Special Edition
December, 1992

This person wants:
A chance to work,
a place to live
and a little privacy

This person wants:
To perpetuate bigotry
to impose his religious views on others
and to undermine the right to privacy.

Which is demanding special privileges?

Reprinted with permission of the Anchorage Daily News
Extra! Extra!

Anchorage Assembly continues taking testimony on the Lesbian and Gay Rights issue.

This special edition of Identity's NorthView is published in response to the ongoing Assembly hearings on Lesbian and Gay Rights. The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily indicate the opinions of Identity, the Board or its members. Publication in this newsletter does not reflect in any way the sexual orientation of the writers, unless otherwise stated.

For everyone on your Holiday List - NorthView -
a proud voice, a powerful connection
(not your average box of chocolates)
The Battle Begins
by Jaime Rodriguez

More than 700 people gathered at the Loussac Library Tuesday night to give testimony before the Anchorage Assembly concerning the proposed gay rights ordinances. Supporters began gathering at 3:00 p.m. and filled two-thirds of the Assembly Chambers. A large group in opposition was forced to fill the Wilda Marston Theatre. People on both sides continued to fill the lobby until the Fire Marshall closed down the space and ordered people out. The Assembly pledged that the public hearing would continue next week, and every week until everyone who wants to testify has had a chance.

Assembly members asked several important questions of testifiers from each side. Concern was expressed about the statistics each side claimed were true. The Assembly requested copies of the source studies of the statistics, and expressed that all documentation would be appreciated.

The Assembly appeared to understand the legal ramifications of the proposed ordinances. They recognized the poor logic and misinformation present in much of the testimony against the assembly did appear a little skeptical that these ordinances would actually help gay people. One assemblyman suggested that these ordinances may escalate the discrimination.

Supporters testified with dignity, grace and humor. Herman Coen, Jr., Karen Carlisle and Allison Mendel were particularly effective at reaching the Assembly. One anonymous military women came out publicly, at great risk to her job. Another notable supporter was a straight fisherman with a lesbian sister.

About 300 of the 700 people who showed were in support of the ordinances. It is very important that during the next week, every straight and gay person who is in favor of these ordinances plan on attending the public hearings. Please note: about 2,500 people attend Jerry Prevo's church. A coalition of 60 evangelical churches are against gay rights in Anchorage. This represents at least 10,000 people. We must be sure that the Assembly knows that this group does not speak for the whole Anchorage community.

Testimony continues Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1992 at the Assembly Chambers located in the Loussac Library (ground level). The Public Hearing portion of the Assembly meetings generally begin at 6:30 p.m. The seating is first come, first served. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. Early arrival is encouraged: Lesbian & Gay supporters are likely to begin gathering at 3:00 p.m. For more information, or to get involved in the ongoing organizing against hate, call EQUAL, The Alaska Gay & Lesbian Task Force, at 907-651-1755.

Jaime Rodriguez is on the National Steering Committee of the March on Washington, is involved with EQUAL, Queer Nation and sits on the Board of Identity.

A Journey
by Lori Stroup

To say nothing will be accomplished politically may be true, but for me, something equally important is taking place: it has been a true confirmation of my beliefs, values and my life as a woman and as a lesbian.

December 1st, 1992: just part of a journey toward the lives we deserve to live, though hard and sometimes painful. We have come together as sisters and brothers to face our oppressors, to stand and say "We will be heard."

At 4:00pm I arrived at the Assembly Chambers, greeted by many friendly faces. It was very comforting -- I was scared at what was going to happen that evening. Although none of the opposition had yet arrived, you could still feel our apprehension about their attitudes and numbers, and, of course, the question: How far will they go?

By 5:00 we were all seated. The room was full of gays, lesbians and allies. In those first few hours, the giddiness of a long overdue victory enveloped every part of me. I noticed as I looked around the chambers at the smattering of our "foes," that they appeared pale and weak even in the light.

As we rapidly moved through the business meeting the energy was high in anticipation of public testimony from both sides. The Assembly recessed after the business meeting and before beginning the public testimony and, curious, I gathered some friends and headed toward the Wilda Marston Theatre, "the enemy camp." In the harshness of the hateful stabs the illusion of eminent victory, which had before enveloped me, left as quickly as it came.

Eight-twenty: public testimony on proposal AO 92-115, 116 began. During these testimonies the room was hit with a wide range of emotions. I personally experienced anger and then pretty much on a moment to moment basis. After all, my friends and I were being compared to drug users, prostitutes and non-Americans. Beside being accused of liking little boys and girls, living a "deathstyle" of disease, purposely spreading AIDS, and having half the syphils and herpes in the world, etc. I soon realized that despite the hate I was seeing, hearing and feeling (which was pointed at us), fear was their motivating factor. Hearing these people fanaticity speak their minds and noting how foolish they sounded, I was no longer angry but I did remember someone saying "Don't interrupt a fool when he is speaking." The "opposition" just seemed ridiculous.

Eleven pm: the evening was over. So here we are hanging in the wind 'til next Tuesday, Dec. 8th.

Please bring your friends.

Lori Stroup is a lesbian feminist and politically active and the Community.
"The sodomites control the government...the way the jews used to have all the power"

[The following letter was received by a local restaurant and found its way to the offices of the NorthView. It is reprinted here in its entirety, as received. Ed.]

Dear Mr. Manger,

I am writing you to tell you how concerned I am for the safety of the children and good people of Alaska. My Husband and my children and myself visit your business regular and it came to my attention last Sunday of how easy it is for normal people to be contacting the Aids disease.

I know that some of your employees are sodomites because we have seen some of them that don't even care if some of your customers know that. I am more concerned because when I saw Dr. Prevo on television, he let us know that the government has lied about this and that this can be transmitted in the air or specially by people who touch food that we can eat in a restaurant or take home and cook.

We are making lists and so are other people in our group of businesses to write and let them know that if we aren't comfortable we will have to go to another business. We are also videoing the television and when we figure out where people work who are either sodomites or people who say they are not but are testifying in favor of special rights for these decedents of Sodom and Gomorrah, we will send each business a list of these names so that they will have a chance to take care of these problems. We know that many of the people who are testifying and tell people they are not sodomites really are but don't want other people to know that they are mentally sick.

We hope we can convince to be your customer and that the other church members will not have to stop. Did you know the number of churches in this area is almost 400. Even if each church only had 500 people (many are much larger) you would not want to loose that many customers. Would you? Please protect my children from these people. They should be quarantined but they control the government and the newspaper and television the way the jews used to have all the power. It is up to all the decent people like you to help get them out of Alaska before they take over every thing here to.

---

**Gay rights**

**Here's what the law won't do**

On Tuesday night, the Anchorage Assembly will hold a public hearing on whether to add gay men and lesbians to the groups protected by city law against discrimination. What are the arguments against amending the city's civil rights code?

1. The amendment will give homosexuals "special" rights.

Wrong: The city law provides for equal opportunity, not special privileges. The amendment would protect gays against discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, education and financing practices, just as it now guarantees equal treatment regardless of race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status or physical handicap.

2. The amendment will infringe on the rights of heterosexual people.

This is the favorite argument of the self-proclaimed "tolerant" person who doesn't wish gays to lose jobs or housing, but doesn't want to be forced to associate with them, either, at least knowingly. It's the argument the military uses: The military knows gays are there, it just wants them to stay in the closet.

The passage of this amendment, or, for that matter, the lifting of the ban against gays in the military, does not mean that every gay person is going to come to work in drag, force co-workers to listen to the details of his or her private life or make unwelcome advances. That's a stereotype based on prejudice.

3. Amending the civil rights code will give societal approval to behavior many people feel is wrong.

We protect divorced people from discrimination, though many people believe divorce is a sin. We protect women from discrimination, though many people believe women are not equal to men and should stay home and be subservient. We protect blacks and Jews from discrimination even though people still hold prejudices against them.

A gay rights amendment would not take away anyone's right to practice his or her religion. No one would be forced to approve of homosexuality or even like gay people.

But this is a society of many cultures and many religions, and we don't always agree on right and wrong. Our constitution guarantees freedom from religion as well as freedom of religion.
EQUAL continues to meet every week, Thursday evening, as long as the Assembly hears public testimony on the Lesbian and Gay Rights ordinances.

Come and share the energy, the feelings, the strategy, the wisdom.

Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
3201 Turnagain St. (No. Lgts. West to Turnagain St., South on Turnagain, 4 blocks)

EQUAL
(EQuality Under Alaskan Law)

The Alaskan Gay and Lesbian Task Force

For information, call Jaime: 338-0762 or Herman/Scott: 258-513