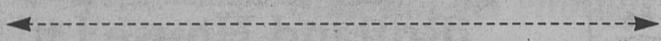
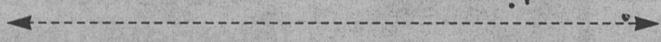


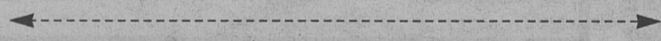
On Saturday, June 12 cyclists from around New England and New York will get together in Vermont for Champ Ride '99. This is Vermont CARES' First Annual Bike Ride to raise critically needed funds to continue prevention education and direct services for people living with, or at high risk of, HIV/AIDS.



The ride is a 25/50/100-mile ride. Everyone can participate, no matter what your cycling ability. This is a great event for both novice and avid bicyclists alike and a wonderful opportunity to get out there and test yourself, while marveling at some of Vermont's beautiful country landscape.



We hope you will help us make this annual ride a tremendous success — either by participating in the ride itself, making a generous donation in support of other cyclists, or volunteering on the day of the event.



Help Vermont CARES celebrate its community and continue its commitment to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS.

BE A CHAMP — DO THE RIDE!

MAYAK graphics & design

Send me more information about Vermont CARES' Champ Ride '99
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I am interested in:

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✂ Clip and return to: VT CARES, PO Box 5248, Burlington, VT 05402 ✂

STONEHENGE TO STONEWALL

Or Gay History In A Nutshell

**With this Tunic,
I Thee Wed**

BY CHARLES EMOND

The idea of two people of the same sex forming what is often called a "passionate friendship" is a constant historical theme. Just to name a few famous couples from American history, there were Eleanor Roosevelt and Lorena Hickok; Ralph Waldo Emerson and Martin Gay; Henry David Thoreau and Edmund Sewall; Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville; Dorothy Thompson and Christa Winsloe; Alexander Hamilton and John Laurens; Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas; Hart Crane and Emil Opffer; Susan B. Anthony and Anna Dickinson.

These people wrote each other notes, scribbled poems and journal entries, and sent off countless love letters. We do know that they loved one another, but we don't know if they ever had sex! In fact, some of them even expressed horror at the thought of intimacy, but this did not diminish their love.

The point is that sexual activity is not necessarily part of a same-sex love affair or relationship. It certainly wasn't for the gay priests and lesbian nuns who served the Christian church under vows of chastity for so many centuries! Examples of these relationships will frequently surface as we continue to trace our history of homosexuality in Western civilization.

Back to the Bible!

In case you thought I had lost my way for a moment, I was just setting the scene for a couple of passionate friendships in the Hebrew Bible! Boswell points out that many pairs of friends were widely admired during the Middle Ages as examples of perfect love. The list includes several pairs of saints as well as Jesus and St John — really.

Of course, we are talking about a tradition in which celibacy was considered the highest lifestyle, and sex a snare of the devil. Even then, some of the medieval references to these same-sex pairs have amazingly erotic overtones!

In the book of Ruth, Naomi is Ruth's mother-in-law. Although this is hardly a romantic relationship, their loyalty and devotion to each other have attracted great admiration. Ruth says to Naomi, "Entreat me not to leave thee or from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." (KJV/Ruth 1:16)

Pop quiz: how many weddings have you attended where the song "Wherever you go, I will go" was played? Uh-huh — thought so.

Forget the Garter and Bouquet!

Since I promised a same-sex marriage last month, let me quote from the first book of Samuel (NIV).

David "...was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features...who knows

how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him." (Think of David here as Brad Pitt with musical talent.)

Sexual activity is not necessarily part of a same-sex love affair or relationship.

"After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan (Saul's son) became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself...And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David along with his tunic, and even his sword and his bow and his belt."

Now this "making of a covenant" is a lot like a marriage! In fact, Boswell says that the word used here for "covenant" is the same one used elsewhere in speaking of marriage! Jonathan already has a wife or two and David has a few later, but you don't hear about any covenant or clothing trades with them!

Okay, so most of the ceremony is bizarre by modern standards. But, hey, modern weddings have that garter thing and the mutual mashing of wedding cake into the happy couple's faces, so who are we to judge?

David Plays the Palace

After their ceremony, they both settle down to live in the palace under the now-jealous eye of King Saul — who is no "merry old soul." In fact, he's a very nasty old soul, who constantly lurks about trying to "pin David to the wall" with his spear while David is playing his harp. (Maybe Saul preferred the fiddlers three?)

Eventually, Saul tells Jonathan to kill David, but since Jonathan is fond of David, he warns him. "They kissed each other and wept together," and then Jonathan says to David, "Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the Lord, saying, 'The Lord is witness between you and me.'"

Much later in the story, David hears of Jonathan's death and writes a lament that includes the following, "I grieve for you Jonathan, my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women (2 Sam 1:26)."

Next time: Zeus picks up a cute shepherd!

For more information on "passionate friendships" and an excellent, if hefty, look at documents relevant to lesbians and gay men in the United States, pick up *Gay American History* by Jonathan Ned Katz. ▼

Charlie Emond teaches in Springfield. He has a bachelor's degree from Queens College and master's degrees from both Dartmouth and Keene State. He teaches college history courses including a course he developed: *Hidden History: Homosexuality in Western Civilization*.