

Being gay isn't an illness



Abigail Van Buren

• Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I have reason to believe that a young man in my family may be gay. (He is 15.) I have been thinking a lot about it lately, and have been wondering if circumcision would cure it. What do you think?

— GRANDMOTHER IN MISSOURI

DEAR MISSOURI GRANDMOTHER: Homosexuality is not an illness, and therefore there is no need for a "cure." I predict that your family will be happier if you accept your relative exactly the way he is, love him, support him, and stop trying to think of ways to cure him. P.S. Circumcision is a sacred rite of the Jewish religion. If your theory were valid, then there would be no Jewish homosexuals. And yet, among the successful, gay, Jewish men who are "out" are Harvey Fierstein, Michael Feinstein, Barney Frank and David Geffen — to name a few. (Oops! And let's not forget Isaac Mizrahi.)

DEAR ABBY: My name is "Alicia" and I'm 16. About a year ago, my mom got two puppies. Although they are annoying, I have to admit they are very cute and adorable.

My problem is, ever since we've had the puppies, I have thought my mom loves them more than she loves my brother and me. For some reason, I feel replaced by them. I know she loves us very much, but it hurts to think she

cares more for them than she cares for us. I think that because my brother and I are getting older, she needs something else to love. Sometimes I just want to sit and cry, but I have never been a person to spill my guts out to my parents. Can you give me any advice that would help me with this?

— REPLACED BY DOGS

DEAR REPLACED: Keeping your feelings locked inside is no way to resolve your problems. Your mother may be an animal lover, but I can guarantee that she loves you and your brother far more than those dogs. However, the person you need to hear it from isn't me — it's her. So please clip this letter, give it to your mother and tell her you wrote it. You appear to need a long, hard hug and some reassurance, but your mother can't know that unless you tell her.

DEAR ABBY: My friend and I have one teacher who is beginning to scare us. He says things like, "You know I love you," and he tells us how he misses us when we're not in class. He also will come from behind and give us back rubs, put his arms around us and give us an

occasional hug.

We have been trying to ignore it because, when we told my mom, she said he probably didn't mean anything and was just trying to be nice.

But at a school dance, he gave my friend a kiss on her cheek and put his hands on my waist.

Maybe we're overreacting, but, Abby, we are the only two in our class he does this to. Other teachers have made us sit through videos and read brochures on "improper touching," and we are beginning to wonder. Is he stretching the line?

— CONCERNED STUDENT

DEAR CONCERNED: Your teacher appears to be using very poor judgment. He has not only "stretched" the line, he has crossed it. It's time you and your friend visit the principal of your school. Explain that the man's overly affectionate behavior is making you both uncomfortable, and you are the only two students that it's happening to. If he hasn't been "counseled" about touching students, this teacher definitely needs to be.

The library is red hot this week

Change is a common word in our lives today.

In fact, we are so used to change that we now expect things to change on a regular basis. Maybe libraries were a step ahead back in the 1960s when they started rotating parts of the library collection on a monthly basis. Evidently patrons appreciated this rotating collection because it is still in effect over 40 years later. Each month we get a completely different set of books coming through our library from the Northwest Kansas Library System.

All of our rotating collection materials are marked with a red dot next to the call number. Hopefully the red dot will be red hot this week; this makes for a Dewey Decimal System of love.

Actually, "Dewey Decimal System of Love" by Josephine Carr is one of the books available on rotation this month. A picture of a cataloging record on the front cover reads "For questions about love, and more particularly, inappropriate love, go to the 306.7s." Boy, if that doesn't sound red hot and juicy.

For something in an altogether different vein, try the rotation book "Let Their Spirits Dance" by Stella Pope Duarte. Jesse promised his mother before he left for the Vietnam War she would one day hear his voice again. Twenty-nine years later in a dream, she finally does hear Jesse's voice.

In the dream, Alicia is told by her son Jesse to make a cross-country pilgrimage to the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington D.C. Only



Jeff Friesen

• Pioneer Memorial Library Director

when Jesse's family arrives at the Vietnam War Memorial are they all able to bring closure to the many unanswered questions surrounding Jesse's death. In doing so, Jesse's family is finally able to piece together the past and move forward unhindered into the future.

For an electric read try the book "The Lightning Keeper" by Starling Lawrence. Set in early 1900s during the industrialization of America, this book combines the indefatigable themes of history and romance.

Harriet Bigelow is the heiress to a large, but diminishing iron-making operation. Toma is an ingenious immigrant fresh off the boat. An encounter in Italy generated sparks

between the two, but a chance meeting in New York City six years later has only heightened their awareness of each other. To save Harriet's family business, Toma has designed a machine that has the ability to revolutionize electricity in America. The world and the power of capitalism however, seems to have divergent destinies in mind for Toma and Harriet. General Electric will stop at nothing to make its goal of providing electricity to every home in American a reality and Harriet has put aside her true love with Toma for a marriage that makes business sense. Does this disprove the theory that electricity will always take the path of least resistance?

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