

P.O. Box 34142
Los Angeles, CA 90034



In this issue of *Progress Notes*...

- ANNUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY CONFERENCE REVIEW
- 2006 PRIDE SOCIAL
- INTRODUCTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- REMEMBERING BRIAN MILLER & ERIC ROFES

**JULY 2006.
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE.
RENEW TODAY!**

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Progress Notes...



JULY 2006

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE LESBIAN AND GAY PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION

LAGPA Lives On

By Stuart Altschuler, M.F.T.
Co-President

As Joni Mitchell (I know I am dating myself!) once wrote, "you don't know what you've got till it's gone". Well there were some of you that did not want to play that one out. Because of a few dedicated colleagues, who believed that losing LAGPA would have been a loss for the mental health community, LAGPA has a working board. The last Progress Notes made it clear that without members stepping forward to serve, we would see the end of an organization that has provided Southern California with so much for well over a decade.

JULY 2006

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Because of about eight licensed psychotherapists and interns, the board has seen a rededication to the purpose and goals of what LAGPA has stood for since our creative and dedicated colleagues formed the organization in the early 1990's.

Because of individuals who are not using their busy schedules and other commitments to get in the way, they are serving us all. You have seen this in the presentation of an Educational Forum, by Jim Walton, PhD, at the end of May. You have seen this in the cleaning up of the directory (still in progress) and in the well-attended and successful social held at my house on June 10.

You have seen this in the successful conference held on June 24. In partnership with our sponsor, The LA Gay & Lesbian Center, it was held at the Village at Ed Gould Plaza. Five workshops were presented, LA City Councilman Bill Rosendahl (while arriving late) spoke to an enthusiastic crowd, and the catered lunch was by far the best

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Co-President, Stuart Altschuler, (right) with Ken Howard during presentation of the LAGPA Community Service award to Brian Miller, Ph.D.

Brian Miller, Ph.D.; Honoring his Commitment to the Community

Participants of the 12th Annual Psychotherapy Conference gathered to honor the life and work of Brian Miller, Ph.D. who was posthumously presented the LAGPA Community Service Award. Ken Howard accepted the award on behalf of Brian's partner, Bernard Cooper and read the following statement prepared by Bernard:

Brian would have relished this acknowledgement from his colleagues. Outwardly, he would have been humbled because he was a man who sought excellence rather than praise, but I promise you that, inwardly, he would have been on fire with pride.

Brian knew that the value of his work was in the

work itself, in its rigors and unglamorous routines. He worked hard because the human spirit needs attending. Empathy was his aspiration.

Ever since his days as a student, Brian wrote about the puzzle of sexual identity, about the joys and pitfalls of community. In his column for Edge Magazine and in his articles for journals and newspapers, he addressed the sometimes difficult negotiations that living a full life requires of gay men and lesbians. His friends and readers loved the bracing, no-nonsense way he could cut to the chase without ever being reductive or glib about a person's problems.

His extraordinary clarity

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The Current Board of Directors



Stuart Altschuler, M.F.T.
Co-President

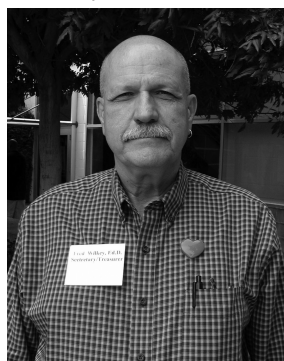
Stuart is a Psychotherapist and Rebirther in private practice, in Los Angeles. He uses a Holistic approach that integrates the emotional, psychological and spiritual needs of the individual. Stuart facilitates "The Hayride", an HIV/AIDS support group originated by Louise Hay, and facilitates workshops on intimacy, self-esteem, homophobia, relationships, grief and loss, self-empowerment, addictions and compulsive behaviors, and sexuality and sexual orientation issues, worldwide.

Stuart is also the host of "Tell the Truth, Faster!", a live AM radio talk show on KXAM 1310am, in Phoenix, Arizona. It can also be heard live, via the Internet at www.tellthetruthfaster.com.



Liliane Quon-McCain, M.F.T.
Co-President

Liliane is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist currently in private practice. Prior to this, she provided volunteer therapy at the Pacific Center of AIDS Project Los Angeles and retired as a counselor after 28 years being employed in Beverly Hills Unified School District. Liliane is currently completing her dissertation, "A Phenomenological Study of Self-Identified Heterosexual Men who are Now Living in an Openly Gay Relationship."



Fred Wilkey, Ed.D.
Secretary/Treasurer

Fred is a licensed clinical psychologist. He has a solo private practice doing cognitive behavioral psychotherapy in West Hollywood. Fred has been counseling as a licensed practitioner for over thirty years.



Aaron Alan, M.A.
Board Member

Aaron has a Master's Degree in

Clinical Psychology from Antioch University. His specialty is treating individuals who present with Dual Disorders. Aaron is particularly skilled at working with people with sexual compulsivity, anger management and domestic violence issues. His background incorporates education, training and experience in the treatment of addiction and compulsion along with disorders such as psychotic, obsessive-compulsive, mood and anxiety disorders. He has worked in the field of addiction recovery and facilitated chemical dependency groups at the Thaliens Mental Health Center at Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles and at the Jeffrey Goodman Clinic in Hollywood. Aaron also provided services to individuals with serious and persistent mental illness at the Alcott Center for Mental Health.



Sanie Andres, M.A.
Board Member

Sanie is a Marriage and Family Therapist Intern and Art Therapist. Prior to entering private practice, he was employed at a community mental health agency specializing in treatment for childhood/adolescent survivors of sexual abuse. He developed art therapy based anger management programs for adolescent and young boys. In addition, Sanie co-developed an outpatient juvenile sex offender program incorporating the use of art therapy with current research in the treatment of JSO's. He is an adjunct faculty member of the Art Therapy department of Phillips

Graduate Institute and a guest lecturer for the Child Development Center of Antelope Valley College.



David Callander, M.D.
Board Member

David is an attending psychiatrist and clinical instructor at Olive View UCLA Medical Center. He received his undergraduate degree in theatre from Pomona College before becoming a Broadway stage manager. A developing interest in health and fitness led him to become a personal trainer, which proved to be a transitory position on the way to becoming a physician. He received his medical degree from the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn, otherwise known as Downstate. He was an intern in internal medicine at St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan before returning to California to complete his psychiatry residency at Harbor UCLA Medical Center in Torrance. David has volunteered at Doctors Without Borders as well as AIDS Project Los Angeles. He currently sits on the boards of the Human Rights Campaign, the Southern California Lambda Medical Association, and the Lesbian and Gay Psychotherapy Association. In his spare time, he has served as a medical consultant for such television programs as "Commander in Chief," "Inconceivable," and "The West Wing."

ADVERTISE in
Progress Notes...

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS • CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

(continued from page 10)

Emotional Regulation Skills Group — This group that is based on the work of Marsha Linehan, Ph.D. with patients who have the diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. It is appropriate for all clients who have problems in this area, which may include patients in a wide range of disorders including substance abuse, etc. This group is adjunctive and the client must have a primary therapist who will remain in the picture as "therapist of record." Contact Joel Becker 310-858-3831.

Gay Men's Group — The Center for Cognitive Therapy in Beverly Hills is now running a Gay Men's Group on Mondays from 7:30 -9PM. If interested, please call Joel Becker, Ph.D. (PSY11680), 310-858-3831.

• EMPLOYMENT •

Psychotherapy Bookkeeper Position — Must be able to add existing client files to software program called "Therapist Helper." Call Mike Fatula MFT at 323-876-8861 OR 323-422-9433 business cell phone. (I am live on business cell phone at 5 minutes before any hour 10AM-10PM Mon-Fri).

• OFFICE SPACE •

Beverly Center — Part-time mornings and Friday-Sunday. Quiet small secured building near Beverly Center, 24/7 access, private climate control, windowed charming comfortable large furnished office, good size for groups, shared

waiting room with call light, sound proofed, plenty of parking (free or metered), utility room with fridge, micro, copier, printer, file drawers. Call Steve Kadel 310-228-3676.

Beverly Hills — Large corner office on Beverly Drive, private waiting room. Available Friday, Saturday, or Sunday (\$200 per day/month) and some evenings. Parking included. Rob Kelly, Ph.D. at 310-277-1944.

West Hollywood/San Fernando Valley — Quiet Garden Courtyard of therapists, designers, and writers near Cedars-Sinai and Thaliens. Also office space on Ventura Blvd. near Laurel Canyon (Studio City).
• Quiet, garden courtyard; one story building; 24/7 access & AIR

- Windowed, private waiting room; sound-proofing & call-light systems
- Windowed & skylighted private therapy office
- Separate entrance-exit; separate restrooms for clients & therapists
- High vaulted wooden ceiling/new wood window blinds
- Utilities included with reasonable rent; private, covered, well-lit parking
- Easy canyon access to San Fernando Valley
- Recently remodeled to psychotherapy specifications

Reasonable rates (utilities included). Call Mike Fatula at 323-876-8861.

West L.A. — Beautifully decorate, windowed, freeway close, handicap access, call lights, separate entrance/exit, security building. Available Thursday and Saturday, all day and evening or for blocks of hours. Contact Renee R. Sperling, LCSW at 310-470-3450.

West Hollywood — \$650 / 434ft² - Share space in large fabulous office. Professionally furnished office for rent, to share with psychotherapist.

A quiet renter will enjoy having the entire week available to you, except daytimes on Mondays and Thursdays when I use the space until 7:30 p.m.

- NOW \$650/month, immediately available.
- Beautifully furnished with antiques and southwest flair. Ok to change decor.
- Fabulous 15' x 20' large inner office w/ private corridor exit.
- Share reception area [11' x 12'] with psychotherapists.
- Wall to wall carpet.
- 8' x 10' west window faces sunsets and tops of healthy Ficus trees.
- Security building with telephone access from the street.
- Any hours available 24/7 except when I am using the office during the daytime on Mondays and Thursdays.
- Numerous additional amenities. Good credit needed. Great for an established quiet professional business.

Heavenly, gotta see it to believe it! Please call 310-455-3232 during business hours. 8235 Santa Monica Blvd at

Harper, NE Corner.

Got Something to Advertise — Then use the Classifieds to reach hundreds of mental health professionals. Placing an ad is **free** to members. ▼

Progress Notes...

A quarterly publication of the Lesbian and Gay Psychotherapy Association of Southern California, Inc., an organization dedicated to the promotion of gay, lesbian, and bisexual psychology, by supporting and serving the mental health professionals who work within the gay, lesbian, and bisexual and transgendered community.

Correspondence regarding the newsletter should be sent to:

LAGPA — **Progress Notes**
P.O. Box 34142
Los Angeles, CA 90034

Board of Directors...

The Board would like to hear from you. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us directly.

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Co-President's Message; Value in Renewing Your Membership

(continued from page 1)

meal served up at any conference in 12 years.

While there were naysayer's who told us there was not time enough to pull this one off, this new board came together and each taking a "piece of the action", made it happen. We even were able to get the CEU process reset so Psychologists, MFT's and LCSW's alike are set to receive those precious and needed credits.

We honored one of our own with a special award presented posthumously to our friend and colleague, Brian Miller, PhD, who passed in April after many years of living with AIDS. He was a gentle soul, a good friend and an inspirational colleague.

The conference even encouraged about 3 new members to step forward and offer a commitment to serve on the board. There is still room for more if any of you are willing. We do need more women, especially.

To make up for the lack of Educational Forums over the last year, our goal is to present 3 or 4 of them during the summer months. These months are usually quiet times for LAGPA, but watch for the announcements and attend. If you have a desire to present a workshop, let us know and we can get it scheduled, if it is a fit.

Our annual membership

drive is moving forward. We hope you will continue to support LAGPA, and the efforts in place at this time, by renewing your membership and encouraging colleagues to join or renew. If you have been upset with us over the last year, we ask your forgiveness and invite you to be part of the refocusing process by staying a member and keeping our numbers strong.

The board elections will also be coming your way by August, as required by our by-laws. If you want a say in the running of this organization, join the board. If you cannot do that, your membership will assure you a spot on our telephone tree. This is something that was a part of the board's procedure when I first became a member in 1995. It stopped being used a number of years ago. The board wants you to know that there is at least one board member that belongs to you, personally. You have and will continue to get calls reminding you of events and lending you an ear to listen to your concerns and suggestions.

Also, and certainly no small item, we have Chuck Stewart back and he is getting the administrative duties cleaned up and streamlined so the board will have an easier time serving you, the membership and the community.

Finally, on behalf of the

entire board, I want to thank all of you who have communicated, via email, telephone and in person, how grateful you are to see LAGPA continue. I cannot tell you how many of you wrote and apologized for not being able to attend this event or another, but thanked us for making them happen. It is important that you are not silent. Let us know what you want or need from your professional association. We need to hear from you. Like anyone

RENEW your membership today.

else, it is always nice to know when efforts are appreciated. We want you to know how much the board appreciates your standing by us and understanding that any community based professional association is only as strong as the commitment of its membership. That means you. We thank you for your continued support, understanding, patience and friendship. ▼

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

This classified section of the Progress Notes allows members and non-members to advertise available therapy services, employment and office space. This section is free for members to advertise and \$15 for non-members.

• THERAPY •

Gay Men's Growth Group — This is an ongoing men's group, which focuses on personal issues that lead toward better relationships with oneself and others. This is a group for serious minded men regardless of age, HIV or relationship status. Tuesday/Wednesday night in Studio City. \$35per session. Contact Sandy Kaufman, MFT at 818-761-4200

Mixed Groups — Mixed psychotherapy groups for well functioning men and women with a focus on relationship, intimacy, sexual, family, and career issues. Yalom model.

Monday and Wednesday evenings led by Raymond Bakaitis, PhD. For more information, please call 310-841-6870.

Gay Men's Psychotherapy Group — Gay-centered depth-oriented approach. Focus on Gay empowerment, childhood issues, HIV/AIDS/health, addiction recovery, relationship/intimacy, dream work. West Hollywood area. Sliding fee scale available. Please call: Matt Silverstein, MFT, 310-842-6124 (License #MFC38474).

Social Anxiety Group — This group will be making use of the latest empirically validated treatment for social anxiety. The group will be mixed (both gay, lesbian and straight clients) and time limited to 10-12 sessions. Contact Joel Becker 310-858-3831.

(continued on next page)



Larry Hymes, M.A.
Board Member

In 2003, after spending 10 years in the television and film entertainment industry, Larry completely switched gears and went into the people-helping field. This began with him teaching elementary school children while earning his masters in clinical psychology, with a specialization in community psychology. Larry then transitioned to becoming a mental health clinician at the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center. There, he specializes in domestic violence, working with both survivors and perpetrators individually and through psychoeducational group

work. Additionally, he provides counseling for individual clients on a range of therapeutic needs, including: substance abuse/addiction, sexual compulsion, depression, anxiety, trauma, & self-esteem. Most recently, Larry has begun a private practice, focusing on individuals, couples, and families.



Rick Olson, L.C.S.W.
Board Member

Rick is in private practice in Los Angeles. Previously, he was Director of Student Training and clinical supervisor at the Institute for Human Identity, New York City's first gay affirmative, psychodynamic treatment center for the

LGBT community. He has extensive experience working with traumatized political refugees and 9/11 survivors and their families as well. He received his MSW and Post-Graduate Diploma in Advanced Clinical Social Work from CUNY/Hunter College School of Social Work. He is also a graduate of IHI's training program in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy with the LGBT Population.



Chuck Stewart, Ph.D.
Administrator to Board

Chuck received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. Since that time, he has written and published fourteen academic books and manuals including: Ho-

mosexuality and the Law (ABC-CLIO Publications), Gay and Lesbian Issues (ABC-CLIO Publications), Sexually Stigmatized Communities (a harassment reduction teaching program published by SAGE Publications), three queer crossword puzzle books, two environmental textbooks on the hazards of lead and mold in residential real estate, and a number of screenplays. He has been responsible for researching and writing a number of teaching curricula and textbooks, mostly for the Los Angeles Police Department. He currently works as an on-line instructor for Phoenix University besides writing for ABC-CLIO and being the administrative assistant to LAGPA and SCLMA. He volunteers as the co-chair for the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Scientists and is the director of the world's only gay ballroom dance troupe Out Dancing Ballroom. At one time he worked as a research physicist, automobile designer and manufacturer, and a classical ballet dancer (yes, he knows, it is very confusing but it makes sense to him). ▼

Join the Board

The Lesbian and Gay Psychotherapy Association of Southern California, Inc. (LAGPA), was established in 1992 as an organization of mental health professionals interested in gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender clients. Members of LAGPA are actively involved in expanding the role of psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and marriage and family therapists who serve the greater gay community of Southern California. While LAGPA is oriented to-

wards mental health professionals, individuals who desire to join LAGPA are not required to be a licensed psychotherapist.

Board meetings are held the *second Sunday of every month* in Hollywood. If you would like more information, please contact Stuart Altschuler, M.F.T., (323) 993-1940 or one of the other board members. ▼



Remembering Eric Rofes, 51

Eric Rofes, Ph.D., died on June 26, 2006 from a heart attack while at his rental apartment in Provincetown, M.A. He is survived by his partner, Crispin Hollings, his mother, Paula Casey-Rofes and brother, Peter.

Eric's gay activism began in his late teens when he started two queer youth groups and founded the Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance. Later he was hired as the Executive Direc-



Eric Rofes, Ph.D.

tor of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center and in 1989, named Director of San Francisco's Shanti

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Celebrating PRIDE

LAGPA members, family and friends spent the Saturday evening of Pride, June 10th, celebrating at the home of Stuart Altschuler. Attendees enjoyed relaxing music while meeting new members and reacquainting themselves with old friends. ▼



From left to right: Peter, Jeff, Payam, Ryan, Oren and David



Chatting in the Kitchen; From left to right: Elaine, William, Dave & Stuart

Remembering Brian Miller, Ph.D.

(continued from page 1)

was evident even as he battled HIV. When I once confided my fear of losing him by saying, “My life would be nothing without you,” he made me laugh by answering, “My life would be nothing without me, too.” The day before he died he told me, “Death only happens to a person once, and the learning curve is very steep.”

If he gave his clients and colleagues a fraction of the devotion he offered me, I think I can say that your profession is better for his having been a part of it. Ernest Hemingway said that every writer’s epitaph should read:



Brian Miller, Ph.D.

“He wrote, and then he died.” The best any of us can hope for is to spend ourselves completely in the most worthwhile work we can do. Brian did just that, and he would have had every faith that each of you is determined to do the same. ▼

Caterer of the 12th Annual
LAGPA Psychotherapy Conference

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and phone number.
P.O. Box 34142
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(310) 299-3465

Remembering Eric Rofes, Ph.D.

(continued from page 3)

Project.

In 1994, Eric earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in Social and Cultural Studies from U.C. Berkley.

Eric’s activism pushed HIV-prevention to encompass broader gay men’s health issues. He fought to broaden the focus of intervention efforts to focus on resources of the individual and not be judgemental.

Humboldt State University is hosting a memorial to

honor Eric’s life on August 25, 2006 from 3:30 - 5:30 pm.

Donations in Eric’s memory may be made to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) or the Highlander Research and Education Center in Tennessee.

More information regarding memorial services or about Eric can be found on his website:

www.ericrofes.com ▼

DISPLAY ADVERTISING: This includes business cards, advertisement for upcoming events you are producing, personal promotion, or anything that you may want members to be aware of. Prices for advertisements are per issue and must be renewed each publication unless other arrangements are made. ▼

Size of Advertisement	Dimensions of Advertisement	Member Rate	Non-Member Rate
Business Card	3.5" w x 2" h	\$20.00	\$30.00
1/8 Page	Horizontal Placement – 3.7" w x 2.37" h Vertical Placement – 1.82" w x 4.8" h	\$20.00	\$30.00
1/4 Page	Horizontal Placement – 7.5" w x 2.4" h Vertical Placement – 3.7" w x 4.8" h	\$35.00	\$50.00
1/2 Page	Horizontal Placement – 7.5" w x 4.8" h Vertical Placement – 3.7" w x 9.75" h	\$50.00	\$70.00
Full Page	7.5" w x 9.75" h	\$75.00	\$100.00

POLICY FOR MAILING LISTS AND FLYERS

LAGPA does not sell or give out its mailing list (in any form) to any person, group or organization. If you would like to send a mailing to the membership you must provide enough copies of the item to be sent folded, stamped and ready to mail. LAGPA will run address labels and place them on the item to be mailed at a board meeting. Therefore, your materials must be received by LAGPA no later than one week prior to the next board meeting as indicated on the web site or in the newsletter, for them to be mailed in a timely fashion. If you want to do a separate mailing you must give us 10 open envelopes with the material you are mailing so we may review it. Rates for this type of service are: members \$125.00 per mailing; non-members \$175.00 per mailing. We strongly suggest you place an ad in the P.N. rather than creating a separate mailing.

As the LAGPA Board is all volunteer, and responsible for creating, collating, folding, labeling, stamping and mailing all newsletters and other correspondence throughout the year, we cannot accommodate the insertion of stand alone flyers into the newsletter or conference materials. Unless, or until, there is a full complement of board members and volunteers to assist on various committees, all flyers must appear as ads in the newsletter and/or conference brochure. Member and non-member rates are listed in the P.N. and on the web site at www.LAGPA.org. Members may bring flyers to LAGPA events and place them on tables where participants can pick them up.

The Board reserves the right to refuse to mail, include in the newsletter or display any material it deems inappropriate or offensive to its membership, or in direct conflict/opposition to the purpose/ mission statement of the organization. To engage in any of the above or for more information please contact our administrative assistant, Chuck Stewart. The purpose of a newsletter is to provide specialized information to a targeted audience. Newsletters can be a great way to market your product or service, and also to create credibility and build your organization’s identity among peers, members, employees, or vendors.

First, determine the audience of the newsletter. This could be anyone who might benefit from the information it contains, for example, employees or people interested in purchasing a product or requesting your service. You can compile a mailing list from business reply cards, customer information sheets, business cards collected at trade shows, or membership lists. You might consider purchasing a mailing list from a company.

Next, establish how much time and money you can spend on your newsletter. These factors will help determine how frequently you publish your newsletter and its length. You should publish your newsletter at least quarterly so that it’s considered a consistent source of information. Your customers or employees will look forward to its arrival. ▼

Self-Acceptance, “The Capacity to Love in All its Forms”

(continued from page 7)

love. There is the love of abiding friends. There is unfulfilled love. There is one true love. There is unselfish love. There is tough love. There is spiritual love. There is human love. There is the love of a pet. Some say love is simply biology.”

We can think of many ways that love is thought of, felt, and expressed. But is love one feeling, one thought, one longing, one need? Is love so easily compartmentalized and defined? Do we know what we are talking about when we use the word love? When we think of love? What is the importance of love in one's life? Are we able to love when we are alone? Are we able to experience love when we face difficult circumstances and choices? When we must face our own sadness and grief and isolation, can we still feel any love within ourselves; for ourselves and for others? In a world longing for love, do we really know what we are longing for?

The older I get the more convinced I become that love is not easy to define, and even harder to accept. It is inside us the day we are

born. Love is a part of our essence. It is not this glowing orb that is waiting to be tapped into and create in us a new wonderful human being. It is akin to a seed that must be watered, fertilized and nurtured. And fertilizer is not always very pleasant!

Love is not a choice. It is the capacity to grow in affection, understanding, and grace for ourselves and others. It is the capacity to forgive and to have a wonderfully poor memory!

Love, I believe, is our capacity to embrace who we are and allow others to embrace us as well. Love is the ability to not hate our own existence. Love is ACCEPTANCE of ourselves.

Love is not something we can trigger. We cannot turn it on or off. But we can grow it by working hard on ourselves, to understand who we are, and why we do what we do. It will surprise us and grab a hold of us when we least expect it, perhaps when we think we are the most unlovable and unworthy creature on the planet. It is quirky, strange and ill-defined. Lastly, it can never exist in a vacuum. For in its essence, love grows by

nurturing relationships, including getting to know ourselves.

One cannot own love or others. That would be possession, not love. And that would not be a relationship, but slavery. A slave to neediness and insecurity. We do not achieve love. There are no guarantees. Love, like relationships, cannot be static or concrete. And, like truly equal and unpossessing relationships, love can be a bittersweet experience. We

discover we can love, but only if we never try to own those we care about.

And that means we allow those we love to be free to live their lives; even if it means our paths go in different directions. In the end, love is not about having. It is about living and respecting ourselves and others. Truly, self-acceptance is the beginning of our capacity to love in all its forms. More at: www.helen-hill.com ▼

(Reprinted with permission from the author.)

The Spiritual Roles of Gay & Sexually Ambiguous People

(continued from page 7)

we were entitled to kill each other in the name of God—before these times gay and sexually ambiguous people were often spiritual leaders.

We were the shamans, the healers, the visionaries, the mediators, the peacekeepers, the “people who walk between the worlds,” the keepers of beauty. The berdache or Two-Spirit people of the Native American tribes—the wintke of the Lakota, the nadle of the Navaho, the minquga of the Omaha, the hwame of the Mohave—as well as the isangoma of the Zulu and the “gatekeepers” of the Dagora in Africa, the hijras in India, the galli priests of the goddess Cybele in ancient Europe and the Middle East, and many others, were honored, respected, and even revered for the spiritual roles

they fulfilled.

I am here today to remember the tens of thousands and probably millions of women loving women and men loving men who have been killed throughout history because of who they were. I come here, though, not from a place of victimization, but rather, one of empowerment. I am here to announce to you, as representatives of the world's cultures and religions, that we are reclaiming our natural, our sacred, our archetypal, and yes, our God-given role of spiritual leadership.

Today at lunch a group of us will sit together in the dining room. We would like to invite anyone—regardless of faith, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, or sexual orientation—to share a meal with us. ▼

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Sponsor of the 12th Annual LAGPA Conference

L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center

Community Therapist Referral Directory

Add yourself to the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center's **Community Therapist Referral Directory (CTRD)**. The CTRD is utilized by the Mental Health Services program (MHS) whenever clients, callers or e-mailers contact the center to request outside referrals to LGBT-friendly therapists. This occurs frequently, multiple times per day. Being listed on the CTRD is completely free.

Online Therapist Directory

The Center is pleased to announce the launch of its **Online Therapist Directory (OTD)**. OTD will allow visitors to the Center's website to directly access information regarding LGBT-friendly therapists in Southern California. Though the program will be expanding to include specializations, currently only basic therapist information (contact data and insurance accepted) is available to viewers. Listings are arranged by geographical locations allowing visitors to find the therapist closest to them. The annual fee for inclusion in the OTD is \$25.

MHS also makes use of volunteer clinical supervisors. The commitment is only one hour a week and is provided from your own office. As an added incentive, the fee to be included on the OTD is waived for volunteer supervisors.

For more information regarding either directory, please contact Ian Stulberg, LCSW, (323-860-7368 or istulberg@lagaycenter.org) or visit the web at laglc.org.

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in *Progress Notes...*

ANNUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

Homophobia & Iran



Payam Ghassemlou, Ph.D.

Payam Ghassemlou, Ph.D., discussed the cultural implications of working with gay and lesbian clients from the Middle East. As part of his presentation, Payam shared a letter he had written in response to two gay teens executed in Iran. The following is his letter as it appeared in "Gay City News":

Gay Executions in Iran

August 15, 2005

To the Editor:

Words cannot describe our outrage about the recent execution of two gay teens in Iran ("Iran Executes Two Teens," by Duncan Osborne, Jul. 28-Aug. 3).

As gay doctors from Iran, we hope someday our people will be free from oppression. In the name of Islam, many atrocities have been done to gay and lesbian people in Iran. Religion has often been misused in this regard. The founders of Islam and Christianity never advocated hatred toward same sex lovers. No homosexuals ever were punished while these prophets were alive. In fact, Islam has made it okay for men to have sex with

their male servants while traveling away from their wives.

I like your readers to know that neither Islam nor the Persian culture advocates such hateful acts. In fact, a great deal of Persian literature is based on homosexuality. When we need validation of gay love, we read love poems by Sadi, Hafiz, Rumi, and other Persian poets. They have written hundreds of love poems on same-sex desire.

The execution of the two gay teens in Iran made us feel as angry as when we learned about Matthew Shepard's murder. The gay community needs to work harder to end hatred everywhere on the planet. We should not stop our struggle for equal rights. The same thing that is happening in Iran can take place right here in the United States if we let down our guard. All fundamentalist have one thing in common: wanting to eliminate gay people.

Payam Ghassemlou Ph.D.
IranianGayDoctors.Com ▼
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**Don't forget to RENEW
your membership.**

The Challenge of Being; Love is Not a Choice

Helen Hill, M.A., spoke of the challenges facing the transgender community, most imparticularly, transsexuals. The following is an excerpt from her e-zine, "Points of Views":

Love. The word itself conjures up myriad emotions and definitions. Does anyone really know what love is

We're Up & Running



Conference goers were welcomed by LAGPA Board Members.



Pre-conference networking; a cup of coffee, a pastry...all set.



Helen Hill, M.A.

all about? The easy responses occur so quickly. I can see them rolling off my tongue as I write this newsletter. "There are all kinds of love." "There is love of money. There is love of a child. There is the love of a parent to their child. There is one's first love. There is puppy love. There is sensual

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CONFERENCE REVIEW

Spirituality & Homosexuality; Reclaiming the Role of Spiritual Leadership

In 1997, Christian de la Huerta addressed religious leaders at the Global Summit of the United Religions Initiative. This statement also appears in his book, *Coming Out Spiritually* (1999):

First of all, let me be very clear in stating that I am aware that the most important priority of this conference is—and should be—the creation of a United Religions working together towards world peace. That is why I'm here. However, there is another reason I'm here, and I would not be true to myself if I didn't take this time to address an issue which I feel needs to be acknowledged in this conversation.

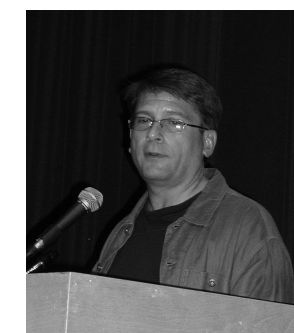
Just a couple of days ago, I was told a story about the Buenos Aires Regional Conference which preceded this Global Summit. In one of the small group processes striving to design the mission and values of a United Religions charter, a discussion ensued about tolerance—about who should or should not be included in a United Religions. As the participants came back together for the large group reports, the elected speaker, a minister from the Metropolitan Community Church in

Buenos Aires, reported that his group had reached consensus that no one should be excluded because of their faith, their ethnicity, their national origin, their gender, their age, their political beliefs, etc. In fact, there was only one area where they had been unable to reach agreement—and that was sexual orientation. He then handed the microphone to another representative from their group, who stood up and said that his religion did not allow him to entertain that possibility, but that in discussing it, his mind had been expanded and now had new material to consider. I think that's great, even hopeful, but from my

perspective, it's just not good enough.

I am here as an unofficial ambassador from a tribe of people belonging to every culture and faith in the world—people who share a love for others of the same sex—those who in the West call ourselves, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or simply, queer. There isn't another group of people in this world which has been, and continues to be, as universally maligned, as universally repudiated, as universally excluded, as universally condemned, as universally excommunicated, and yes, even eliminated by some of the religions of the world.

The ironic, and tragic,



Christian de la Huerta.

thing is that before patriarchal times, back when women and the Divine Feminine were honored, before we entered this present period of our history several thousand years ago when, somehow, we got this mistaken idea that there was only one name for the Creator, one way to speak with and worship the Divine—and that we were entitled to use violence and military power to impose our beliefs on the rest of the world, that

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This Year's Theme: Community & Sexuality



Councilman Bill Rosendahl

After brief opening remarks, Councilman Rosendahl fields questions from the audience. ▼



Ken Howard, L.C.S.W.

Crystal Meth, HIV Risk, and Gay Men: A Harm Reduction Approach. ▼



David Burke, Psy.D.

A Psychodynamic Understanding of Sexual Compulsivity. ▼