**Homosexuality**

**One in five gay or bisexual men has the AIDS virus, according to a study of 8,000 men by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Of those infected, 44 percent were unaware they were HIV-positive. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 8, 2010)***

**A pivotal moment for gay athletes: “I’m a 34-year-old NBA center. I’m black. And I’m gay.” With those three sentences, said Kevin Fallon in TheDailyBeast.com, Jason Collins has become “one of the biggest trailblazers in sports history” – the first openly gay athlete currently playing in a major American team sport. In a first-person cover story in Sports Illustrated, the 7-foot-tall, 255-pound Collins said he’d grown tired of living in fear and denying his sexuality. “I wish I wasn’t the kid in the classroom raising his hand and saying, ‘I’m different,’” Collins wrote. But since no other pro athlete has done it, he said, “I’m raising my hand.” To his immense relief, Collin’s announcement brought an outpouring of support from other NBA plays, said Howard Beck in The New York Times. Proud of @jasoncollins34,” tweeted Los Angeles Lakers star Kobe Bryant. “Don’t suffocate who u r.” Added fellow Laker Steve Nash, “Maximum respect.” *(The Week magazine, May 10, 2013)***

**In a sign of how quickly attitudes are changing, three openly gay Republicans are running for Congress this year. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 30, 2014)***

**Male bats have the highest rate of homosexuality of any mammal. (Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 53)**

**One year ago: The Episcopal Church’s House of Deputies further paved the way for the Rev. V. Gene Robinson to become the church’s first openly gay elected bishop, approving him in a 2-1 vote. (Rocky Mountain News, August 3, 2004)**

**The battle for gay rights has been won: The gay liberation movement has triumphed, said Julian Glover. Last week, Prime Minister David Cameron, a Conservative, hosted a political reception for “lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender Britain” in the garden of No. 10 Downing St. On a lovely summer evening, I and my fellow gays – journalists, politicians, and activists – mingled with Cabinet members, chatting and supping white wine. “The ordinariness of it all confirmed a wonderful thing: the country’s very rapid and far-reaching acceptance of sexual difference – with little of the religious and cultural hysteria that has accompanied the struggle in, for instance, the U.S.” No single party can now claim to be the natural home of the gay vote. It’s true, of course, that the Labor Party “did much of the legislative hard work that got us here,” and gay-rights campaigners will always be grateful to it. Yet now British politics as a whole are inclusive. Gays need no longer vote Labor or Liberal Democrat out of “fear of what a Tory government might do.” Gays do continue to face some discrimination – we still can’t give blood, for example. But “the fact that someone is gay or lesbian need no longer be their primary defining characteristic.” We can be ordinary. We can even – gasp – be Conservatives. (*The Week magazine, July 2-9, 2010)***

**Catholicism: The purge of gay priests: Under Pope Benedict XVI, the Catholic Church appears to be taking a "self-destructive path," said the Chicago Sun-Times in an editorial. In a misguided response to the sex-abuse scandals of recent years, the new pope is apparently about to release an "instruction" banning any man with homosexual inclinations -- even one who is celibate -- from becoming a priest. The pope has already dispatched investigators to the U.S. to conduct "apostolic visitations" of the seminaries where young men train for the priesthood, to weed out homosexuality wherever they find it. Given the large, if unknown percentage of priests who are gay, and the dire shortage of candidates for the priesthood, the proposed purge seems a classic case of the Catholic Church "cutting off its nose to spite its face." Not so, said Amy Welborn in The New York Times. The pope's cleanup of America's seminaries is "about far more than homosexuality. And it's badly needed." The seminaries are supposed to prepare priests for lives of charity and virtue, and they have done a poor job of screening out troubled young men. In addition to all the sex-abuse scandals, the church has recently seen its priests arrested for embezzlement, drunken driving, and even public lewdness. Catholics deserve to have spiritual leaders "who aren't engaged in an eternal and ego-driven struggle with their own problems." It's also important to view this papal decree in context, said John Allen, also in the Times. In Italian culture, the purpose of a law is not to proscribe actual behavior but to "describe a perfect state of affairs from which many people will inevitably fall short." So "when the Vatican makes statements like 'no gays in the priesthood,' it doesn't actually mean 'no gays in the priesthood.'" What an absurd argument, said Andrew Sullivan in Andrewsullivan.com. "The force behind this new discrimination is not Italian," but rather an authority-loving German. He's acting at the behest of "hard-right Catholic intellectuals" in the U.S., who are adamant about blaming gay priests for the church's scandals. But this "fatwa" against gays will solve nothing. The real problem is men with "stunted sexual development," lured to the priesthood by its requirement of celibacy. Furtive, deceptive, and self-loathing, these men are sexually attracted to children, not other men. Blaming the thousands of dedicated gay priests for the crimes of these pedophiles is "manifestly unjust." And to discriminate against gay men not for what they do but for who they are is nothing but "bigotry. Period." *(The Week magazine, October 7, 2005)***

**I was the first person to know that my daughter, Chastity, was a lesbian, but I was the last person she told. I didn't make it easy for her, and I'm not proud of that. *(Cher, in More)***

**The Pentagon no longer classifies homosexuality as a mental disorder. Instead, it officially groups homosexuality under “conditions, circumstances, and defects” not conducive to military service, including bed-wetting, sleep-walking, dyslexia, stuttering, and obesity. *(Newsweek, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 8, 2006)***

**An unprecedented 71.3 percent of college freshmen believe that same-sex couples should have the right to marry, up from 64.9 percent in 2009, according to a new UCLA survey. *(TheDailyBeast.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 17, 2012)***

**Archie Comics announced that after 70 years, Riverdale High would enroll its first openly gay character, a cute blond guy named Kevin Keller. The company said it was part of an effort to keep the series “current and inclusive.” *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 7, 2010)***

**Gays can’t be “converted”: Can gays and lesbians willfully change their sexual orientation? A few organizations, often founded by religious conservatives, contend that so-called reparative therapy can indeed help gays go straight. But after examining more than 80 studies on sexual orientation change, the American Psychological Association concluded that the treatments didn’t work and urge psychologists to steer gay clients away from them. At best, “certain studies suggested that some individuals learned how to ignore or not act on their homosexual attractions,” Judith Glassgold, who led the group’s investigatory panel, tells CNN.com. At worst, the treatments backfire, leaving patients depressed, filled with self-loathing, and even considering suicide. But at the same time, the APA said, therapists cannot just disregard patients’ religious faith. To reduce the conflict between their sexual orientation and spiritual outlook, therapists can suggest alternatives to gay patients, such as embracing celibacy or finding a church that welcomes homosexuals. “Secular therapists have to recognize that some people will choose their faith over their sexuality,” Glassgold says. *(The Week magazine, August 28 – September 4, 2009)***

**I'm proud to be gay, and I consider being gay among the greatest gifts God has given me. (Tim Cook, Apple CEO)**

**Panaji, India: "Curing" gays: India drew international condemnation this week after a Goa state official from the ruling Hindu Nationalist Party claimed that his government was setting up clinics to "cure" homosexuals and make them "normal." Homosexual acts are illegal in India, and last year the Supreme Court reversed a lower-court ruling that would have legalized same-sex relations. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who was visiting India this week, denounced the Goa proposal. "I am proud to stand for the equality of all people," said Ban, "including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender." (*The Week magazine, January 23, 2015)***

**Good week for: Gaydar, after Dutch scientists found that gay men and women are more detail-oriented than heterosexuals, which can help them detect the sexual preference of others. “This is the first time that scientific proof has been found for the existence of a gaydar mechanism,” researcher Lorenza Colzato. *(The Week magazine, June 11, 2010)***

**Gay people have a different role than other minority groups. Very few black kids have ever had to worry about telling their parents that they were black. *(Barney Frank)***

**Walt Disney Company will not be donating its usual small grants to local troops of the Boy Scouts of America in 2015 because of the organization's rule banning gay Scout leaders. *(Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 21, 2014)***

**IQ of the dolphin has been estimated to be 100. They like company, fall in love, are occasionally homosexual and sometimes even nymphomaniacal. (*Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 105)***

**To prepare 2.25 million service members for the end of “don’t ask, don’t tell,” the Pentagon has created an educational campaign featuring slide shows, PowerPoint presentations, and lectures. Among the guiding principles: “Standards of conduct apply to everyone regardless of sexual orientation,” and “there is no expectation to change religious or moral views.” *(HuffingtonPost.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 7, 2011)***

**The greatest fears of those around me seemed to stem from the preconceived notion that gay men would not be up to the task of soldiering. I think most will eventually discover that some of the most professional and dedicated soldiers they have known are gay. That said, I am in no rush to tell everyone around me about my sexuality. I suspect that many gays who are serving are like me. We will continue to do our jobs, and may or may not come out. We don’t crave a big announcement, nor do we want to parade our private lives in public. Soldiers, gay or straight, simply tend to be more reserved than that.” *(An anonymous gay soldier, in TheNewRepublic.com)***

**Flamingos and other birds display homosexual behavior, sometimes forming committed same-sex relationships that can involve sex, traveling, living together, and raising young together. (Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 53)**

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**New evidence of a “gay gene”: Heterosexual fruit flies can be turned gay with the flick of a single gene, scientists have discovered. When researchers at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna altered one gene in a female fruit fly, she began avidly pursuing only other females. She seduced other females by tapping their legs, playing them songs with her wings, and licking them – all standard fly seduction techniques. Males that were similarly altered became more passive and turned their sexual attentions exclusively to other males. “A single gene in the fruit fly is sufficient to determine all aspects of the flies’ sexual orientation and behavior,” author Dr. Barry Dickson tells The New York Times. “It’s very surprising.” The results add to a growing body of evidence that sexual orientation may be inborn, although scientists do not know if there is a similar master sexual gene for humans. “The results are so clean and compelling,” says Dr. Michael Weiss of Case Western Reserve University. “This will take the discussion about sexual preferences out of the realm of morality and put it in the realm of science.” *(The Week magazine, June 17, 2005)***

**Turning worms gay: Are some people born gay? In the latest study to support the theory that sexual orientation is biologically determined, University of Utah researchers found that they could turn straight worms gay by altering a single gene. That gene, in the tiny worms’ brains, made female nematode worms suddenly develop an attraction to other females and start “acting male.” Study author Erik Jorgenson tells the London Times that because human brains are so much more complex, you can’t necessarily generalize the findings up the evolutionary scale. But the dramatic turnaround in attraction that altering a single gene can produce, he says, does suggest biology is involved. “It seems possible that if sexual orientation is genetically wired in worms, it would be in people, too.” *(The Week magazine, November 16, 2007)***

**There is no "gay gene" to predict sexuality: The largest-ever study into the link between sexuality and genetics has found that there is no "gay gene" that determines a person's sexual orientation. Instead, same-sex attraction appears to be driven by a complex mix of genetic, cultural, and environmental influences -- just like many other human traits. "Its effectively impossible to predict an individual's sexual behavior from their genome," co-author Ben Neale, from the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, tells CBSNews.com. Homosexuality and bisexuality are a "normal part of variation in our species." The researchers examined the genetic profiles of nearly 480,000 people in the U.K. and U.S. -- about 100 times more than any previous study into genetics and same-sex attraction -- who were also asked whether they had ever had a same-sex partner. The scientists identified five specific genetic variants associated with same-sex behavior, including one linked to the biological pathway for smell and others connected to the regulation of sex hormones. Overall, genetics accounts for 8 to 25 percent of same-sex behavior, when thousands of tiny variations across the whole genome are taken into account, researchers concluded. Sexual orientation "is influenced by genes but not determined by genes," said researcher Brendan Zietsch. But genetic variation does appear to have a stronger influence on same-sex behavior in men than in women, suggesting that female sexuality is more complex. (The Week magazine, September 20, 2019)**

**Geneticist Cassandra Smith suspects that any gene found to cause homosexuality will turn out to have a hidden advantage. “Nature,” she says, “is keeping it around for some reason.” (Denise Grady, in Discover magazine)**

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**Male giraffes are bisexual, and 94 percent of copulations are between two males. (Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 196)**

**A female goose may get in on the act with two romancing homosexual male geese and copulate with both. Both males will then help parent the young. (Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 196)**

**Harris's coming-out success: Neil Patrick Harris always knew he was gay, said Brian Hiatt in Rolling Stone. Even in elementary school, he says, "I had crushes on boys who were a little bit older than me. It was sort of an infatuation, but I didn't know then what to do about it." Growing up in rural New Mexico, Harris had to struggle to understand these feelings on his own. He didn't know anyone who was openly gay, and there were no gay role models on TV. "No, it was always like, 'Oh, cousin Jeffrey. He really should settle down with a girl.' But it was always a dot, dot, dot kind of thing." Harris, 40, who now has a partner and two children, tried to date women and stayed closeted until his early 20s. He publicly came out when he was 33. He initially worried the move would damage his acting career, but since coming out he has been offered only bigger and bigger roles. "Some actors don't get hired because you can't look into their soul and see what they're like, because they're kept guarded. So the coming-out process, given that, is a great move. People know you're sexual and that's who you like, and you're not guarded and sketchy and awkward. I'm intoxicated by people who are really honest about themselves." (The Week magazine, June 6, 2014)**

**San Francisco has the highest concentration of lesbians, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the nation, with 6.2 percent of residents identifying as LGBT. Portland, Oregon, is second with 5.4 percent of residents, and Austin is third with 5.3 percent. Mormon stronghold Salt Lake City is seventh at 4.7 percent -- ahead of New York City, at 4 percent. (The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 3, 2015)**

**Why homophobes hate: People who lash out at gay people with anger and hate are often reacting to repressed homosexual tendencies of their own. That’s the finding of a new study that suggests that many vocal homophobes “protest too much” precisely because deep down “they are fearing their own impulses,” University of Rochester psychologist Richard Ryan tells LiveScience.com. He and his colleagues asked German and American college students a series of questions to judge their attitudes, and those of their parents, toward homosexuality. Then they tested the subjects’ subconscious attraction to the same sex, in part by asking them to rate the attractiveness of men and women in a series of photos while recording how much time they spent looking at each photo. The researchers found that the students who came from the most rigid, anti-gay homes were the most likely to reveal repressed homosexual attraction. This explains why some religious leaders who frequently denounce homosexuality, such as the Rev. Ted Haggard, are later discovered to be engaging in secret homosexual relations, Ryan said. “These are people who are at war with themselves, and they are turning this internal conflict outward.” (The Week magazine, April 27, 2012)**

**The Spirit of Jesus and his teachings is inclusive: exclusion of any kind risks opposing that Spirit. The Kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus was open to those rejected by the religio-political hierarchy of his time. Jesus explicitly invited into his Father’s Kingdom those considered “ritually unclean,” which included the lepers, the lame, “mixed races” (Samaritans) and eunuchs (who were considered sexually aberrant). Jesus invited into the Kingdom those considered inferior and unworthy by the establishment: “Gentiles,” tax collectors, women, “harlots,” slaves, and children. The Spirit of his message was universal and unconditional love. The God’s Kingdom within us and among us is available to all who are willing to enter through faith and love. The inclusive Spirit of Love stretches the boundaries of the human heart to embrace even those we perceive to be “different” and those we perceive to be our enemies. We are willing to allow gays and lesbians to be ministers, members, friends, and contributors in Unity ministries. It is hypocritical to exclude them from participation in the spiritual relationship that is marriage. *(James Gaither, in Contact magazine)***

**77% of Americans say they know someone who is gay or lesbian, up from 42% in 1992. Among people under 30, 84% say they know gays and lesbians. *(CBS News, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 25, 2010)***

**In Europe, openly gay legislators and mayors are becoming commonplace. Eleven openly gay men and women now serve in the British Parliament, and the mayors of Germany’s two largest cities, Berlin and Hamburg, are gay, as is the mayor of Paris. *(Time, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 22, 2010)***

**An Oklahoma college student is suing the state for the right to use the license plate “IM GAY.” Keith Kimmel, 28, says the state discriminated against him by rejecting his vanity plate. “I’m openly gay,” he says. “What better way to tell everybody than to put it on the back of a car?” *(The Week magazine, March 5, 2010)***

**Why some people are gay: Is homosexuality a “lifestyle choice” or an inborn characteristic? Recent scientific research has found strong indications that gay people are born that way, and a new Swedish study has provided the most definitive evidence yet. Detailed analysis of the brains of 50 straight people and 40 gays and lesbians has found that gay men have brains with architecture strikingly like that of straight women. Lesbians’ brains, on the other hand, are similar to those of straight men. In the study, which utilized both MRI and PET scans of the subjects’ brains, researchers found that straight women and gay men both have highly symmetrical brains, with equal-sized right and left hemispheres. In straight men, the right hemisphere is significantly larger than the left. The scans also found intriguing differences in the amygdala, the section of the brain that makes connections between stored information and emotional reactions. In straight women and gay men, the amygdala is rich in connections that allow for sophisticated interplay of thoughts and feelings. In straight men and some lesbians, the amygalala shows more “fight or flight” responses. “It’s a more action-related response than in women,” study author Ivanka Savic of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm tells New Scientist. Researchers believe the brain differences originate in the womb during pregnancy; it appears that exposure to male hormones “masculinizes” the brain, and that when the levels of these hormones are unusually low during the gestation of a boy and high during that of a girl, the child’s sexual orientation becomes gay. *(The Week magazine, July 4-11, 2008)***

**Amsterdam’s Homomonument – a pink, triangle-shaped granite platform on one of the city’s canals – is a memorial to persecuted gays and lesbians. (*Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader: Wise Up!, p. 259)***

**Opposition to gays serving in the military has declined sharply among active-duty U.S. troops. In 2004, 65% were opposed. Today, 51% are opposed. *(Military Times poll, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 19, 2010)***

**The concepts are irrational which hold that homosexual relationships are sinful because “unnatural” and “against the laws of God.” Anything that is found in nature is part of nature and therefore “natural.” Homosexuality has been a part of human behavior for at least as far back as we have recorded history. It is an aspect of human nature. It is part of the biological diversity of the planet. The notion that people “perversely” choose to be homosexual is more unthinking prejudice. At no point in my life did I sit down and decide, “I guess I will be homosexual.” In that regard, what I am sexually was not more my choice than my brown eyes or thinning hair. From my own experience, I can only assume that other humans also are what they are sexually as a matter of biology, as a product of nature. The laws of nature are laws of God, so in that sense it is irrational to claim anything that is part of nature is opposed to God. Morality needs a different and more plausible ground than “nature.” *(James Gaither, in Contact magazine)***

**An NFL first: Las Vegas Raiders defensive lineman Carl Nassib this week became the first active NFL player to publicly declare that he is gay. "I finally feel comfortable to get this off my chest," said Nassib, 28. Entering his sixth season in the NFL, the 6-foot-7 West Chester, Pa., native and Penn State alumnus added that he's "not doing this for attention, I just think that representation and visibility are so important." His announcement drew supporters from the Raiders organization and several teammates. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, and President Biden. In the NFL's 101-year history, several players have come out after retiring from football, and Michael Sam came out before the 2014 draft, but never appeared in a regular-season game. Nassib said he'll donate $100,000 to the Trevor Project, an LGBTQ youth suicide prevention non-profit; 24 hours after he came out, Nassib had the NFL's top-selling jersey. *(The Week magazine, July 2, 2021)***

**Cynthia Nixon says she chose to become a lesbian, said Alex Witchel in The New York Times. “I gave a speech recently to a gay audience, and it included the line ‘I’ve been straight and I’ve been gay, and gay is better,’” says the Sex and the City star. “They tried to get me to change it, because they said it implies that homosexuality can be a choice. I understand that for many people it’s not, but for me it’s a choice, and you don’t get to define my gayness for me.” Nixon came out as a lesbian in 2004, after breaking up with childhood sweetheart Daniel Mozes, with whom she has two children. She’s now engaged to Christine Marinoni, who gave birth to their son last February. Both relationships, she insists, have been equally heartfelt. “When I was in relationships with men, I was in love and in lust with those men. And then I met Christine, and I fell in love and lust with her. I am completely the same person.” She rejects the idea that it’s acceptable to be gay only if you have no choice in the matter. “Why can’t it be a choice? Why is that any less legitimate? It seems we’re just ceding this point to bigots.” *(The Week magazine, February 10, 2012)***

**It is true that passages in the Old Testament and St. Paul’s letters can be cited against homosexuality. However, neither society in general nor Christianity in particular has consistently upheld every position set out in the Old Testament. We have evolved morally beyond certain ideas found in the Old Testament. We no longer seriously advocate or practice execution by stoning of children who curse their parents nor violators of the Sabbath, as is commanded in the Old Testament. Paul admonished slaves to submit to their masters and wives submit to their husbands; we have advanced morally beyond those views. Furthermore, Paul himself famously admitted his own fallibility: “we understand in paret.” Since we evolve spiritually and morally and even St. Paul admitted his fallibility, it is the intellectual and spiritual responsibility of each generation of Christians to work out responsible and loving ethnical guidelines. *(James Gaither, in Contact magazine)***

**No joke – some penguins really are gay, said The New York Times in an editorial. Only last year we broke the story of Roy and Silo, the two male chinstrap penguins at the Central Park Zoo who pair bonded and adopted a chick together. “If emperor penguins are sending us a message about heterosexual marriage, then what are Roy and Silo doing?” *(The Week magazine, September 30, 2005)***

**When asked to guess what percentage of the population are gays or lesbians, Americans estimate, on average, that 25% are. A new, population-based survey puts the actual number of adults who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, or bisexual at 3.5%. *(Gallup Poll, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 10, 2011)***

**An irate Bulgarian farmer is demanding compensation from a dealer who sold him a gay breeding pig. Galen Dobrev says the 220-pound boar’s preferences were clear the moment he got it home. “It was a disgrace,” he said at a court hearing. “All it was interested in was other male pigs.” *(The Week magazine, December 17, 2004)***

**If a person is gay and seeks God and has good will, who am I to judge him? *(Pope Francis)***

**A groundbreaking survey of more than 200,000 Americans has found that 3.5 percent of the population identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. *(Gallup, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 1, 2013)***

**Exodus: “Praying away the gay” doesn’t work: “It takes a lot of courage – and honesty – to admit you were wrong,” and Exodus International has done just that, said Marlo Thomas in HuffingtonPost.com. For 37 years, the controversial Christian ministry was the driving force of the “ex-gay” movement, which maintains that gay men and lesbians can change their sexual orientation through prayer and psychotherapy. But last week, Exodus’s president, Alan Chambers, “joined the ever-increasing chorus of voices in our nation calling for kindness, tolerance, and decency,” and announced his organization’s closure. Apologizing for the “pain and hurt” Exodus had caused, Chambers said he no longer believed that “reparative therapy changes sexual orientation, and in fact does great harm to many people.” The idea of conversion therapy was always absurd, said Susan Milligan in USNews.com. “If one could choose one’s sexual orientation, why make a choice that will make you the target of discrimination, violence, hatred, and even murder?” *(The Week magazine, July 5-12, 2013)***

**60% of registered voters said they would support an openly gay candidate for president. *(Zogby Inter national, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 12, 2008)***

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**At least 30 to 40 percent of Catholic priests in The U. S. are gay, according to multiple estimates by researchers and dozens of interviews with priests. Some are sexually active, and some are not, but priests said the widespread homosexuality within their ranks is an open, though rarely discussed, secret. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 1, 2019)***

**Gay priests: When is a ban not a ban? “Love the sinner, hate the sin.” For decades, said Ellen Goodman in The Boston Globe, this was the teaching of the Catholic Church regarding homosexuals, who were welcomed into the faithful if they refrained from “sinful” sexual activity. Gays, the church reasoned, “do not choose their homosexual condition.” But last week, new pope Benedict XVI essentially “labeled homosexuals themselves as the sin,” announcing that no men with “deeply rooted homosexual tendencies” would be allowed into the priesthood. The Vatican directed seminaries to begin screening for homosexuality, advising that gays could be spotted by their hesitancy to talk about sex and their “trouble relating to their fathers.” For gay Catholics, Benedict has ushered in a new Dark Age, said Andrew Sullivan in Time. “I have known many gay priests,” and nearly all of them were selfless, dedicated servants of Christ. Their experience as “outsiders” in a straight world bred in them extraordinary empathy for the poor and needy, the lonely, and the outcast. Among them was New York City Fire Department chaplain Rev. Mychal Judge, who died while bravely ministering to firefighters at the World Trade Center on 9/11. Are we to believe now that Judge – and thousands of other wonderful men – are no longer fit to serve God? Those priests, sadly, are being scapegoated for the church’s sex-abuse scandal, said religion professor Mark D. Jordan in Newsday. That scandal was not perpetrated by gays, but by pedophiles, who are attracted to children. The new policy is “at best an illusion – at worst cynical spin. Barring homosexuals from the seminary will not prevent pedophiles from being ordained.” *(The Week magazine, December 16, 2005)***

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**Seventy-six countries criminally prosecute homosexual acts, according to a recent study by a gay-rights group. In seven of them, homosexuality is punished by death. *(Time, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 27, 2010)***

**J. Edgar Hoover, Oscar Wilde, Chief Crazy Horse, Pope Paul II, Pope Julius III, Leonard Bernstein, Alexander the Great, Sigmund Freud, Lawrence of Arabia, Plato, Peter Tchaikovsky and Florence Nightingale were all rumored to be gay or bisexual. (Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 53)**

The gay population of Nebraska jumped 71 percent between 2000 and 2005, to a total of 43,000, according to a new analysis of Census Bureau figures. In Kansas, the number of people who said they were gay rose 68 percent, and in Iowa, the increase was 58 percent. Gays are now flocking **to rural states, demographers say; rather, those already there are more willing to acknowledge their sexuality. *(The Atlantic Monthly, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 9, 2007)***

**Seagulls sometimes engage in lesbian mating, resulting in sterile eggs. (Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 196)**

**The scent of sexuality: Straight and gay men have dramatically different responses to odors believed to govern sexual arousal, a new study finds. Using brain scans to detect excitement, Swedish researchers found that homosexual men had no reaction to pheromones -- olfactory sexual signals -- contained in women's sweat. These men were, however, aroused by pheromones distilled from men's sweat. Straight men were sexually aroused by female pheromones, but were turned off by male pheromones. "This shows that reactions to these pheromones are not linked to gender but to sexual preference," says researcher Per Lindstroem of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. Sandra Witelson, an expert on brain anatomy and sexual orientation, says the findings strengthen, but do not prove, the theory that homosexuality is inborn. "It is one more piece of evidence showing that sexual orientation is not learned," she said. *(The Week magazine, May 27, 2005)***

**For the first time ever, U.S. service members were authorized to march in a gay pride event in uniform, after a recent memorandum from the Defense Department made an allowance for a parade last week in San Diego. (Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 3, 2012)**

**There’s nothing wrong with being a gay sheep. Researchers at Oregon Health & Science University learned that the hard way after they killed dozens of homosexual sheep in order to dissect their brains to uncover a cause for their behavior. Several groups, among them PETA, were not amused. (Incidentally, scientists believe that 8 percent of all rams prefer same-sex partners.) *(Armchair Reader: Vitally Useless Information, p. 346)***

**The White House has named Jeremy Bernard as its new social secretary – the first man and the first openly gay person to fill that role. Bernard will organize White House events, including parties and state dinners. (The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 11, 2011)**

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**More than fifteen hundred different species exhibit homosexual behavior. (Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 196)**

**Homosexuality has been recorded in some 1,500 species so far, and been well documented in about a third of these cases; it has been known since the time of Aristotle, who thought he witnessed two male hyenas having sex with one another. But explanations are harder when gay animals (such as some humans and, apparently, some killer whales) never try to mate with the opposite sex. *(The Economist, October 28, 2006)***

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**Teens raised by lesbians are as well adjusted as those raised by straight parents, says a new study. Researchers at the University of Virginia sifted through comprehensive interviews of 12,000 American teenagers, analyzing their rates of depression and anxiety, their school grades, and their rate of sexual activity. The sexual orientation of the teens’ parents, the study found, made no difference. Some social conservatives have questioned whether children raised by gay couples are more likely themselves to be gay. This study did not address that issue, since there was not enough data to draw any comparisons. But researchers found that most important factor in teens’ well-being was having parents who consistently demonstrated their love and caring. “What’s really important,” the authors tell New Scientist, “is the quality of the relationship.” *(The Week magazine, December 3, 2004)***

**Turkeys are also bisexual. (Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 196)**

**Can gays and lesbians willfully change their sexual orientation? A few organizations, often funded by religious conservatives, contend that so-called reparative therapy can indeed help gays go straight. But after examining more than 80 studies on sexual orientation change, the American Psychological Association concluded that the treatments didn’t work and urged psychologists to steer gay clients away from them. At best, “certain studies suggested that some individuals learned how to ignore or not act on their homosexual attractions,” Judith Glassgold, who led the group’s investigatory panel tells CNN.com. At worse, the treatments backfire, leaving patients depressed, filled with self-loathing, and even considering suicide. But at the same time, the APA said, therapists cannot just disregard patients’ religious faith. To reduce the conflict between their sexual orientation and spiritual outlook, therapists can suggest alternatives to gay patients, such as embracing celibacy or finding a church that welcomes homosexuals. “Secular therapists have to recognize that some people will choose their faith over their sexuality,” Glassgold says. *(The Week magazine, August 28 - September 4, 2009)***

**What if homosexuality is not a choice? What if Christian leaders are wrong about homosexuality,” asked Baptist minister Oliver “Buzz” Thomas in USA Today. Conservative Christians insist that homosexuality is an unnatural “lifestyle” freely chosen in defiance of God. But science has found substantial evidence that homosexuality is the result of hormonal influences in the womb and of genes. In coming years, that evidence will mount, until it becomes impossible to deny that people are born gay. Religious reactionaries, thus far, are in denial about this, retreating like ostriches into the Old Testament’s pronouncement that homosexuality is “an abomination.” But this ancient text also states that handling pigskin is an abomination (sorry, no more football), speaks approvingly of slavery, and demands the death penalty for working on the Sabbath and using the Lord’s name in vain. In the last 2,000 years, we’ve come to see that these passages are remnants from another time and culture. The prejudice against homosexuality belongs on that same junk pile. If Christian leaders continue to ignore the scientific evidence, they’ll soon have no more credibility than the bishops who condemned Galileo for revealing that Earth goes around the sun. *(The Week magazine, December 1, 2006)***

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**F.Y.I.: See also the Male & Female document on the Monday Munchees website located in the M-section of documents!**

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