

MOW Calendar

ACLU Publishes Annotated List of Pending Cases

The Lesbian & Gay Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union has just published the first national, annotated list of pending cases involving AIDS, sexual orientation, or consensual sexual activity.

The publication, titled the *National Docket of AIDS and Sexuality and the Law Cases*, is the first ever compiled in this subject area. "I think it will be an extremely useful and important tool for lawyers handling such cases and for interested persons trying to keep up-to-date on the rapid developments in this volatile legal arena," said Nan D. Hunter, Director of the national ACLU's Lesbian & Gay Rights Project.

The *National Docket* includes all the known pending cases as of June 1987 -- not only cases of the ACLU Project and ACLU affiliates, but of all the gay and lesbian legal rights organizations, as well as cases being handled by private attorneys. It includes cases involving discrimination against heterosexuals as well as gay people, such as custody cases involving sex outside of marriage and firings. The AIDS-related cases cover the gamut of discrimination issues, including employment, family law, and criminal law.

The *Docket* is available for \$10 per copy, plus a \$2 postage and handling charge, from the ACLU Literature Department, 132 West 43rd Street, New York, NY 10036. Checks should be made payable to the ACLU Foundation.

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Some have criticized the FDA for releasing AZT before longer term tests could be done; they say the early release of the drug with the FDA stamp of approval amounts to little more than sanctioned human subject experimentation without safeguards. Others say that failure to release a drug holding such promise when there is no other effective known treatment would be inhumane.

The move from experimental to prescription stage also raised serious questions about financing. Drugs used in research protocols are free, while approving AZT meant it would now cost approximately \$11,000 per year for one person. Many people with inadequate insurance are unable to obtain the drug because of the cost. To help alleviate that problem, Congress passed legislation to set up funds for low income people unable to afford it. \$30,000 was allocated to Vermont for that purpose. Others object to allowing a drug company to charge for it when people taking it are, in effect, still part of ongoing experiments.

The questions of who will have access to AZT is seriously raised by the availability of it through prescription. Some fear that doctors who are not specialists will be

1. **NATIONAL LOBBY DAY:** Friday, October 9. Delegations from around the country will meet with their Senators and members of Congress to acquaint them with our issues and to urge them to support appropriate legislation.

2. **THE WEDDING:** Saturday, October 10. A non-sectarian union ceremony celebrating the relationships of hundreds and perhaps thousands of same-sex couples will emphasize the demand that lesbian/gay domestic partners be entitled to the same rights and privileges as married heterosexual couples. A reception will follow the ceremony.

3. **LESBIANS & GAY BANDS OF AMERICA CONCERT:** Saturday, Oct. 10. 8 to 11 pm, DAR Constitution Hall, 1776 D St. NW. Thirteen bands and two choruses featuring 250 musicians will perform.

4. **MARCH AGAINST DEATH AND VIOLENCE:** Friday, Oct. 9 through Sunday, Oct. 11. For a period of 40 hours, culminating with the March, people carrying the names of those who died of AIDS or homophobic violence will move in a solemn single-file procession past the White House, the Capitol and other national symbols. By bearing witness to the violence and suffering our community has endured, we hope to awaken the conscience of the nation.

5. **LESBIAN AND GAY MARCH ON WASHINGTON:** Sunday, October, 11. Come join hundreds-of-thousands of people from all over the country!!

tempted to prescribe it without thinking to any and all patients, whether appropriate or not. Others wonder if people who have ARC or indications of a compromised immune system should be offered the drug to prevent the onset of AIDS.

Many AIDS and gay activists have expressed anger that AZT has been made widely available when other potentially valuable treatments are only available to a limited number of people in research protocols. AZT is hardly more proven than other drugs which show less side effects, they argue. Why shouldn't they also be available to those seeking to take them? Proponents say that AZT has been the most widely tested of any new treatments, and that holding off on approval of other medications is appropriate.

Despite the media hype, AZT is not a cure for AIDS; it may, however, be a valuable step in the right direction, pointing the way for future research. At a time when thousands of lives hang in the balance, a wrong step could have catastrophic effects. Unfortunately, in the search for treatments and cures, frustration, anger and mistakes seem inevitable. The long wait for a true cure will strain our patience, our health care system, and our community.

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6. **VETERANS MEMORIAL SERVICE:** Sun., Oct. 11. Prior to the March, lesbian and gay veterans will conduct a memorial service at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to honor the many thousands of lesbians and gay men who have given their lives while members of the U.S. military. Immediately following the memorial service, the veterans will proceed across the Potomac to join the March.

7. **AIDS MEMORIAL PROJECT:** Sun., Oct. 11. The Names Project is creating a national AIDS Memorial composed of thousands of individual 3' by 6' fabric panels, each inscribed with the name of someone lost to AIDS. The panels will be assembled into one massive expanse of names and displayed across the Capital Mall. Information; Vt. CARES PO Box 5248 Burlington, Vt. 05404. 863-2437.

8. **NATIONAL LESBIAN/GAY RIGHTS CONGRESS PLANNING MEETING:** Mon. Oct. 12. Plans will be initiated for a 1988 nationwide Congress of lesbians and gay men, to show our diversity, to establish our priorities and to devise strategies for accomplishing them.

9. **CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE FOR LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS:** Tuesday, Oct. 13. A non-violent Civil Disobedience Action at the Supreme Court to demand full civil rights for lesbians and gay men; a powerful statement of resistance and hope for love and justice for all.

10. **BICENTENNIAL PROTESTS IN PHILADELPHIA:** The Philadelphia Lesbian & Gay Task Force is organizing protest demonstrations for Sept. 17 (U.S. Constitution's 200th Anniversary) and Sept. 23 (tentative convening of the U.S. Supreme Court). Join in protesting the hypocrisy of the official Constitution Bicentennial celebrations.

For more information; March on Washington Committee, P.O. Box 7781, Washington, D.C. 20044. (202) 783-1828. Local contact; M.O.W. c/o VLGR P.O. Box 281, Hinesburg, Vt. 05461. (802) 864-3617.