouldn't consider less than a majority a significant, positive appraisal."

Many respondents were critical of the absence of stories about the daily lives of gays and lesbians.

News coverage of issues surrounding the lives of gays and lesbians peaked in the early 1990s partly due to AIDS-related stories, but has since slowed, Aarons said.

"You've got to look at this with a certain measure of philosophy but that doesn't mean you stop," he said.

The Next Step

While the visibility of gays and lesbians in the newsroom has increased, the struggle for more fair and accurate news coverage is ongoing.

Aarons, a visiting journalism professor at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Journalism and a former national correspondent for the *Washington Post*, is working toward getting college journalism educators nationwide to incorporate the coverage of gays and lesbians into core curriculum.

"Right now it's usually the case, a reporter gets thrown into a very complex story (and) they end up repeating a lot of these questionable statistics and rhetoric on both sides. It perpetuates the stereotypes and bad reporting," he said.

In response, Aarons is organizing a panel of about 40 journalism educators and professional journalists to discuss the state of coverage of gay and lesbian issues. The workshop will be Aug. 4 in Washington, D.C., in advance of the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

"If you're going to be student, demand that you're going to get some education on this issue," Aarons said. "You wouldn't send an engineer out there without calculus."

A copy of the study, *Gays and Lesbians in the Newsroom: 10 Years Later*, can be obtained at <http://www.nlgja.org>.

MAJOR FINDINGS

This summary is based on the 2000 Survey responses of 363 lesbian and gay journalists, follow-up interviews and comparisons with the two previous studies.

1. Lesbian and gay journalists enjoy unprecedented freedom in their mainstream news organizations, with more than 90 percent attesting they are out in their newsrooms.
2. While coverage of lesbians and gays has shown improvement over 10 years, these journalists say there is still a way to go. They rate much of current coverage as just fair to poor, especially of local issues affecting lesbian and gay communities. The responses suggest mainstream media reacts to stories that reach national consideration but is falling short in their attention to home turf gay and lesbian communities. Coverage of lesbians, and gays and lesbians of color is rated at the very lowest level.
3. Derogatory comments, while significantly lessened over the decade, are still heard far too often in newsrooms.
4. Health benefits have proliferated for same-gender couples in many of these news organizations, but it is far from universal.
5. Communication between lesbian and gay staff members and managers to discuss coverage of lesbian and gay issues appears to have plateaued in these newsrooms compared to the early 90s, and, in several cases, regressed.
6. Coverage of HIV/AIDS experienced a steep decline compared to the early 90s.

1992

President Clinton is first president to recognize gay and lesbian civil rights as a serious and important issue. Clinton also appoints open gays and lesbians to government positions.

Journalists votes to change the venue of its conference from Colorado to honor the boycott prompted by the anti-gay Amendment 2.

1993

Canadian cartoonist Lynn Johnston introduces a 17-year-old gay character in For Better or Worse, a comic strip running in 1,500 newspapers. Nineteen papers cancel the strip and 40 request

substitutions. Johnston wrote the strip in memory of a gay friend who was murdered. She is a finalist in the following year's Pulitzer Prize category for cartooning.

1993

NBC News reaffirms in a memo to employees its policy not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

1994

San Francisco Chronicle reporter Randy Shilts dies at age 42 from complication of AIDS. Shilts pioneered mainstream reporting on the hazards of unsafe sex.

1994

Essence magazine promotes a Latina lesbian, Linda Villarosa, to executive editor.

1993

At the urging of the NLGJA, the National Association of Hispanic

Some resources for covering lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities (Note: Some agencies listed here are not included in the original hard copy printed in June.)

ACTIVISTS

Advocates for Youth

National organization that addresses youth issues, including HIV and AIDS.
 (202) 347-5700; fax: (202) 347-2263
 info@advocatesforyouth.org
 www.advocatesforyouth.org www.youthresource.com

The Audre Lorde Project

Promotes wellness and progressive social and economic justice for LGBT ethnic minorities.
 (718) 596-0342; fax (718) 596-1328
 alpinfo@alp.org www.alp.org

AIDS Action

Lobbies for programs and research funding.
 (202) 530-8030; fax: (202) 530-8031
 aidsaction@aidsaction.org www.aidsaction.org

ACT UP

Chapter-based advocacy group. Survive AIDS (Formerly ACT UP/Golden Gate)
 (415) 252-9200; fax: (415) 252-9277
 actup@actupgg.org www.actupgg.org

BiNet USA

National bisexual organization.
 (202) 986-7186
 BiNetUSA@aol.com www.binetusa.org

Bisexual Resource Center

Information and news about bisexuality.
 (617) 424-9595
 brc@biresource.org www.biresource.org

Black Coalition on AIDS

Information for African Americans with AIDS in the San Francisco Bay area.
 (415) 346-2364
 bcoa@bcoa.org www.bcoa.org

Black Lesbian Support Group

Information and support.
 (202) 797-3593
 blsg@blsg.org www.blsg.org

Family Pride Coalition

Support for families of lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgendered people.
 (619) 296-0199; fax: (619) 296-0699
 director@familypride.org www.familypride.org

Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund

Works to elect openly gay and lesbian officials.
 (202) 842-8679; fax: (202) 289-3863
 swiesen@victoryfund.org www.victoryfund.org

Gay Asian and Pacific Islander Men of New York (GAPIMNY)

Social, political, and educational forum for gay, bisexual, and questioning Asian and Pacific Islander men and transgender people in the New York City area.
 (212) 802-RICE
 gapimny@gapimny.org www.gapimny.org

Gay Asian Pacific Alliance

Support network for gay & bisexual Asian/Pacific Islanders.
 (415) 282-4272
 tommy@gapa.org http://gapa.org

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

Chapter-based organization that fights anti-gay bias in K-12 schools.
 (212) 727-0135; fax: (212) 727-0254
 glsen@glsen.org www.glsen.org

Gay Men of African Decent

Information and advocacy group.
 (212) 828-1697
 gmad@aol.com www.gmad.org

Human Rights Campaign (HRC)

Political action committee.
 (202) 628-4160; fax (202) 347-5323
 hrc@hrc.org www.hrcusa.org

International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC)

Aims to advance the human rights of people and communities subject to discrimination or abuse on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status.
 (415) 255-8680; fax: (415) 255-8662
 iglhrc@iglhrc.org www.iglhrc.org

Intersex Society of North America

Advocacy and education.
 (707) 283-2170
 info@isna.org www.isna.org

Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Organization (LLEGO)

Dedicated to improving the status of LGBT Latinas/os in the areas of education, health care, and public policy.
 (202) 408-5380; fax: (202) 408-8478
 moq@llego.org www.llego.org

1994 Max Ramirez wins a Pulitzer Prize for cartooning. Gays and lesbians protest, pointing to anti-gay cartoons.	1994 Steven Gendel is the first U.S. journalist to disclose he is gay on a major network when he outs himself during an NBC broadcast of the Stonewall anniversary.	the news industry toward granting health benefits to the partners of gays and lesbians and unmarried heterosexual couples.	1995 <i>Capital Gay</i> magazine folds.
1994 <i>The Washington Blade</i> reports similarities in a series of murders along the East Coast. The FBI credits the newspaper with being the first to suggest that the crimes are the work of a serial killer targeting gay men.	1994 NLGJA issues its domestic partners benefits guide, contributing to a movement in	1995 <i>Gay Times</i> goes on sale for the first time.	1995 American University professor Rodger Streitmatter publishes "Unspeakable, the Rise of the Gay and Lesbian Press in America."
		1995 "Gaytime TV" launches on Rainbow Television Network in the United Kingdom.	

The Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force (LGIRTF)

Chapter-based legal resource and advocacy group.

(212) 818-9639; fax: (212) 573-6075

info@lgrtf.org www.lgrtf.org

Log Cabin Republicans

Chapter-based gay and lesbian Republican organization and political action committee.

Kevin Ivers, Director of Public Affairs:

(202) 347-5306 x12; fax: (202) 347-5224

info@lcr.org www.lcr.org

National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum

(510) 302-0930; fax: (510) 302-0933

natblkforum@aol.com

National Minority AIDS Council

Provides HIV/AIDS capacity building assistance to groups of color.

(202) 483-6622; fax: 202-483-1135

info@nmac.org www.nmac.org

National Youth Advocacy Coalition

LGBT youth advocacy organization.

(202) 319-7596; fax: (202) 319-7365

nyac@nyacyouth.org www.nyacyouth.org

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

Provides support, education, advocacy through 440+ chapters.

(202) 467-8180; fax: (202) 467-8194

info@pflag.org www.pflag.org

Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL)

Metropolitan Washington, D.C. LGBT youth organization.

(202) 546-5940; fax: (202) 544-1306; TTY: (202) 546-7796

smyal@aol.com www.smyal.org

South Asian Lesbian And Gay Association of New York (SALGA)

Social and political group for LGBT who trace their descent from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tibet as well as people of South Asian descent from countries such as Guyana, Trinidad and Kenya.

(212) 358-5132

salganyc@hotmail.com www.salganyc.org

Trikone

Support group for lesbian and gay South Asians.

(408) 270-8776; fax: (408) 274-2733

trikone@rahul.net www.trikone.org

EDUCATIONAL

The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS)

University-based research center dedicated to the study of historical, cultural, and political issues of LGBT.

(212) 817-1955

clags@gc.cuny.edu http://web.gsuc.cuny.edu/clags

International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)

Gender identity resource organization.

(781) 899-2212; fax: (781) 899-5703

info@ifge.org www.ifge.org

National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education

A resource for colleges and universities seeking curriculum for LGBT, climate improvement on campuses, and policy changes, program and development of LGBT Office/Centers.

http://www.lgbtcampus.org

National Institute for Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Education

Providing educational programs to assist individuals, families, communities of faith, corporations, and professionals facing GLBT issues.

(816) 960-7200

vbuckley@thenationalinstitute.org www.thenationalinstitute.org

HEALTH

Asian & Pacific Islander Partnership for Health

Provides API HIV/AIDS prevention intervention in Washington, D.C.

(202) 986-2393; fax: (202) 986-7423

apiph@zzapp.org www.apiph.org

Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS

Provides API HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention in the New York City area and national capacity building assistance.

(212) 620-7287; fax: (212) 620-7323

www.apicha.org

Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team

API HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention in the Los Angeles area and national capacity building assistance.

(213)553-1899; fax: (213) 553-1833

apaitmain@aol.com

http://members.aol.com/apaitmain/apait.htm

Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center

Largest organization in the country providing education, support and advocacy for Asians and Pacific Islanders living with or at-risk for HIV and AIDS.

(415) 292-3400; fax (415) 292-3404;

TTY: (415) 292-3410

info@apiwellness.org www.apiwellness.org

1995

Canada forms the National Gay and Lesbian Journalists Association with ties to the U.S. parent group.

1995

NLJGA and the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation publish Another Perspective: A report on Gay and Lesbian Issues in "Electronic Journalism." The survey reveals most

respondents are unimpressed with the quality and extent of coverage of gay issues.

1995

Gay and lesbian reporters face a worldwide pattern of press freedom violations, according to the report, "Double Jeopardy, Homophobic Attacks on the Press, 1990-1995," by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

1996

Michael Fredericksen becomes NLGJA's first executive director. NLGJA national headquarters moves to Washington, D.C.

1997

NLJGA publishes Stylebook Addenda: Gay/Lesbian Terminology.

1997

The German Association of Gay and Lesbian Journalists is formed.

1997

The Associated Press photo coverage of pride parades reaches beyond the usual cities to include a rainbow banner in Lansing, Mich., at "Free 2B Me," the Michigan Pride March for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights.

HEALTH (continued)

Filipino Task Force on AIDS
Assistance for Filipinos with HIV and AIDS and their families.
(415) 920-2630
pinoy@ftfa.org <http://www.ftfa.org>

Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA)
Medical resource center and advocacy organization.
(415) 255-4547; fax: (415) 255-4784
info@glma.org www.glma.org

Gay Men's Health Crisis
AIDS/HIV resource, support and advocacy.
(212) 367-1210; fax: (212) 367-1236
martina@gmhc.org www.gmhc.org

Lesbian Community Cancer Project
Information on cancer and treatment
(773) 561-4662; fax: (773) 561-1830
info@lccp.org www.lccp.org

Life Foundation
HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention for Asians and Pacific Islanders
in Honolulu.
(808) 521-2437; fax (808) 521-1552
mail@lifefoundation.org www.lifefoundation.org

Malama Pono-Kaua'i AIDS Project
HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention for Asians and Pacific Islanders
in Lihu'e, HI, and national capacity building assistance.
(808) 246-9577; fax: (808) 246 9588
malmpno@aloha.net www.malama-pono.org

National Native American AIDS Prevention Center
Works with among American Indians and Alaska Natives on issues
related to HIV and AIDS.
(510) 444-2051; fax (510) 444-1593
information@nnaapc.org www.nnaapc.org

Native American AIDS Center
A project of the American Health Center. Provides AIDS education and
prevention for Native Americans and Alaskan natives in San Francisco.
415-522-2460; fax: (415) 522-2470
www.uihbi.org/page12.html

LEGAL

ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project
Legislation/civil-rights.
(212) 549-2627; fax (212) 549-2650
lgbthiv@aclu.org www.aclu.org/issues/gay/hmg1.html

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund (LLDEF)
Legal and civil-rights organization.
(212) 809-8585; fax: (212) 809-0055
lambdalegal@lambdalegal.org www.lambdalegal.org

National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)
Litigators.
(415) 392-6257; fax: (415) 392-8442
info@nclrights.org www.nclrights.org

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF)
Civil-rights.
(202) 332-6483; fax: (202) 332-0207;
TTY: (202) 332-6219
nglft@nglftf.org www.nglftf.org

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN)
Legal-aid and watchdog group.
(202) 328-3244; fax: (202) 797-1635
sldn@sldn.org www.sldn.org

Transgender Law and Policy Institute
Transgender legal resource.
(718) 624-4259; fax (718) 625-7216
pcurrah@brooklyn.cuny.edu www.transgenderlaw.org

MEDIA

Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE)
Information for media on covering gay families.
(415) 861-KIDS; fax: (415) 255-8345
colage@colage.org www.colage.org

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)
Promotes fair, accurate and inclusive media coverage. Includes the Digital Queers
Initiative, a resource for the high-tech industry.
(212) 629-3322, (800) GAYMEDIA; fax: (212) 629-3225
glaad@glaad.org www.glaad.org

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA)
Resource for news industry; chapter-based.
(202) 588-9888; fax: (202) 588-1818
info@nlgja.org www.nlgja.org

Rainbow Query
Search engine for LGBT Internet.
www.rainbowquery.com

RELIGIOUS

Cathedral of Hope Congregations
Locations in many cities.
(214) 351-1901 x203 or (800) 501-HOPE;
fax: (214) 351-6099
kmartin@cathedralofhope.com www.cathedralofhope.com

Work Place Benefits Becoming More Inclusive

By Sherry Boschert

When Tony Lonefight's partner of nine years, Brian Myer, developed gallstones, Lonefight watched helplessly as Myer suffered excruciating pain.

Myer had no health insurance from his employer, a small gay newspaper. Lonefight's employer – a Knight-Ridder paper – extended benefits to heterosexual spouses of employees but not to same-sex domestic partners, who cannot get a marriage license. The couple did not have an extra \$3,000 for emergency room care, so they endured the pain, hoping the stone would pass. Luckily, it did.

"It's tough to see your partner in pain. But it's tougher to justify the attitude that says this pain is necessary because he's gay, because he's my partner, instead of his spouse," Lonefight wrote in a letter to the board of directors of the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA).

A trend toward adoption of domestic partner benefits in the past decade is making it less likely that lesbian and gay journalists have to face a crisis such as Lonefight's. In 1994, only 10 media companies extended health benefits to domestic partners of employees. By 1997 that number increased to 27, and by September 2000 at least 71 media companies and unions offered domestic partner benefits to employees at more than 1,100 newspapers, television and radio stations, magazines, wire services and online news providers.

Lonefight wrote his letter to NAJA to support a request from the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA), which is soliciting endorsements of domestic partner benefits as an issue of fairness. The NLGJA so far has contacted nearly a dozen journalism organizations seeking statements such as this recent response from the Journalism and Women Symposium: "JAWS believes that providing domestic partner benefits is a step toward providing equal pay for equal work for everyone in the news industry."



The adoption of domestic partner benefits in the news industry reflects larger societal trends. Gays and lesbians became more outspoken in the 1990s. Polls show the public as a whole became more accepting of lesbians and gays, especially on the issue of fair treatment in the work place. Corporate America began to embrace domestic partner benefits so that by September 2000, 99 (20 percent) of the Fortune 500 companies offered domestic partner benefits, more than four times as many as did three years ago.

The NLGJA lobbied the news industry for domestic partner benefits, collecting data and producing educational pamphlets on the topic in 1994, 1997 and 1999. Regular updates are posted at <http://www.nlgja.org/pubs/DP/DPintro>. Despite the wider availability of domestic partner benefits, NLGJA considers the struggle for fair work place policies far from over. The federal government taxes employees for the cost of domestic partner benefits, making health insurance more expensive for partners than for spouses of workers. Domestic partner benefits do not begin to address dozens of state and federal rights conveyed to spouses by marriage that are unavailable to domestic partners.

Some of those issues are beginning to be addressed by state courts and legislatures, as well as federal lawmakers. Court cases seeking legalization of same-sex marriage in Hawaii and Vermont prompted Congress to pass the Defense of Marriage Act defining married couples as a man and a woman, and a number of states adopted similar laws.

In December 1999, the Hawaii Supreme Court declared the same-sex marriage lawsuit in that state moot and reinstated a law making marriage available only to heterosexual couples. In April 2000, Vermont became the first state to grant gays and lesbians civil unions with the same rights as marriage.

Meanwhile, Canada rewrote its definition of common-law marriage so that any couple living together for more than a year has equal rights, gay or heterosexual.

1997

NLGJA issues an updated domestic partner benefits guide. *The Washington Post* refuses to extend benefits to domestic partners. The Hearst media group and Knight-Ridder agree to offer domestic partnership benefits.

1997

For the first time, advertising spending in the gay press reaches \$100 million, according to Mulryan Nash, a New York gay-themed ad agency that tracked the totals in the 1990s.

1998

The annual NLGJA convention in Las Vegas draws 525 people.

1998

Gay Parent magazine begins online, then adds a print version.

1999

Xiomara A. Sosa joins NLGJA as its second executive director, the first Latina and the first lesbian to hold the job.

Most U.S. gays and lesbians see domestic partner benefits not as a panacea but as a step toward equality in the work place, a step that some major media companies such as Gannett, The Associated Press and NBC have yet to take.

A few media companies have embraced domestic partner benefits half-heartedly. Lonefight's employer, Knight-Ridder, in 1997 gave its papers permission to offer domestic partner benefits. More than half of Knight-Ridder's papers opted to offer these benefits, but many declined. Two other major media companies — Hearst and the Washington Post

Co. — offer domestic partner benefits only in some (not all) of their divisions.

Yet most media companies that adopt domestic partner benefits do so corporate-wide. And with the number of media companies that offer these benefits growing six-fold in the past six years, the momentum for domestic partner benefits is likely to continue.

Sherry Boschert works in the San Francisco bureau of the International Medical News Group. She is also a board member of NLGJA. She can be reached at: sherrybo@pacbell.net.

(PULITZER continued from page 7)

Sometimes, the attacks on gays are plainly mean-spirited and oblivious to the pain they cause. In some cases an unholy mix of anger and fear suffuse the language of those who condemn gays and lesbians as immoral. ...

But opposition to same-sex marriage or domestic partnerships comes in many shadings, and it is useful to distinguish those who hate from those whose opposition has other origins. ...

It is the Catholic teaching that sex is a gift meant for the purposes of procreation and that sex indulged in for other reasons is a misuse of that gift. Thus, sex outside of marriage is not condoned. Even sex within marriage when the possibility of procreation has been blocked by birth control is not condoned. Gay sex, in this view, does not fall into the category of permissible sex.

It is possible to disagree with this view while still recognizing it to be a legitimate doctrine of a major religion aimed at providing guidance in the chaotic realm of human sexuality. ...

At the same time, opponents of same-sex marriage have an obligation to see through to the humanity of a vulnerable minority. ... For each of us, it is normal to be who we are, whether we are heterosexual or homosexual. ... And the sooner we recognize it the better. ...

There are among us already those eager to sharpen the swords of conflict on the issue of same-sex marriage.

But the people of Vermont are in this together. Opponents and supporters of the Supreme Court's ruling are part of the same community, and as the discussion moves forward it is important to cultivate a charitable view of those on the other side. That way, however the issue is resolved, Vermont will be a better place in the end.

Dean's courage (April 30, 2000)

During the four-month process leading to passage of the civil union bill last week, attention was focused first on the Supreme Court, then on the Legislature.

Last week Gov. Howard Dean signed the bill into the law, and his comments brought the focus to him and to the long journey he has traveled since last December.

The entire state of Vermont has traveled a long journey from the time the Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples had a constitutional right to benefits equal to those enjoyed by heterosexual couples. Dean's journey was emblematic.

At first, he didn't want to discuss the issue at all. ...

After the Supreme Court decision Dean's unease was evident. He acknowledged that the issue made him "uncomfortable," and his language, cautious and clumsy at the same time, reflected the unease many Vermonters felt in talking about homosexuality and gay rights.

But once Dean had established the position that the issue was one of civil rights and that he favored civil unions, the strength of his convictions grew. ...

During the debate, advertising replete with lies, innuendo and bigotry appeared, and like many Vermonters Dean was outraged. The hatred that emerged among a small minority of opponents made it all the more clear to Dean, as it did with many legislators, that the civil unions bill was necessary. ...

(Dean said in a speech:) "I believe this bill enriches all of us, as we look with new eyes at a group of people who have been outcasts for many, many generations." ...

But even if he was reluctant at the outset to face the issue, he and the Legislature did not shrink from the duty they saw before them. For Vermonters that is a cause for pride.

<p>1999 New York ad agency Mulryan Nash announces the annual leap in advertising in gay and lesbian publications, saying some \$120 million in revenue is spent in 152 newspapers and magazines. Total 1998 newspaper ad revenues are \$43.9 billion, according to the Newspaper Association of America.</p>	<p>2000 NLGJA's 10th anniversary. The organization has 1,000 members in 19 U.S. chapters and in Germany and Canada.</p>	<p>SOURCES: National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association University of Southern California library Web site South Bank University, London Web site Sears Queer History Timeline The Mattachine Society</p>
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SEARCHING FOR DIVERSITY IN THE NEWS

News Watch Submission Form

Check One: Good Bad Ugly

Title of work: _____

Pub./broadcast _____ Date: _____

Source of work (news outlet name/address or URL): _____

Author/Producer of the work: _____

Your comments about the work (attach second page if necessary): _____

Suggested contacts for comment (i.e. media critics, community leaders, scholars):

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ & email: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ & email: _____

Your Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ & email: _____

Affiliation: NABJ AAJA NAHJ NAJA NLGJA

Other: _____ University: _____

Submissions will not be returned. Send form and submission to:

*News***Watch**

409 13th St., 9th Floor • Oakland, CA 94612

Phone: (510) 839-2807 • Fax: (510) 891-9565 • **newsproj@sirius.com**

The News Watch project was established with support from The Ford Foundation. News Watch is a joint project of the Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism, the Native American Journalists Association, the National Association of Black Journalists, the Asian American Journalists Association, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association.



NEWS WATCH NEEDS YOUR EYES AND EARS!

We are seeking your nomination of print stories, headlines, photos or broadcast stories ranging from the good, to the bad, to the ugly that involve the coverage of people of color, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities. Selected submissions may be featured in our journal or on our Web site.

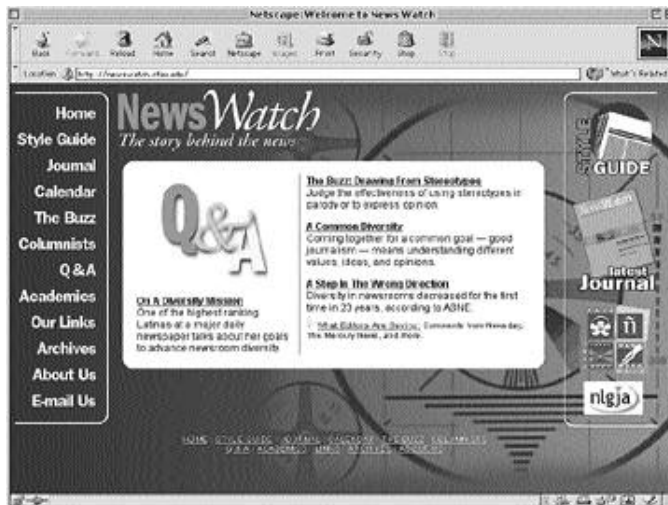
News Watch takes The Good, The Bad and The Ugly and turns them into learning tools so that The Good is encouraged and The Bad and Ugly don't get repeated. The project provides constructive criticism aimed at strengthening all of our reporting skills.

News Watch is a clearinghouse of information on — and a place for dialogue about — diversity in the news. We are also a resource for journalists and educators seeking fair and relevant

news coverage of communities that are traditionally overlooked and/or represented in a stereotypical manner. Fill out the form on page 14 and attach it to the work you want us to review.

This is an ongoing effort. If you find yourself nodding in agreement with a story, send it to us as an example of Good coverage. If you furrow your brow, send it to us as an example of Bad coverage. If you shake your head in disgust, send it to us as an example of Ugly coverage.

Keep up with what journalists across the nation are talking about at
<http://newswatch.sfsu.edu>



News Watch and its Web site are projects operated by journalists, for journalists.

The Web site features engaging discussions on hot topics in the news media. Join us on “The Buzz” as we explore good, bad and ugly journalism, and how we can do better.

Also check out our “Q&A” section with influential news media movers and shakers, and read what our Advisory Council members are saying in “Columnists.”

Don't forget to refer to our online Diversity Style Guide, which will continue to be expanded this year, and to our calendar listing.

In the future, watch for postings of award-winning stories by and about ethnic minorities, and a section on “Today in the Journalistic History of People of Color.”

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

The Good

NLGJA President Addresses Coverage Issues (14Mar01)

Robert Dodge, president of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association sent letters of congratulations to two newspapers that featured a series of articles on their local lesbian and gay communities: *Florida Today* (Melbourne) and the *Roanoke (VA) Times*.

Addressing the editor of *Florida Today*, Dodge wrote, "As a fellow journalist, and as national president of NLGJA, I found your series presented a fair and balanced look at the gay community."

Dodge went on to say, "All too often news

organizations view gay and lesbian coverage as a one-story, or one-project experience. I would encourage you to make the series a beginning rather than an end. There are plenty of good stories in the gay and lesbian community; and because gay people are everywhere, you'll find that cultivating sources will also pay dividends with non-gay community coverage."

<http://www.flatoday.com>

<http://www.roanoke.com/roatimes/livinggay>

The Bad

Diane Whipple was referred to as the "roommate" of Sharon Smith even though the women were life-partners. The headline of the *San Francisco Chronicle's* above-the-fold story, Feb. 7, 2001, read: "Dog Owners Belong in Jail, Partner Says," while the deck read, "Mauling victim's roommate hires attorney to monitor probe."