

Culture, et cetera

Lesbian teen witch?

"After a sluggish start, the current Buffy-goes-to-college season of 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer' has flowered into a juicy depiction of freshman-year sexual awakenings. Buffy has become an emotionally independent woman (no mommy or watcher needed) and has left behind a frustrating, masochistic, hands-off relationship with Angel for mature sexual fulfillment with hunky Riley Finn.

"Willow . . . has been involved in a lesbian relationship with sister witch Tara . . . although their affair has been most rendered in . . . metaphors: When they do magic together, their powers shoot out of their bodies, zap around the room in sparkly streaks and leave them panting on the floor, surrounded by candles and rose petals. . . .

"On the May 2 episode of 'Buffy,' Willow came out to her friends and chose Tara over prodigal boyfriend Oz."

— Joyce Millman, writing on "The gay, the bad and the hottie," May 8 in the on-line magazine Salon at www.salon.com

Gay for Gore

"For Vice President [Al] Gore, the support of gays and lesbians is crucial, especially in all-important California. His presidential campaign has developed a network of 50 to 100 gay and lesbian fund-raisers based in virtually every major city, who are organizing events for him. . . . Openly homosexual officials are sprinkled throughout the Democratic Party leadership. Organizers are recruiting hundreds of gays and lesbians to serve as delegates to the national convention this summer and, for the first time, the Democratic National Committee is trying to ensure that gays make up a balanced part of every state delegation at the convention. . . .

"Virginia Apuzzo . . . recently . . . served as a high-ranking official in Clinton's White House. Even in that position, however,



Photo by Daniel Rosenbaum/The Washington Times

Homosexuals who attended the Millennium March on Washington are likely to show their voting muscle for Vice President Al Gore.

she chafed at gays' inability to move their agenda, and today she worries that gains are coming far

too slowly. 'It's like watching an iceberg move. . . . Where's ours? What have we gotten? We've got-

ten to dress up with some straight people.' . . .

"Julian Potter, the White House's liaison to the gay and lesbian community, notes that 'no laws have been passed.' She says that a new president could, with a few strokes of a pen, undo Clinton's pro-gay executive orders and appointments policy. 'I think there's an illusion that we've gained a lot,' she says. 'In the hinterlands, in real America, it hasn't changed.'"

— Robert Dreyfuss, writing on "Pride and Prejudice," in the May 25 issue of *Rolling Stone*

Culture warriors

"Today, as for some time now, social and religious conservatives constitute a minority of the population. But it is a significant minority — a 'dissident culture,' I have called it.

"That culture cuts across political, racial, ethnic, even religious lines. And it takes many forms, from membership in organized groups like the Christian Coalition to the spontaneous ac-

tions of families who, in one way or another, and for one reason or another (often purely secular ones), choose to opt out of the dominant culture.

"There are now over a million children who are being home schooled, and as many or more families that are 'TV abstainers.'

"This dissident, minority culture can be disproportionately influential. . . .

"Public figures, religious and political alike, cannot refrain from recognizing and responding to the serious issues at stake in these culture wars; indeed, they have a duty to recognize and respond to them. But they also have a duty to exercise prudence and discretion so as not to exacerbate conflict into open warfare."

— Gertrude Himmelfarb, writing on "The Election and the Culture Wars," in the May issue of *Commentary*