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# ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

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The University of Arizona, Tucson

## HITTING THE BOOKS



Philosophy junior Gabe Flores found a quiet place among all the displaced furniture on the fourth floor of the UA Main Library to catch up on some reading for a class. The library is undergoing renovation of its heating and ventilation system, causing a change for scenery for some library patrons.

CHRIS CODUTO / Arizona Daily Wildcat

## Security to stay for commencement

By J. Ferguson  
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

Members of the Commencement Policy Committee said students should expect to see "honor guards" and security checkpoints at this spring's commencement.

The security measures were put in place at the 2004 winter commencement to end the long-standing ritual of throwing tortillas during the ceremony.

UA administrators said the ritual had become disruptive over the last

few years and sought new measures to prevent graduating students as well as their guests from bringing in tortillas and other disruptive items.

Lori Goldman, who chairs the CPC, said the security measures used during winter commencement helped reign in disrespectful behavior.

"Everyone was pleased with the level of respect at the winter commencement," Goldman said.

Goldman said the spring commencement is still in the planning stages but expects the ceremony to be similar to winter commencement.

Alistair Chapman, president of Associated Students of the University of Arizona, agreed the winter commencement went well.

"It was an outstanding success, a dramatic improvement," Chapman said.

Chapman said the first hour and a half went without incident, which allowed invited speakers and honored guests to address the students nonstop.

"The keynote speaker (Raul

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## Hate crimes not always classified

By Jennifer Amsler  
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

A self-admitted neo-Nazi was convicted two weeks ago for beating and killing an openly homosexual man in 2002 but was not convicted of committing a hate crime, even though he admitted he killed the man because of his sexual orientation.

Philip Walsted was found dead outside of IBT's bar, 616 N. Fourth Ave., with dozens of injuries inflicted by a baseball bat.

David Higdon was charged with first-degree murder Jan. 28, and his prosecutor said he killed Walsted because of Higdon's affiliation with a neo-Nazi group. Higdon will be sentenced March 28 and he stands to serve anywhere from 25 years to life in prison or possible execution.

Lori Girshick, coordinator for the Wingspan anti-violence project, said the judge will take into consideration Higdon's skinhead ties and testimonies from witnesses at the time of Walsted's murder.

Wingspan does various services around Tucson for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals who need counseling and assistance. Wingspan holds seminars and is working to "better the light" on North Fourth Avenue, Girshick said.

Girshick, who sat in Higdon's trial to show support for Walsted's family and the community, said the Arizona Legislature does not have a statute specifically related to hate crimes.

However, if hate is a factor in the crime, Girshick said it is taken into consideration during trial.

Michelle Pickrom, Tucson Police Department spokeswoman, said police cannot charge a person for a hate crime, but it can be introduced in a trial as a "sentence enhancer," meaning it could tack extra time on the person's sentence.

TPD classified 21 cases as hate crimes in 2004 and 28 cases as hate crimes in 2003, but that does not necessarily reflect a downward trend, Pickrom said.

According to Wingspan statistics based on telephone reports, in 2004, 59 individuals in Arizona reported some kind of discrimination based on their sexual orientation, including vandalism, job discrimination, unjustified arrested, assaults and robberies.

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## Gay rabbi visits campus, talks about homosexuality

By Cassie Tomlin  
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

To be an Orthodox gay rabbi is to be a duck-billed platypus.

That's coming from someone who knows — Rabbi Steve Greenberg, the first openly gay orthodox rabbi, who spoke to about 70 students and other Tucsonans last Thursday night in the UA Hillel Center.

Greenberg traveled to Tucson from New York City to speak as part of Temple Emanu-El's Rabbi Albert T. Bilgray "Living Judaism" speaker series.

Greenberg shared his Jewish history, his experience being part of the film "Trembling Before G-d," and his views on gay marriage and homosexuality in Orthodox cus-

tom. Greenberg also discussed his book "Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition."

Orthodox Judaism does not condone homosexuality and does not allow homosexuals to become rabbis.

Greenberg was not publicly gay for more than 10 years after he finished rabbinical school.

Greenberg said that he interprets the biblical prohibition on homosexuality differently than Orthodox custom, and said the one place in the scriptures that bans "lying with another man" focuses on humiliation more than homosexuality.

"Jewish law is not a science detached from life," he said.

Rabbi Sam Cohon, of Tucson's Temple Emanu-El, said homosexu-

ality is broadly accepted in Reform Judaism and there are many openly gay reform rabbis, but he does not see Orthodox resistance to homosexuality fading any time soon.

Greenberg said the Orthodox community is attempting to address homosexuals as little as possible.

"Most Orthodox people have never met a gay person; they've only seen them on a screen in a tutu on a float," he said. "It is totally other in the Orthodox community."

Greenberg said common Orthodox sentiment holds that homosexuality is a curable disease or moral illness. He said that once the Orthodox community realizes

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KEVIN B. KLAUS / Arizona Daily Wildcat

Rabbi Steve Greenberg elaborates on his experiences as an orthodox rabbi and homosexual Thursday night in the UA Hillel Center. Greenberg's lecture was part of the Temple Emanu-El's Rabbi Albert T. Bilgray "Living Judaism" series.