

## *The Voice*

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# VOICE

SERVING THE K-W AND AREA LGBT COMMUNITY

VOLUME ONE

ISSUE FIVE



Friday, February 5, 1999



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!!

**NEW SECTION: HEALTH- Page 16**

**NEW COLUMN: "SHADES OF GREY" Page 54**

**NEW COLUMN: "KALEIDOSCOPE" Page 47**

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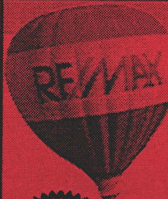
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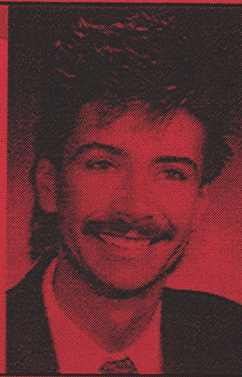
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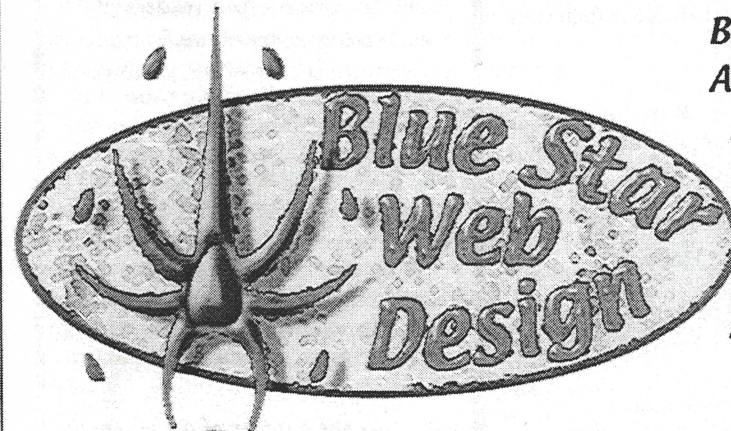
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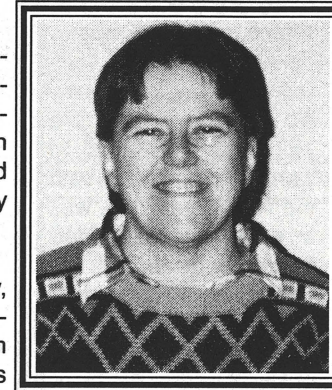
## EDITOR'S NOTE

*To all advertisers and readers of The Voice, I apologize for the unforeseen and unavoidable delay of the January issue.*

*The voice is published monthly and is usually available the first Friday of each month. Unexpected delays can be at times, the nature of the beast when it comes to getting anything printed and published and bound or stapled together correctly.*

*We value the support of all of our advertisers and readers alike. We also may experience some growing pains, but, if you hang in there with us we hope to continue to provide you with an entertaining and informative magazine that represents your community.*

## VISIBILITY



*Ms. A.J. Mahari*  
Editor

Visibility is the ability to actively define the parameters of your own existence. It is the ability to determine the ground upon which you will walk and the scope of the journey upon that path.

Visibility, like invisibility, has its positive and negative sides. Visibility is born out of courage. It takes courage to know who you are. Furthermore, it takes courage to let others know who you are. It then takes even more courage to keep your head up in a visible and meaningful way in the face of whatever life can throw at you.

For all too long, we, as lesbians, gays, bi's and transgendered people have sat back waiting, perhaps, for the straight world to build the bridge over the gap of misunderstanding and hatred that all too often separates our worlds. This is a bridge that, though begun here and there, is in need of tremendous work in South Western Ontario. It seems that there is a bridge that goes only so far and then one can just walk right off of it, and partake in a free-fall of sorts into an unknown, yet waiting, abyss of invisibility.

There is a void in the absence of visibility that breeds such misconception, misunderstanding and outright disrespect for who we are as people.

Just think of a problem that you have had to deal with in your life. A friend or relative with a disorder, or a handicap, some challenge to be understood.

If you have some other experience to compare here you'll realize that change can only be won slowly by enough people of any group, having the courage to be as visible as it takes until more tolerance is won. Tolerance must first be attained in order to build a bridge toward acceptance.

If you are not visible who is going to build your bridge? If you are visibly building your bridge now what about our collective bridge?

In any group or segment of society; any person that is not seen: is not heard: and is consequently not honoured with the respect that is afforded those who are visible.

There are always going to be reasons to hide, to "go with the flow"; to do the easiest things; to take the path of least resistance; but, as a sailor in life, the path of least resistance can only carry your vessel so far. You may not travel to the depth of your soul outright, but the damage done in the dark defies determined dereliction of duty and cries foul at the invisible reality of its own circumstance. It is impossible to see and to find one's way in the dark or in the murky beginnings of tolerance alone, for both are fraught with uncertainty at best and a lack of safety at worst. Visibility verifies that it does indeed require loss in order to gain. Nothing is made visible without sacrifice standing still swifly-moving from dark to light, from being hidden to being seen in plain sight.

## THE HISTORY OF VALENTINE'S DAY

Romans celebrated on February 15th the feast of Lupercalia. This spring holiday was held in honor of the god Lupercus, protector of the herd and crops. The people entreated to Lupercus to protect their flocks and keep animals and people healthy and fertile through singing and dancing. On the eve of this festival, young women would put their names in a ceramic

Claudius II. The Emperor believed that if his men remained single his army would be larger. He wouldn't lose men to wanting to stay home with the family. Valentine was arrested and beheaded because he would secretly marry people forbidden to wed. He became known as the patron saint of lovers.

Believing that Valentine's Day exists to celebrate the memory of a saint who valued love and romance, many exchange love notes or Valentines.



and every young man would pick a name. They would be partners in the festivities and dances, oftentimes they would not need to participate in this particular event the next year.

Christian legends believe that Valentine's Day is the Feast of St. Valentine, who was beheaded on February 14th under the orders of Roman Emperor

Others believe that Valentine was later confused with the Norman French word 'galatin' meaning "lover of women". Through the passage of time, the two have merged with the result of St. Valentine being remembered as the patron saint of lovers.



## "The Rose"

"Some say love it is a river that drowns the tender reed.  
Some say love it is a razor that leaves your soul to bleed.  
Some say love it is a hunger an endless aching need.  
I say love it is a flower and you its only seed.

It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance.  
It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance.  
It's the one who won't be taken who cannot seem to give,  
It's the soul, afraid of dying that never learns to live..."

*A dedication to an extraordinary woman, an angel who came along at a pivotal time in my life, who will always live in my soul, and have a VERY special place deep within my heart.*

Rayne Jarvis



# The Cupid Myth

## THE EROS AND PSYCHE STORY

BY MICHAEL STAR

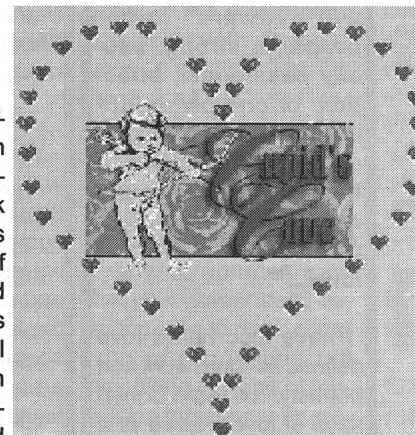
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***"It is wrong to think that Love comes from long companionship or persevering courtship. Love is the offspring of a spiritual affinity and unless that affinity is created in a MOMENT it will not be created in years or even generations."***

Kahlil Gibran,  
THE BROKEN WINGS

Cupid was the Roman god of Love, son of Venus and Mercury; and in Greek mythology he was Eros, son of Aphrodite and Hermes. He took as his wife the beautiful mortal maiden Psyche...on the condition that he would join her only at night so she never saw his face. Their dark nights together were full of love and passion; though Psyche had a fear that her loving husband might also be an ugly monster!

At the urging of her sisters (and her own fears) she hid a knife and candle by their bed one evening before he came. After Cupid fell asleep Psyche silently stole out of bed and lit the candle. As she held the light up to his face she saw not an evil ugly beast...but a most handsome young man with wings!



In her surprise she spilled some candle wax on his sleeping face. The hot wax woke Cupid, and he flew away as he cried ***"O foolish Psyche! Is it thus you repay my love? But go; return to your sisters whose advice you seem to think pref-***

***erable to mine! I inflict no punishment on you other than to leave you forever."***

Like the mortal maiden Psyche we sometimes let our own insecurity (or the opinions of others) blind us to a True Love which waits before our very eyes! Sometimes we cannot trust our feelings and our souls to SENSE Love; but insist on SEEING it with our eyes!

"Psyche" is a Greek word for "butterfly" and for "the soul". At times the beautiful butterfly of Love looks more like the lowly caterpillar; sometimes Love lives in a self-protective cocoon concealing the loveliness inside from the gaze of mortal eyes.

Love is, as Gibran puts it, a "spiritual affinity"...a meeting of two souls on a level that mere senses cannot divine nor mind

Continued on page 6

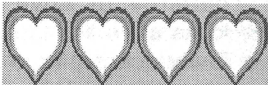
# The Cupid Myth

Continued from page 5

can explain. Love is not seen nor heard and often goes unrecognized. Love is not in LOOKS -- it is in hearts and souls!

We sometimes call it "chemistry" -- that attraction and reaction which occurs when certain people meet. If it's a sexual attraction but lacks a spiritual affinity then it is Lust (Eros). A spiritual affinity without sexual attraction is deep friendship (Agape).

Only when BOTH are present can the attraction be considered a True Love. There will be some attraction in the first moments of meeting and then a quickly-developing sense of deep friendship, romance and desire. Only True Love has it all!



## LOVE

by A.J. Mahari



Love has often been defined and more times than not maligned. Love is often mistaken for numerous other parts and pieces of emotion that exist within the myriad of what it is to feel within the scope and confines of the human condition.

Included here is the Webster's definition of love;

**"a deep tender feeling of affection for or attachment or devotion to a person or persons; an expression of one's love or affection; a feeling of brotherhood and good will toward other people; a strong, usually passionate, affection; of one person for another, based in part on sexual attraction; the person who is the object of such an affection; sweetheart; lover..."**

I have also heard love defined as "hard work and honesty." Leonard Cohen says of love: **"Love is a fire it burns everyone. It disfigures everyone. It is the worlds excuse for being ugly."**

Whatever our experience, love is the quest of every human heart in this journey called life.

## "Friends For Life"

**When two people have shared as much as you and I have; when they've opened up their hearts, shared their dreams, thoughts and fears; when two people know each other well enough to know if sadness is hiding behind a smile or if happiness is glowing in the eyes; when they've shared so many laughs, and when each other's pain at times has triggered tears; when two people believe in one another and are always sincere to each other; when they have trusted one another with the truth that lies within-- then you can be sure that they're friends for life...just like you and me.** --Zoe Dellous

### Carrie.....

You showed me the way...and now I can make it on my own...You are such a cherished friend. we are together, in spirit and soul, in the magic of the land of Oz! Love has so many faces, places and spaces between friends. Here is to the continued exploration of one of life's most profoundly offered, yet equally rare journeys, between soul-friends. Love is every step between us my friend....

A.J.

## CANADA MOVES TOWARD EQUALITY

### NEW LEGISLATION PLANNED BY THE GOVERNMENT

### SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

**Ottawa --** The federal government is planning sweeping changes to dozens of pieces of legislation to extend equal rights to same-sex couples.

Pre-empting a losing battle in the country's courts, government sources say, Ottawa has decided to proceed with amendments that will treat homosexual couples the same as heterosexuals in everything from pensions to bankruptcy law to the Criminal Code.

The government's political will to make the changes was strengthened by the fact that there was little evidence of a backlash when Immigration Minister Lucienne Robillard announced two weeks ago that her department will open the door to same-sex immigrant couples.

The major policy shift has been prompted by a growing stack of court cases that say certain existing federal laws violate the Charter by not treating homosexuals and heterosexual couples equally.

"The government has to deal with this sooner or later," a government source said. "It's unavoidable."

A gay and lesbian rights group has launched a massive lawsuit against Ottawa, seeking changes to 58 federal statutes. But David Corbett, lawyer for the Foundation for Equal Families, said the group has made it clear that it is willing to drop the court action if the government proceeds with changes under a set time line. Ottawa has not yet responded officially to the lawsuit.

While the decision has been made to make the changes, sources said the government is still debating how to do it, either with one omnibus bill amending a mass of legislation together or by proceeding individually through each department involved.

High-level discussions are under way in a number of government departments to decide how best to implement the changes.

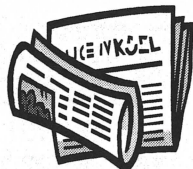
Beyond the obvious complication of drafting a massive omnibus bill, there is concern that it would create a focal point for opponents of gay rights. As well, cases against some elements of federal law have advanced further than others in the courts and may have to be amended sooner than the time it would take to draft one overhauling bill. A more practical alternative -- and certainly more manageable in terms of writing new legislation -- may be to proceed case by case. The timing of the changes will depend on how the government makes them, since a piecemeal approach would likely get specific legislation amended faster than one large bill.

Either way, with the courts ruling consistently in favour of same-sex rights, the government is seen to have little choice but to make the amendments.

In 1995, when the Supreme Court of Canada of

Continued on page 11

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS



**GAY SLURS PULLED FROM MERRIAM-WEBSTER THESAURUS- Company Admits Policy Treated Gays Unfairly**

**Washington, DC** - Merriam-Webster, America's self-proclaimed "foremost publisher of language-related reference works," announced today that it will be removing the word "homosexual" from its online thesaurus and from future print editions, according to a company spokesperson in an exclusive interview with GAYBC Radio Network:

<http://www.gaybc.com>

**More on this story on page 26**



## GAYS ORGANIZE IN SAN LUIS POTOSI

The first-ever gay group has come into existence in the city of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, 258 miles north of Mexico City in the state of the same name.

Fourteen people gathered at Sheik Disco Bar in late November to hear a talk by Tijuana gay leader Alejandro Garcia. By the end of the evening, they had formed an association and named Jorge Ivone their interim coordinator.

A board of directors will be selected once group members get to know each other better, they decided.

**"The gay/lesbian community of San Luis Potosi now has grown enough to begin to be aware that they are a community,"**

said Garcia.  
- Rex Wockner

## JAMAICAN GAY GROUP FACES 'FEROCIOUS OPPOSITION'

The new Jamaica Forum of Lesbians, All-Sexuals, and Gays (J-FLAG) is "facing ferocious opposi-

tion from all quarters in this deeply Christian-religious country," says spokesman Thomas Glave.

"Several homophobic remarks have appeared about us in the local Jamaican press, and have been aired over the radio -- although we have also witnessed some local positive attitudes and occasional support," Glave said Dec. 29.

J-FLAG is asking foreign activists to fax and e-mail letters supporting the group to the country's three main newspapers. Glave requests that his name not be used in the letters.

According to the Web page, "'All-Sexual' is a term used in the Caribbean Forum of Lesbians, All-Sexuals & Gays (C-FLAG) network to indicate that it considers all-sexual behaviour to be part of a sexual continuum in which classifications such as 'gay', 'lesbian' and 'bisexual' often cannot be rigidly applied."

-Rex Wockner

<http://www.qrd.org/qrd/www/world/wockner.html>

## Gang-raped lesbian wins refugee status

By TOM GODFREY,  
TORONTO SUN

A lesbian who was gang-raped with her lover by Colombian police because of their sexuality yesterday was granted refugee status in Canada.

Irma Patricia Pulido, 31, was allowed to stay here by an Immigration and Refugee Board because of her fear of persecution in Colombia because she's lesbian.

Her Toronto lover, Rosa Roldan, 37, of Mexico, made a similar claim which was turned down. She is now appealing.

"The main issue in this claim is credibility," board member Larry Colle said. "The claimant is a lesbian who was raped with her lover in a police station."

Pulido, an accountant, came to Canada in March 1996 and filed a refugee claim.

The board heard Pulido and her former lover in January 1996 were taken to a Colombian police station where they were beaten, raped and sodomized.

Colle said displays of homosexuality on the streets of Colombia could entail some risk.

"Homosexuals are relatively well off or keep a low profile," Colle said. "Homophobia is rampant and this results in discrimination against gays and lesbians."

Pulido said it was vital that she make love again after her rape "to get out of the closet again." She preferred Latino women because they provided "lots of love."

Pulido told the board she and Roldan meet weekly in a Toronto hotel where they make passionate love.

Her lawyer, George Kubes, said Pulido is ecstatic that she was given status here.

He said Pulido, who has found work in the accounting field, is among a dozen lesbians to have been granted refugee status here.

"Canada is open for those people who have suffered," Kubes said. "She has a whole new world ahead of her."

## MOMENTUM GAINING FOR DAY OF SILENCE PROJECT

On April 7, 1999, thousands of students at high school and colleges across the United States and Canada will stay silent, passing out cards advocating for queer equality rather than speaking. These students will be participating in the **Day of Silence**.

The purpose of the Day of Silence is to create a visible, "audible" silence to protest the oppression forced upon lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. It also hopes to offer educational tools and dialogue devoted to ending the silence by organizing post-event forums and breaks. Participation in the event has grown exponentially from a single campus in 1996 into an international effort.

For the first time, the Day of Silence Project has chosen to adopt a theme: **"Unity through Diversity."** By focusing on this topic, DoSP hopes to encourage dialogue about the unique issues facing diverse segments of the queer community. The

The Project expects that these conversations will unite the community to protest homophobia and heterosexism.

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS



Chloe Palenchar, Co-nity we can achieve equality by through our diversity -- along gender, sexuality, race, class, age, educational status, and every other line."

## Tasmania Australia Changing Hearts And Laws

By Rodney Croome  
1999 Sydney Star Observer

How has an island society once renowned for its homophobic intolerance become a leader in gay and lesbian legal rights?

Some people have suggested that it is because some of the more homophobic members of the Upper House have been replaced by more tolerant members, and that Parliament has begun to take a lead on reform.

But this doesn't account for the magnitude of the changes we are seeing.

Far from being imposed from above onto an unwilling population, our new human rights laws are a reflection of the growing spirit of tolerance and respect for diversity which exists within the Tasmanian community.

This was acknowledged by Upper House members themselves during the anti-discrimination debate.

Several MLCs made the point that Tasmanian society has changed dramatically over the past five years -- particularly in our attitudes to sexual minorities -- and that the Upper House can no longer resist this change.

If our new human rights laws are a reflection of changing community attitudes why have these attitudes changed?

The answer is simple.

Tasmania has gone from worst to best because of 10 years of grass roots activism, lesbian and gay visibility and our repeated efforts to engage in a dialogue with all Tasmanians at every level of society.

Our campaigning has focussed on changing hearts and minds as much as changing laws.

The result has been not only a new legal regime, but a new society.

**Continued on page 27**

## CANADA MOVES TOWARD EQUALITY

### NEW LEGISLATION PLANNED BY THE GOVERNMENT

#### SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

**Continued from page 7** said that the Old Age Security Act discriminated against same-sex couples, Ottawa acknowledged that the laws would have to change to reflect a new view of families, but nothing was done.

Last year, however, the government tipped its position when it didn't appeal the Rosenberg case, which declared the definition of spouse in the In-

Other problem areas:

Registered retirement savings plans cannot be transferred to surviving homosexual partners without that person paying taxes.

Conflict-of-interest guidelines do not require people in same-sex partnerships to disclose their partner's activities, as their heterosexual counterparts must.

The Bank Act or legislation regulating business requires heterosexual spouses to disclose insider information, but does not ask the same thing of same-sex spouses.

The country's bankruptcy laws do not specifically prevent people in same-sex partnerships from shifting their assets to their partner and then declaring bankruptcy.

The Criminal Code does not protect same-sex couples from being forced to testify against each other, as heterosexual couples are protected.

— QUEERPLANET

**The Day of Silence Project** Team is composed of volunteer youths from across the country who are dedicated to fighting for queer rights. Their energy and focus is garnering momentum and recognition as April 7 approaches. Co-Chair Jessie Gilliam comments "schools across the nation are gearing up to fight oppression and end homophobia on this day. We invite you to join our Project and work to end the silence."

If you or your school are interested in participating or learning more about the project, please contact Jessie Gilliam, Co-Chair, at:

or  
Chloe Palenchar, Co-Chair, at:



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**"We need to know that we are not accidental, that our culture has grown and changed with the currents, that we like others have a social herstory, filled within individual lives, community struggles, customs of language, dress and behavior that when looked at in their entirety form what we call herstory—the story of a people." —Joan Nestle**

## NARRATIVES OF OLD LESBIANS:

### Maintaining the Integrity

by Sharon Jacobson and Beth Kivel

In my younger days, I really did not want to be a lesbian. I really thought that life would be better and more comfortable. I don't know that I would say more rewarding. I don't think that. Easier, life would be easier if I were straight. Now I never thought life would be easier if I were not Jewish or life would be easier if I were male. I wasn't interested in [being male or Jewish]. But I did think it was a burden being a lesbian. (Jacobson, 1996)

This is an excerpt from the narrative of Rebecca, who described herself as a "bigot's paradise," because she is old, morbidly obese, Jewish and lesbian. Indeed Rebecca's comments illustrate her awareness that her sexuality is not in agreement with cultural norms and expectations. Her comments emerged through a process of soliciting the story of her life with a

focus on her leisure. Narrative and narrative analysis have been used to gain understanding about other cohorts of lesbians and gay men (Kivel, 1994, 1996); however, little attention has been paid to the importance of narratives in understanding how old lesbians have responded to the cultural messages associated with age, gender and sexuality.

Macdonald and Rich (1991) expressed concern over the "patronizing tones" used to describe old lesbians and gay men in professional writings. These authors argued that images of childlike simplicity; neurotic fears; physical, cognitive, and sensory loss; wrinkles; and sagging bodies are inaccurately portrayed as risks of old age rather than risks of life. Hill-Collins (1990) reported that research on disempowered and

marginalized groups is only given attention when the findings and ideas are framed "in the language that is familiar to and comfortable for a dominant group. This requirement often changes the meaning of ideas and works to elevate the ideas of dominant groups." Personal narratives by old lesbians can present a more accurate description of their authentic experiences and maintain the integrity of their lives.

Scott (1993) argued that narratives are the "evidence," of individual and social experience. Such evidence has the potential to help researchers and practitioners gain a deeper understanding of how individual's identities and social relationships are created, maintained and perpetuated within the context of the culture in which they have lived and been socialized.

Van Manen (1990) offers the following insights. One reason that narratives are so powerful is their ability "to compel" the reader. They recruit our attention and draw us in as we begin to read about a person's life. Narratives also "lead us to reflect" on the significance of what is being shared with us; they "involve us personally" as we begin to compare what we are reading to our own lives. Narratives have the power "to transform" each person, evoking emotions and feelings, teaching lessons, and touching lives through the sharing of lives. Narratives provide a "measure of one's dependability to make interpretive sense."

Jacobson (1996) collected narratives from eight lesbians, all over the age of 60, to gain an understanding of how the stigma, prejudice, and discrimination associated with being an old lesbian

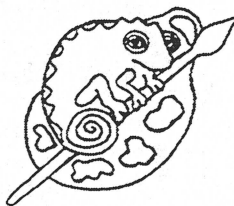
influences and was influenced by their leisure. Although the intent was to learn about their leisure, the narratives also provided insights into the impact a culture of stigma and discrimination had on their lives in general. Simone and Rebecca were two of these eight women. The following ex-

cerpts from Rebecca's narrative illustrate her experiences and responses to having lived in a hostile environment.

I think that at some level or in some way one or all of them [the labels: old, morbidly obese, Jewish, lesbian] made me feel—not 100% of the time, but for a great deal of my life—like there is something hidden

or something that I should not talk about or something that makes me less than that norm. And some of the things that I probably have accomplished have been in rebellion against the feeling that . . . I am inferior in some way.

There was this one day that I was dressed very casually and I went into some sort of store. I was asking this clerk something. Well, her eyes sort of glazed over and suddenly I saw myself in her eyes: fat and old and with no evidence of particular wealth. Uninteresting as far as the clerk was concerned.



Wendy Bonza

Psychotherapist  
Art Therapist



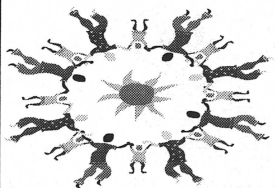
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I don't know if, from early years, I have altered the kinds of things that I like to do or the things that I did regularly, because there were things that I felt comfortable doing with women only and other [things] that I might like to do but it was not acceptable [to do them]. If I have [altered my patterns and activities] then they have become an inherent part of me [and] I cannot recognize them as factors that say, 'I like this. I don't like that.'

Simone internalized and responded to the cultural messages differently

**WOMYN'S  
READING CIRCLE**



*Beginning in February of 1999, will meet once a month, on the last Wednesday of each month. Phone 743- [redacted] for more information if you'd like to come out and join us. We will choose our reading selections by consensus. Our first meeting will be held on Wednesday February 24, at 7Pm.*

than Rebecca. The sadness she feels can be heard in these excerpts from her narrative:

Well, as they say in the 12-step programs, you have obviously survived life, now it is time for you to live life. It is obvious I am a survivor, but I have not enjoyed my life.

I think big city loneliness is loneliness and everything else is depressing too at the same time. But one of the things about small town loneliness is that you go out and everything is just so beautiful and you have a real feeling that this is the way

things were meant to be. This is so much closer to God. This is great. Why am I so out of step with it? And I guess that was the feeling that I had back in college, this feeling of really being out of step with the world that was functioning very nicely and very well and very comfortably.

Voltaire wrote some poems and he came right out and told the world that there were lesbians in France. . . . The thing is that Voltaire loved such people and he considered them damned. He considered himself damned, probably. But again this just reinforces this tragic-doom stereotype. Well, you get that in the Well of Loneliness, she [the character Stephen Gordon] has to be the one that sacrifices her own happiness. . . . In some ways I feel that I have sacrificed mine too.

Van Manen asks, "Aren't the most captivating stories exactly those which help us to understand better what is most common, most taken for granted, and what concerns us most ordinarily and directly?"

The excerpts from these two narratives not only captivate us but help us to better understand the various ways in which old

lesbians have internalized and continue to internalize and respond to the cultural messages of age, gender and sexuality in North America. By listening to these stories and maintaining the integrity of their voices and experiences, we can gain a deeper and more accurate understanding of the lives and experiences of old lesbians.

Sharon Jacobson works with the Women's Studies Program at suny Brockport, Brockport, N.Y. 14420. Beth Kivel is an assistant professor in the Division of Leisure Services, the University of Northern Iowa, 241 Wellness Recreation Center, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0161.

Source:  
<http://www.asaging.org>

**Presentation on Lack of Awareness of Lesbian Issues**

"...Lesbians are always lumped together with gay male experience, in the same way that white people's experience marginalizes the experience of people of colour. The reality is that most lesbians lead very different lives to gay men; not only because we are women, but because we are women living in a sexist, androcentric society.

**Continued on page 15**

**From The Book: "Blood Bread and Poetry"  
Selected Prose 1979-1985**

**by Adrienne Rich**

"Woman identification is a source of energy, a potential spring-head of female power, curtailed and contained under the institution of heterosexuality. The denial of reality and visibility to women's passion for women, women's choice of women as allies, life companions, and community, the forcing of such relationships into dissimulation and their disintegration under intense pressure have meant an incalculable loss to the power of all women to **change the social relations of the sexes, to liberate ourselves and each other.**

The lie of compulsory female heterosexuality today afflicts not just feminist scholarship, but every profession, every reference work, every curriculum, every organizing attempt, every relationship or conversation over which it hovers. It creates, specifically, a profound falseness, hypocrisy, an hysteria in the heterosexual dialogue, for

every heterosexual relationship is lived in the queasy strobe light of that lie. However we choose to identify ourselves, however we find ourselves labeled, it flickers across and distorts our lives.

The lie keeps numberless women psychologically trapped, trying to fit mind, spirit, and sexuality into a prescribed script because they cannot look beyond the parameters of the acceptable. It pulls on the energy of such women even as it drains the energy of 'closeted' lesbians-theenergy exhausted in the double life. The lesbian trapped in the 'closet', the woman imprisoned in prescriptive ideas of the 'normal' share the pain of lost options, broken connections, lost access to self-definition freely and powerfully assumed."

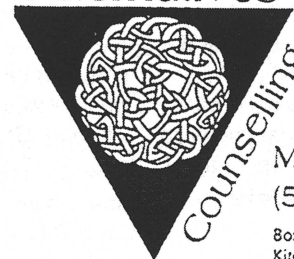
**Lack of Awareness of Lesbian Issues  
Continued from page 14**

Unfortunately, even in lesbian and gay communities, lesbian issues often take a back seat to gay male concerns.

In classroom discussions where lesbian experience is assumed to be the same as that of gay men, we're often asked by the students what it is like to always be afraid of being gay bashed. Being afraid to walk alone at night may be a novel experience for a man, but as women, lesbians have always faced the threat of male violence. The possibility of being harrassed, assaulted or insulted as lesbians is **in addition** to the threat we face as women, and the danger increases if we are also of colour or differently abled.

**by Lisa Jeffs**  
from the article, "So You Think I Should Be Shot?"  
**Unteaching Homophobia.**

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## Q Health

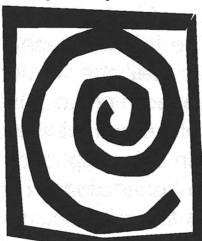
by Dr. Jeffrey Chernin

### *The Adaptive Spiral, an Approach to Overcoming Self-defeating Patterns*

Just as the mind-body connection has become commonplace in recent years, it is increasingly apparent that our emotional, psychological, and spiritual selves are connected. The spiral, which exists in nature, is a way of looking at personal growth and maturation, with no element separate, but rather each component being linked to one another. A spiral is a way of looking at growth. It helps to explain why some "been- there-done-that" issues come back again, but at a different level of learning or with a new perspective. Lesbigoay individuals tend to have a high level of awareness about themselves, which is essential for overcoming self-defeating patterns. Perhaps that is because a lot of self-reflection comes with the territory of being "different" or outcast.

The Adaptive Spiral, an idea which developed organically through my mental health practice, is one antidote to patterns which develop early on, and ones in which may have been adaptive in childhood but become maladaptive as adults. In other words, certain actions and perceptions which got us through the minefields of childhood often remain unchecked and lock us in to unhealthy patterns as adults.

The first element of the spiral is Awareness, and it is important to understand that awareness has several components and levels. The first level of awareness is that there is a pattern to the types of problems or challenges you have. The next level is to acknowledge that you play a part in the patterns and are therefore, the patterns can be changed. The next level of awareness is to recognize that these patterns serve a purpose, which may be unconscious. The final component is to recognize that you may have to change the means to these unconscious goals or actually change the goals themselves in order to be more fulfilled and contented.



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The second element of the adaptive spiral is Accepting Responsibility, which includes first being Willing to take a look at yourself in as non-defensive a manner as possible. Accepting responsibility also means making Decisions about examining your motivations, choices, and what you wish to change. Growth stems from accepting that there are new ways of being and that you can take healthy risks to push the envelope of your comfort zones.

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The third element of the spiral is Perception, which includes how you view yourself in relation to others and the belief system which you developed early on in life. It includes thoughts, both automatic and more purposeful, as well as attitudes. Even mood and how you react to others while in certain moods relate to perception.

The fourth element, Strength, includes the ability to have courage, which includes the courage to accept our imperfections, to look at yourself honestly, and to change. Perseverance, which is a type of strength, includes knowing that change takes time. Part of courage is accepting your strengths; as a lesbigoay individual, you have had to go through some painful times with family and friends during the coming out process. Remembering that you got through those times can be helpful in changing long-standing patterns.



The fifth component is Identification, which refers to realizing that you are not the only one who thinks the way you do and has these patterns. Realizing you are not alone can reduce any shame involved over being who you are, which includes being a lesbigoay individual.

Learning to Trust, the sixth element, means being able to first trust yourself and your feelings and perceptions. It also includes understanding there are various types of trust and discerning who you can trust with which type.

Regarding Action, the final element of the spiral, it has been my experience that long-lasting change come in small increments. A gung-ho approach to anything (a prime example is diets) is usually self-defeating and may be part of a vicious cycle.

Overcoming vicious cycles and patterns does not exist in a straight line. Growth includes pitfalls and steps forward as well as back, in addition to visiting the same places but at different levels of awareness. Often, it takes the help of a professional or a place where you can go to feel safe to explore yourself, which includes self-help groups as well as with self-help books and with good, honest friends. Whichever resources you utilize in your self-examination, remember that it may be a scary, but potentially enriching experience.

*This article was submitted to The Voice by Dr. Chernin.*

**Dr. Jeffrey Chernin is a psychotherapist and author in Carmel, California. He has written numerous articles and the book "Counseling Lesbians and Gay Men in Individual, Couple, and Group Settings." Comments? [REDACTED]**

# FIRST U.S. LESBIAN HEALTH REPORT



**SUMMARY: The 1st federally funded study of lesbian health concerns finds suggestions of increased breast cancer risk factors and homophobia-induced stress, but mostly finds that lesbians have been ignored.**

U.S. research on lesbian health has been far too scanty, and one reason is that researchers perceive a stigma attached to the work. Those are two of the conclusions of "**Lesbian Health: Current Assessment and Directions for the Future**," a report by the distinguished National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine (IOM) supported with the first federal funds (a 1997 grant by the National Institutes of Health's Office of Research on Women's Health) ever allocated for a comprehensive assessment of the research and issues surrounding the particular health needs of lesbians.

"Journal of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association" co-editor Jocelyn White, MD called the release of the report "a landmark day in the history of

lesbian health" because the IOM "underscores the importance of ensuring that lesbians are included in every significant research study on women's health," and because the report "will help guide the research community as it develops a comprehensive research agenda for lesbian health over the next decade."

The IOM, which is frequently called on by government to provide independent, non-partisan recommendations for public policy, set up a Committee on Lesbian Health Research Priorities in 1997 with a mandate to review and assess existing research on lesbian health, to examine issues of methodology in conducting that research, and to make recommendations for future research. The new report represents that group's long-awaited findings.

Lesbian orientation per se was not found to present a special risk for any disease. However generally, the report found that so little research has been done that no real conclusions can be reached on any given issue of lesbian

physical or mental health; **even defining "lesbian" is a problem the report investigates.** There are indications that lesbians are not receiving adequate medical care for reasons including a lack of knowledgeable practitioners (one study found that 20% of lesbians had visited physicians with no knowledge of lesbians) and a lack of health insurance (which domestic partner health benefits could remedy for some). There are suggestions that the stress of societal homophobia may affect lesbians' physical and mental health, and that lesbians as a group may have a higher incidence of certain factors associated with increased breast cancer risk -- but there's not enough data to be conclusive. **There are also reports of health myths in the community, such as the false notion that lesbians don't need regular Pap smears.** Some of the conditions for which IOM examined lesbians' risks included mental illness, HIV, chemical abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases.

The report defines three specific research priorities for the future: in-

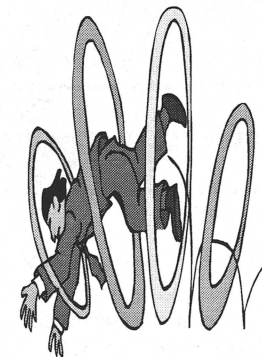
creased research on lesbian health and the development of more sophisticated methods for conducting it; increased research on how to define sexual orientation and how to acknowledge the diversity among lesbians; and increased research on the barriers to lesbians' accessing mental and physical health care and ways to overcome them.

It also makes eight specific recommendations, including: increased federal funding for lesbian health research; routine inclusion of questions on sexual orientation in

women's health studies; development of research designs that will include the diversity of lesbians; a survey big enough to assess differences in health risks between lesbians and other women; and training of researchers to study lesbian health.

The report called on the government to increase funding for such studies, but the Human Rights Campaign urged private funders to do so as well. HRC also expressed the hope that the report itself would help to remove researchers' perceptions

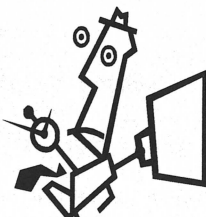
that work in this field might damage their careers.--NewsPlanet Staff  
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2. **Free and Confidential Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinics:**  
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**THE BASICS OF RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLANS (RRSP)**

**PART TWO OF TWO**

**By Darren Kregar (Econmical Tax Services)**

Now that you have put money into your RRSP, at some point, those funds are going to be withdrawn. Most commonly, you will withdraw from your RRSP when you retire. However, there may be times when you need to make RRSP withdrawals sooner.

But beware, if you have 20 years until retirement and you withdraw \$20,000, you will be giving up over \$134,550.00 in retirement savings because of your withdrawal assuming a 10% return on your RRSP. However if you still plan to withdraw from your RRSP there are some tax-efficient ways to do this.

**No or Low Income**

Make RRSP withdrawals during periods of no or low income. If you are unemployed or on disability leave, or perhaps

launching a new business your income may be quite low. If you're total taxable income from all sources is below \$29,590.00, your marginal tax rate (this is the combined federal and provincial tax rate) is about 25%. The most taxable income one can earn without paying any tax is the basic personal amount plus a supplementary tax credit which combined is \$6,707.00.

You must realize that any withdrawal from a RRSP is subject to a withholding tax. The withholding tax is 10% on withdrawals of \$5,000 or less, 20% on withdrawals of \$5,001 to \$15,000 and 30% on withdrawals over \$15,000. These withholdings are NOT penalties. They should be treated as an installment on your taxes owing for the year. In most cases these withholdings won't be enough to satisfy your full tax bill and you will be

required to make up the difference when you file your tax return for the year.

**Buying a Home**

Use your RRSP to buy a home. In 1992 the Department of Finance introduced the Home Buyers Plan (HBP) which was designed to help certain Canadians use RRSP money tax-free in order to buy a home. You are entitled to withdraw up to \$20,000 from your RRSP for buying a home, as long as you haven't owned a home in the last four years. If you are married, then you and your spouse will each be entitled to a \$20,000 withdrawal, provided neither of you has



owned a home in the last four years and you are buying the home jointly. (As far as I know same-sex couples could put in 20,000 each to purchase a new home. Revenue Canada would only consider you both to be co-habiting and purchasing the home together. I will look into this further. (DK)

Once you have made your withdrawal under the HBP, you must close the purchase of a home by October 1 of the following year. If you make a withdrawal in 1999, your purchase must close by October 1, 2000.

Any withdrawal under the HBP must be repaid to your RRSP in equal annual installments over a 15 year period. Your first payment will have to be made in the second year after the year of your withdrawal. For example, you withdrew \$15,000 on July 31, 1999, you'd make your first repayment in the year 2001. This repayment can be made within the usual RRSP deadlines for that year. That is you have until Mar 1, 2002 to make your first payment. Don't worry if you miss the payment, it will be added to

your taxable income.

Be sure that any withdrawals from your RRSP has been in your RRSP for more than 90 days.

**Going to School**

Use your RRSP money for full-time education for you or your spouse. This program is very similar to the HBP. You will be allowed to take up to \$10,000.00 each year over a four year period, to a maximum of \$20,000 in total from your RRSP for education for you or your spouse. Note: "Full-time" does not have to mean four years of schooling, it can mean a three month enrollment in a qualifying educational program at an eligible institution. If you are disabled - full time isn't a requirement, you can attend part-time to be eligible for this plan.

If you drop out of the program, you will face tax on the amount of your RRSP

withdrawal unless you meet one of the following three condition:

- You withdraw from the educational program more than two months after the year of your RRSP withdrawal.
- Less than 75% of your tuition costs are refundable when you withdraw from the program.
- You enroll in another qualifying program on a timely basis
- OR you can by-pass the tax hit by repaying the amount withdrawn and filing an approved form with Revenue Canada.

As with the HBP You will have to repay the amounts withdrawn back to your RRSP over a 10 year period. Your first payment is to made no later than the first 60 days of the sixth year after your

**Continued on page 23**



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## BUSINESS FEATURE



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The gay/lesbian representative on staff is **Mark Daboll** - who, as well as being well-travelled - is also gay. What distinguishes a gay travel consultant from any ordinary travel agent is the knowledge to assist customers who request gay or gay-friendly destinations, ac-

offer more unique itineraries - from Easter Island to Iceland.

**From Mark's travel desk:** Some quick tips for gay and lesbian sun seekers: the most popular destinations are Puerto Vallarta (gay beach, accommodations, nightlife and fabu-

Caribbean islands of St-Barts and St-Martin. Manuel Antonio Beach in Costa Rica is also recommended for a more adventurous gay vacation.

**Worldwide:** Australia/New Zealand, South Africa (particularly Cape Town), Thailand, the Canary Islands and Ibiza

(Spain), Greece and several Western European countries are your best bets.

**Closer to home:** Provincetown, Ft. Lauderdale, Lake Tahoe and Palm Springs are still hot spots. Rumours abound about South Beach (Miami) and Key West losing their sizzle, but someone has to make a buck writing articles of fluctuation! Of course who could ignore San Francisco, the self-declared gay capital of the world? My favourite weekend getaway option is New Orleans - without question.

**Even closer:** current listings of gay-operated spas, resorts and B&B's could come in handy, but buyer beware! Such establishments sometimes experience a turnover in management - let's get the orientation right.

Do you want to cruise the seas instead of the sidewalks? People think of all-gay cruises, but did you know that you can also experience a gay-group cruise with your own travel escort?

The ever-popular **ALL-IN-CLUSIVE** packages: So many advertised for heterosexuals - but gays and lesbians want the deals as well and they are going. Find out which resorts cater to you.

## THE BASICS OF RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLANS (RRSP)

Continued From Page 21

withdrawal. For example: You make a withdrawal in 1999, your first payment must be made by Mar 1, 2005. You may be required to pay back sooner to your RRSP if after your first withdrawal, you fail to qualify for the full-time education credit for three months in two consecutive years. If you fail to make the proper repayments in any given, don't worry, they will be added to your taxable income for the year.

### When you Retire

Your RRSP will mature at the end of the year in which you turn 69. By that date you will have to wind up your RRSP and do something with the assets inside your plan. You have three options:

- Make a lump-sum withdrawal from your RRSP. (And have no future savings and pay likely more tax than you need to)
- Buy an annuity with the proceeds of your RRSP. When you buy an annuity you are simply entering into an agreement where you pay a sum of money to a company (usually a life insurance company) that agrees to pay you a

guaranteed sum of money each month for a period of time. Each annuity payment will be fully taxed - not until you receive the payment. One of the drawbacks with an annuity is that once you and your spouse are gone, so is the annuity. Another drawback with annuities is that the amount of your payments are determined by interest rates at the time you buy the annuity.

Transfer your RRSP assets to a RRIF (Registered Retirement Income Funds). RRIFs and RRSPs are much alike except you can't make any more contributions to a RRIF and you must make withdrawals from a RRIF each year. The amount of the withdrawals depend on your age or the age of your spouse. Your assets will continue to grow tax-free until they are withdrawn. Unlike an annuity, you control the investments that are made. A good financial advisor can help you with the right investment decisions. Since you are in control, RRIFs can provide a more flexible income in your retirement years, although you must make the minimum with

## RRSP

Continued from page 23  
drawal each year. Unlike the annuity, the balance of your RRIF will be transferred to your loved ones.

In most cases the best option for most individuals are RRIFs, but be sure to speak to a reputable financial advisor before making the final decision.

In summary if you need to withdraw from your RRSP early in life be sure to visit a tax consultant to see what the tax consequences will be and furthermore be sure to ask your financial advisor what the loss saving would be in your retirement year. Also as the last tip: **DO NOT GET TAX ADVISE FROM A FINANCIAL ADVISOR, AND FURTHERMORE DO NOT ASK FOR FINANCIAL ADVISE FROM A TAX CONSULTANT.** Even though they may know the correct answer, there main focus in business is entirely different.

The above article has been adapted from 'Winning the Tax Game' by Tim Cestrick CA, CFP.



## Gay Networking

By Brad Smith



Surviving in today's corporate world can be a trying task, especially when you're gay. Everyone is trying to climb the corporate ladder and earn a bigger buck than the next person. But it doesn't have to be difficult. Knowing how to play the game and still keep your hair perfectly quaffed at the same time is the key to survival and maximizing your return - financially, socially and professionally.

One of the biggest and easiest ways to accomplish this goal is through networking. This age-old tradition is not just about looking for a job. It provides opportunities to meet other gay professionals, some who are out and some, who aren't, who can relate to being gay in the corporate world. It's great for making friends, business acquaintances or the companion that you are destined to meet.

Networking is about exchanging information too -- stock tips and investment ideas, new

websites, like [gfn.com](http://gfn.com), and even where the hottest parties are on Saturday night. It also enables us to keep business within the community through client referrals to brokers, real estate agents, florists or some other professional service.

### Getting Started

For the novice networker, the best way to begin is to figure out what you want to get out of the process. Once done, pick someone you know who works in the same industry as you and contact that person. (No, this is not your opportunity to pull and "All About Eve" on your gay supervisor.) Invite them to lunch or for a drink, or simply ask if they know where and when there is a gay professionals' event in the area. For instance, in New York, gay members of the financial community - bankers,



[www.gfn.com](http://www.gfn.com)



analysts, traders - meet once a month for drinks, to schmooze and network. In Miami, there's actually an organization called Network, made up of gay professionals. Even in less Metropolitan-like cities, these events take place. Whatever you do though, don't misrepresent yourself and try to be someone or something you're not. Anyone on the corporate bandwagon will smell a social climber or Eve Harrington right off the bat. Be yourself. Facades crack eventually. And gay or straight, cracks or wrinkles are just not pretty. Not everyone can be the gregarious, life-of-the party extrovert. You know the kind: The good-looking, All-American southern blonde boy who charms people with his winning grin and charismatic ability to bounce between conversational topics ranging from Dow 9000 to the opening of Cabaret on Broadway. If that's not you, don't force it. Natural is best. Treat networking like college rush; each participant has something to gain from the other, be it extending a helping hand or professional connections. Places To Network. It's like that classic Jerry Seinfeld episode in which Jerry sees a pretty girl and steals her phone number from his neighbor's AIDS Walk pledge form to get

a date. It's not how you get it, but whether you get it. Volunteering in our community is a great resource.

Volunteers tend to be leaders, movers and shakers in the community - especially in the gay world. Not only do you get to help a worthwhile cause and give back to our community, but also you get to network. Bars are no longer the necessary means for gays and lesbians to meet one another. The world is our oyster and it's up to us how we wear the pearls. You can also surf the web for networking groups. In New York, check out The Network, [www.mindspring.com/~thenetwork.com](http://www.mindspring.com/~thenetwork.com), a makeup of independent professional organizations. On the west coasts, [www.lambdalv.com](http://www.lambdalv.com). While the site targets gay professionals in Las Vegas, its regional networking page lists more three dozen gay professional groups in the western U.S. and Canada. Women looking to network should try [www.sdcw.org](http://www.sdcw.org), the San Diego Career Women Group.

### Do's and Don'ts

Always ask permission to use someone's name when contacting their contact. When calling a

professional contact, always call early in the morning or at the end of the day. No one has time during the day to chat. Never call someone at home without your contact's permission.

When at a function, look professional. Jeans are a definite no-no. Taper your alcohol intake. First impressions are lasting ones. Do not try new fashion trends. The bright yellow Versace might keep your dance card full on Saturday night, but it's not going to get you a job on Wall Street. Keep conversations focused on professional issues. Don't bring up Madonna or whom you slept with the night before. Always ask for a business card and offer yours.

Networking is a win/win situation. Be willing to help those you can along with yourself. Remember the golden rule: treat others like you would like to be treated. Remember, think smart and act smart.



## GAY RIGHTS GROUPS CAUSE AOL TO WITHDRAW ONLINE THESAURUS

### WASHINGTON -

America Online Inc. and Merriam-Webster Inc. halted services for an online thesaurus Friday night after an outcry from gay-rights organizations upset with derogatory references used in the compendium's treatment of the word "homosexual." based in Dulles, Va., AOL, the world's largest Internet-service provider, licenses an electronic version of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Thesaurus.

Merriam-Webster also offers the thesaurus on its own Web site. The companies confirmed they had removed the thesaurus from their sites. In its list of synonyms for homosexual the thesaurus listed "homo," "fruit," "fag-got," among other terms. The activists didn't want the terms removed from the database but asked that the companies offer more guidance on their derogatory nature. Activists also were upset at the inclusion of "pederast" among words related to homosexual because it refers to men who seek young boys as sexual partners.

Merriam-Webster issued a statement saying the company is "reviewing policies regarding inclusion of words that are offensive or inappropriate." The company also said "the thesaurus is not a political tool," but simply a compendium of words "used in our society." "We're sorry about the problems," said Deborah Burns, director of marketing at Merriam-Webster, Springfield, Mass. She said the company would immediately remove the inflammatory words.

The incident highlights the ways in which companies on the Internet are exposed to tighter scrutiny and the speed with which consumers can make companies more accountable for faux pas or misdeeds. Merriam-Webster has published dictionaries and thesauruses since the 1840s, and over the years the company has updated and changed its policies on hundreds of words. Those changes generally happen slowly, however. The controversy began last Thursday morning when Mike Webb, a 43-year-old radio talk-show host in Seattle, logged on

to America Online and began putting AOL's thesaurus through its paces. Mr. Webb had looked at several electronic thesauruses and couldn't find one he felt was thorough enough to use for his work. Mr. Webb typed the word "homosexual" into AOL's database and was surprised by the tiny screen that popped onto his computer screen.

"I'm not for censorship. My only problem is that kids who stumble on these words might think these are words that can be used," Mr. Webb said. Once he saw the definition, Mr. Webb immediately sent it in an e-mail message to an acquaintance at GAYBC Radio Network, an Internet-based audio news service. By Friday morning the activist groups, including the Human Rights Campaign and Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, had contacted AOL along with several of its own subscribers. By Friday evening, AOL and Merriam-Webster had removed the database from their services in order to

make some technical changes.

**Young, Gay and Proud**  
<http://www.pilotonline.com/news/nw0112tee.html>

A story about Jon Leszczynski, a 16-year-old high school student in Portsmouth, VA who is in the process of starting a gay/straight alliance. The story examines Jon's coming to terms with his sexual orientation, long before he felt comfortable revealing it to his mother and selected friends.

The young man is seeking to found the only gay/straight alliance in a Virginia high school, in light of complex statistics that purport to tell the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, including the risk of suicide and a higher truancy rate

The way through the current impasse is to change the broader social, cultural and political environment in which decisions about gay and lesbian rights are made.

Jon himself confronted the fear of violence when he was cornered by his lockers and taunted by fellow students.

After the death of Matthew Shepard, Jon considered leaving high school altogether; instead

however, he wrote letters to his representatives, and sought out support groups. With the encouragement of his mother, whom he had come out to in a letter, he decided to begin the process of establishing the student group. Even with the spread of rumors about that new "fag club," Jon has had 20 students express interest in joining. He worries about the reaction if the group is approved. "He thinks about Matthew Shepard," Eaton writes, "And he thinks, 'If I don't do something, it could go that far here, too.'"

Please write to the Virginian-Pilot and thank them for a deeply sensitive portrayal of a young gay man who has taken up the struggle for equal rights and visibility, in the face of harsh reality.

### Tasmania:

#### From Page 10

The lesson for sexual minorities in New South Wales is clear.

For months representatives of peak gay and lesbian organisations have lamented the Carr Government's failure to give same sex couples legal equality.

The solution proposed by these organisations has

been more intensive lobbying of key Members of Parliament.

But no amount of lobbying will achieve reform as long as there remains widespread misunderstanding of, or indifference to, the rights of same sex couples amongst the people of NSW.

The way through the current impasse is to change the broader social, cultural and political environment in which decisions about gay and lesbian rights are made.

This means moving far beyond the corridors of Parliament House into the clubs, schools and homes of ordinary citizens and speaking to them regularly and directly in a way which has meaning for them all.

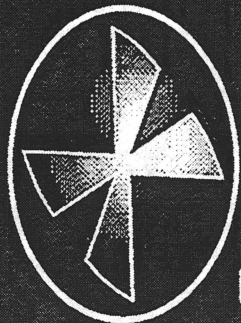
As Tasmania shows, once popular attitudes have changed through this kind of campaigning, law reform will not only inevitably follow, it will be impossible to resist.





# GENERATION X IS YOUR BEST SOURCE FOR GAY & LESBIAN MOVIES

k-w's best selection of  
foreign, cult, anime, indie,  
Gay & Lesbian and  
hard-to-find videos.  
And damn cool mags too.



**GENERATION X**  
ALTERNATIVE VIDEO & MEDIA

[10 REGINA ST. N.] [888-GENX]

Generation XXX is opening soon. Featuring the best in adult video (Gay & Lesbian titles also available).

## COMMUNITY LISTINGS

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

#### Sunday

**Rainbow Metropolitan Community Church** service To attend an LGBT-friendly Community Church try the Rainbow MCC. Services take place each Sunday at 7:00 p.m. at St. Matthias Anglican, 171 Kortright Road, at the corner of Kortright and Edinburgh Road. Call the Rainbow MCC at 519-

**Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth Discussion Group:** A group for people aged 16-25, sponsored by ACCKWA and held in Waterloo, 7:00-9:00 pm. To join, or for more information, call Rob Gascho at ACCKWA at (519) (Kitchener).

#### Monday

**Queer Static** at the Trasheteria, every Monday from 10:00 pm to 3:00 am. The Trasheteria is located at 52 Macdonell in Guelph. This is a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender friendly event, sponsored by **Guelph Queer Equality** and the Trasheteria. No cover, a \$2 donations is suggested. Contact GQE at:

for more information

#### Tuesday

**Guelph Queer Equality (GQE)** meets every Tuesday from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in UC536, the University Centre's Mature Student Lounge at the University of Guelph. Contact GQE at:

for details.

#### Wednesday

**Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group** We meet every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm at <http://www.gomorrahs.com>. Call us for more details: 905-

or email

**GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Group** explores issues in sexual orientation; Hagey Hall Rms. 373/378, University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered people, and those questioning their sexuality are welcome. Information: GLOW's website is at <http://www.csclub.uwaterloo.ca/clubs/glow> **Topics T.B.A.:**

**GLOW's Second Discussion Group** also meets in Hagey Hall Rms. 373/378, University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm.

Both the Second Group and the Coming Out Group meet together in one room for the introduction and icebreaker question, then the Second Group moves to the other room for their own discussion or activity. The groups rejoin for the social at 9:00 pm.

**GLOW Social:** a social evening in Hagey Hall Rms. 373/378, University of Waterloo, 9:00-11:00 pm. Everyone welcome; meet old friends, and make new ones.

**Wednesday Pride at the Spiral Club,** an evening for the queer positive, transgendered, lesbian and gay community. Spiral Club is at 122 Woolwich St., Guelph,

# COMMUNITY LISTINGS

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Thursday

**Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group:** If you are post-op or pre-op transsexual or are dealing with gender dysphoria, come join this bi-weekly peer support group. Meetings begin February 4, 1999 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm and will continue bi-weekly thereafter. Meetings will be held at the Hamilton AIDS Network, 512 James St. N. For further details, please call (905) [REDACTED], or e-mail Janet at: [REDACTED]

### FEBRUARY EVENTS

Saturday February 6

**WOODS Closed\* Event:** Line Dance Instruction at 7 pm. RSVP by January 30th to Brenda R. and Sue.

Tuesday February 16

**WOODS Closed\* Event:** Gloria Nafziger Seminar & Planning Meeting at 6:30 pm sharp! RSVP to Dona by February 9th.

**Are You Paying Too Much Tax?** a seminar at 7:00 pm at <http://www.gomorrah.com> Patricia (Pat) Wilson, Certified Financial Planner with Investors Group will answer questions on RRSP's, investment planning, financial advisors, and more. The tax man cometh! Be prepared! Call (905) [REDACTED] ext. [REDACTED] (24-hour voice mail) to register. Seating is limited.

**Admission is Free.**

Friday February 19

**PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)** meets at 8:00 pm. PFLAG is a support group for people who are learning to understand and come to terms with the sexual orientation of family members or friends. Information, call Evie at [REDACTED] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [REDACTED] (Cambridge) or email them at: [REDACTED]

Saturday February 20

**WOODS Closed\* Event:** In-home Video Night at 7 pm. RSVP by February 13th. Closed means that this event is restricted for WOODS members only.

**Maximizing Business Profits:** a seminar for Business Owners, Investors and Professionals. The seminar begins at 7:30pm, at the Italian Canadian Club, Guelph. To register, please contact Bonnie J. Babin, Financial Concept Group, (519) [REDACTED] or (519) [REDACTED]. The next seminar in this series will be on March 31, 1999

Saturday February 27

**Chairs For Charity '99:** at the Rotunda at Kitchener City Hall. Chairs donated by local artists are currently on display at the Rotunda throughout the month of February. Works include paintings, prints, small sculpture, photography and, of course, functional chairs. This event features a reception, food, music, a cash bar, an auction and fun! All proceeds go to ACCKWA. Call ACCKWA at (519) [REDACTED] for more information.

# COMMUNITY

## Social and Service Organizations

**Distress Line-** (519) 745-1166

**Lesbian/Gay/Bi-sexual Youth Line:**  
1-800-268-YOUTH

**Two Spirited People of First Nations:**  
Toronto-416-944-9300

**AIDS Hotline:** Ontario Ministry of Health  
1-800-668-2437

**ACCKWA** (The Aids Committee of Cambridge, K-W and Area) 85 Frederick St. E., Kitchener, Ont., (519) 570-3687

**ACGWC** (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 204-85 Norfolk Street, Guelph Ont., (519) 763-2255

**AWARE K-W:** A Christian gay-positive group with roots in the Christian Reformed Church, meets every second Sunday evening of each month. For information call Gary Terpstra at [REDACTED], or Fred Rolleman at [REDACTED]

**Brethren Mennonite Council For Gays and Lesbians,** P.O. Box [REDACTED], Eastwood Square, Kitchener, Ont, N2H 6S9

**COLLAGE: (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)** Provides education, support and community on local and international levels. 415-[REDACTED] or contact Sarah at [REDACTED]

**Women's Centers:**  
UofW (519) 888-4567 ext. 3457

**Substance Abuse:** (Kit) (519) 741-3827

**Outline:** A support and resource phone line for people dealing with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues at the University of Guelph and the surrounding area. Phone lines open every evening; Sunday through Thursday, 7 to 10 pm and Friday and Saturday, 6 to 9 pm. Call (519) 836-4550 or email [outline@uoguelph.ca](mailto:outline@uoguelph.ca) web: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/~outline>

### Sexual Assault Centers:

KW.....(519)741-8633  
Brantford.....(519)751-1164  
Cambridge.....(519) [REDACTED]  
Guelph.....(519)823-5806

**Waterloo Region Alliance For Equal Rights-Kitchener-**(519) [REDACTED]

## RADIO SHOWS

**Woman Made Collective Show**  
CFRU 93.3 FM **Airs Mondays 6-7pm**

**Women's Spin-- CKMS 100.3 FM**  
**Airs Wednesday Nights-6-8pm**

**Nowhere To Hide--CKMS 100.3 FM**  
**Airs Wednesday Nights-8-9pm**

**Fag Factory--CFRU 93.3 FM**  
**Airs 2pm Thursdays**

**Leaping Lesbians-- CKMS 100.3 FM**  
**Airs Thursday Nights-6-8pm**

**Queer's Kick Ass-CFRU 93.3**  
**Airs Thursday Nights 11pm-1am**

**Out & About Queer Radio CKWR 98.5 FM**  
**Airs Fridays at 9:30-10:30pm**

**TV:** 10% - Qtv broadcasts Sunday's at 11:30 PM-Tune to channel 20 in KW, channel 8 in Guelph, or channel 13 in London.



## Parting Glances



This wonderfully rich and seductively appealing comedy-drama is considered by many to be one of the best gay films of the 1980s. The action takes place within a 24-hour period and centers around a gay New York couple who are about to temporarily separate for job reasons. The plot is their tearful separation and a party held for them by their mostly gay friends. The party habitués are all finely drawn, creating familiar types for gays; not gay stereotypes. But it is Steve Buscemi who steals the show by giving a bravado performance as a young rock singer dying of AIDS. The film's strengths lie in its simple and honest moments -- a loving embrace, a telling confession.

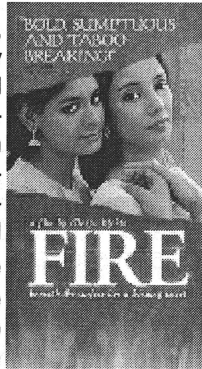
A joyful, knowing gay love story.

## Fire

Director: Deepa Mehta  
Cast: Shabana Azmi, Nandita Das

Review: India, one of the many countries who still limits the freedoms of women comes this original and emotionally charged drama about the forbidden love between two women. The newly wed Sita (Nandita Das) is a young and beautiful woman who comes to live with her husband's brother and his wife Rahda (Shabana Azmi) in New Dehli. Restless and independent and realizing that her arranged-marriage husband is far from faithful, Sita quickly finds her new world stifling. The older Rahda, on the other hand, offers the face of complacency, all the while holding within her rage and loneliness. Within this volatile atmosphere the two women strike up a natural friendship which leads to smoldering passions and a sensual but secretive romance.

Indian-born and educated filmmaker Deepa Mehta has created a taut, brave and invigorating love story that challenges the place of women in Indian society.



(Filmed in English)

## Fire in Bollywood

by Rex Wockner  
You might want to bop over to the video store and pick up the

Indian lesbo-love flick *Fire* to see what all the brouhaha is about.

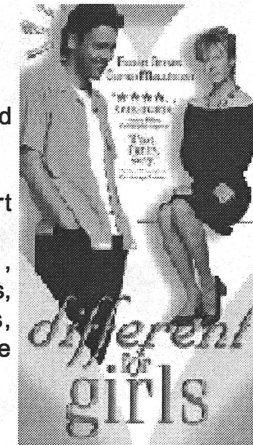
India's Supreme Court has ordered the government to provide bodyguards to the movie's two lead actresses after they were threatened by zealots from the right-wing Shiv Sena party.

Since early December, members of the party have ransacked more than a dozen cinemas across the nation, intimidating managers into suspending screenings of the film by smashing windows and snack counters and destroying posters.

## Different For Girls

Director: Richard Spence

Cast: Rupert Graves, Steven Mackintosh, Miriam Margolyes, Saskia Reeves, Charlotte Coleman



"This film poisons our women," said a Shiv Sena spokeswoman. "It makes them curious about something immoral."

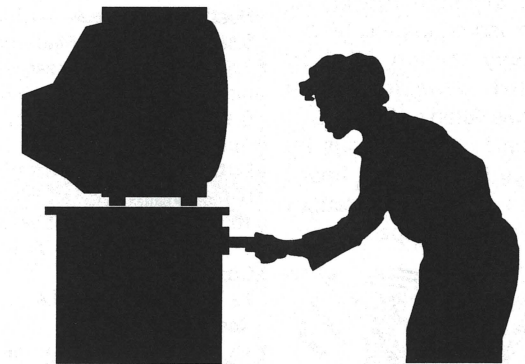
The party's leader, Balasaheb Thackeray, told *The New York Times*: "[The film] can corrupt tender minds. It is a sort of a social AIDS."

Truly demented analogy.

The film's director, Deepa Mehta, knows what's really going down.

"I don't even think it's the lesbianism that threatens them. It's that the movie says women have choices, and that is frightening to a male-dominated society," she says. "I have become the victim of an Indian gestapo. This is so very ridiculous -- and also so scary."

"Bollywood" is Bombay, center of India's huge film industry.



Karl has undergone a sex change operation and is now called Kim.

She is organized and genteel, with a career as a greeting card com-

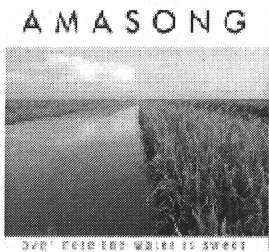
pany. Paul has become a rebellious character, working as a motorcycle courier by day and a pub crawler at night. How they overcome society's prejudices and, more importantly, their own differences, is executed in a breezy, refreshingly war fashion.

Review: An endearing, highly enjoyable and off-beat romantic transgender comedy. Paul (Graves, who played Scudder in *Maurice*) and Karl (Mackintosh) were childhood best friends. Separated after nearly 20 years, they meet up again in London. But things have changed a bit:

# MUSIC



**Amasong - Over Here  
The Water Is Sweet**



**50 Women's Voices  
sing Music from 14  
countries in 11 lan-  
guages.**

Selections include chant by Hildegard von Bingen, devotional music from the Spanish Renaissance, protest music from South Africa, spirituals from the United States and the Bahamas, dance music from Norway and Russia, laments from Ireland and Yiddish Lithuania, "Vesi Vasy Lumen Alle" by Harri Wessman, and Lewis Allan's "Strange Fruit," made famous by Billie Holiday and heard here in a stirring arrangement for acappella choir.



**The perfect Bedtime  
companion for lovers.**

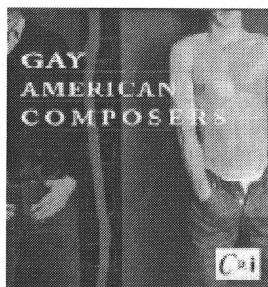


A collection of orchestral favorites for romance and any quiet, intimate times. The CD booklet features all new breath-taking photos from Judy Francesconi.

**Contents:**

1. **Canon** - Johann Pachelbel
2. **Andante Cantabile** - Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
3. **Winter**: From The Four Seasons - Antonio Vivaldi
4. **Pavane Op. 50** - Gabriel Faure
5. **Fur Elise** - Ludwig Van Beethoven
6. **Meditation** - Jules Massenet
7. **Song of the Princesses** - Igor Stravinsky
8. **Romance** - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
9. **Dreaming** - Robert Schumann
10. **Fantasy** - Rose Robbins
11. **Corral Nocturne** - Aaron Copland
12. **The Janiculum** - Arturo Respighi
13. **Lullaby** - Johannes Brahms
14. **Cradle Song** - Edward Grieg

**Gay American  
Composers**

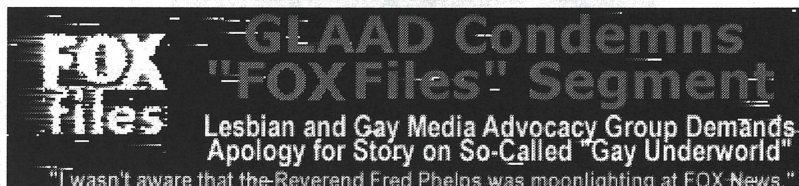


Contents:

1. Robert Helps: **Homage A Rachmanioff**
2. Lee Hoiby: **I Was There**
3. Lou Harrison: from String Quartet Set: **Variations; Estampe**
4. Chester Biscardi: **Incitation To Desire: Tango**
5. Ned Rorem: from **The Nantucket Songs**
6. David Del Tredici: **Fantasy Pieces**
7. Robert Maggio: **Desire Movement**
8. Conrad Cummings: **In The Department Of Love**
9. William Hibbard: **Bass Trombone, Bass Clarinet, Harp**
10. Jerry Hunt: **Lattice**
11. Lou Harrison: **Serenade For Betty Freeman & Franco Assette**
12. Chris DeBlasio: **What Whitman In 1989**
13. Robert Helps: **Homage A Faure**



# TELEVISION



**FOX FILES:  
TURN UP THE HEAT**

**On Thursday, January 21, GLAAD** issued a special online alert regarding that night's episode of Fox Files, the Fox Network's tabloid television news magazine. Having learned that the segment, "Undercover in the Night," might be defamatory to the lesbian, gay and transgender community, we asked that people watch the segment. On Friday, January 22, GLAAD issued a press release condemning the episode (see more below) and demanding that Fox take the following actions:

- agree to never air the segment again, whether on Fox or on the Fox News Channel
- issue an on-air apology on the next edition of Fox Files
- issue a written statement to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community
- agree to work with GLAAD on a segment covering lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, eschewing the sensational and exploitative tone that "Undercover in the Night" was told with.

As of this date, Roger Ailes, President of Fox News and former Republican strategist, has not returned phone calls from Joan M. Garry, **GLAAD** Executive Director, or Scott Seomin, **GLAAD** Entertainment Media Director. Publicly, Fox has only said that they found the segment "a fair an accurate portrayal of the dangerous fringe of the gay, lesbian and transgender community."

**GLAAD** has issued a compendium of statements from community-based organizations, as well as media analysts. We have received numerous copies of letters written by members of the community to Roger Ailes, asking that Fox meet with **GLAAD** and take responsibility for the story. As of this time, Ailes' e-mail address is no longer working, and none of the letters have been responded to substantively.

*Peter D. Martel*  
**Chartered Accountant**  
Kitchener, Ontario  
Tel: (519) 741-1851 Fax: (519) 741-9451



# HIS-STORY

## WE'RE HAVING GREAT SEX, BUT ARE WE HAPPY?

By Michael Shernoff, MSW  
Published in the October Issue of In The Family magazine.

Mark has been a patient of mine for the past seven years. He was when he began treatment, an attractive, successful, white gay man with a supportive friendship network. He had just broken up with a lover after 10 years of an open relationship, and they remained on amicable terms. He told me his now-single life included working out regularly and going out to the bars once or twice a month, where he had no problem finding willing sexual partners with whom he practiced safe sex. His pursuit of other hot men to have sex with was the major recreational aspect of his life. He rarely drank and avoided drugs, but he worried that it might be unhealthy that he was still a "circuit queen" (going to bars and picking up men), and although he knew he was intelligent, he felt his life was shallow. "Although I'm sleeping with some of the most attractive men in the city, often

I'm left feeling a little sad and empty afterward," he explained. On the average, he had sex twice a week with different partners. He generally liked the men he had sex with and thought of them as nice, if not always interesting or sensitive. The sex was always exciting and physically satisfying, so why, he asked me, wasn't he happy?

My generation of post-Stonewall gay men came out in a gay culture that encouraged us to have sex with a stranger as casually as we might shake hands with a new acquaintance. Because sexual freedom was synonymous with gay liberation, a steady supply of sex with unknown partners was a rite of passage for "liberated" urban gay men. It was not uncommon to find men who prided themselves on their long list of sexual encounters and variety of sexual acrobatics. In this sexual free-for-all before AIDS, for most of us, be-

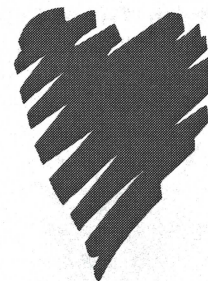
ing gay was about sex. No more repression, no more guilt and shame no more hiding: being out and proud meant getting off as often as possible. I embraced this gay frat party ethos, as did nearly all my friends. It was practically unheard of for gay men to say anything openly negative about the gay sex scene. Those who felt alienated and intimidated by the hypersexual climate were afraid of being branded a traitor, uncool, homophobic or erotophobic. Until recently, there was little, if any, exploration of the psychological fall-out of fast-food, anonymous, "hit and run" sex, and few, if any voices from within the community offered a counterpoint to the paramount position sex held in the gay culture.

Much of the contemporary gay male value system around sex was forged in the free-love '60s and '70s, but did all that erotic energy actually make gay men happy back then? Does it bring

us happiness now? Before AIDS, cruising and the search for sex gave so many gay men's lives meaning and focus. This is still true for a large segment of the gay population today, men of all generations--my client Mark, for example--although less so for some because of the health risks that are now inherent in high-risk sexual encounters. Some say AIDS changed gay men's relationship to sex, and certainly gay men have had to change their behaviors to avoid contracting and spreading the disease. Of course, there have always been gay men in long-term, committed, monogamous or nonmonogamous (or semi-monogamous) relationships, and I don't mean to erase them with my characterization of gay life as one big singles scene, but gay culture--what is reflected in our books, magazines, films--is all about sex between body-beautiful strangers. I know that some gay men enjoy their sex lives and feel quite happy in general, and I am careful not to pathologize their sexual style. Having been there myself, I know the appeal. Sex is fun! I wouldn't want our community to create a norm where coupling is the only state to which a gay man should aspire. But I have increasingly been hearing from gay clients about their discom-

fort with the sexual standards and mythologies surrounding gay erotic life..

-we're all jumpy about fueling homophobic prejudice against gay sexuality--Sadownick's subjects confess that recreational sex had stopped satisfy-



ing the deeper cravings they had for emotional connection. Like my client Mark, and others I have worked with, some of the men in Sadownick's book felt a growing confusion about their relationship to sex as they went through the motions but felt an alarming inner emptiness even while experiencing physical pleasure. Gay men are in the paradoxical position of being defined by our sexual desire for other men--and threatened with violence and hatred on that sole basis--and at the same time we have enjoyed the most sexually promiscuous era of modern life. Gay men have been so occupied with sex that it's the one, unifying ray of light in our often politically di-

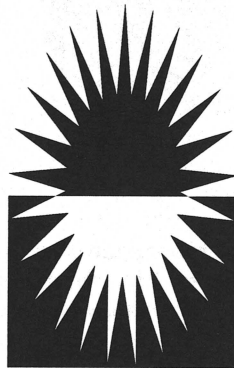
vided community. I have resented the backlash rhetoric that AIDS was a blessing in disguise for the gay community because it "made" us learn how to be more to each other than sex partners. That is an insult to all of us who have lost so much and continue to lose our lives every day to this horrible illness, and an outrageously misguided take on the pre-AIDS gay sex scene. Gay men have always had deep friendships and loyalties--we don't just screw each other. All of us yearn for tenderness from other men--more and more, when I hear clients and friends describe their ideal mate, it is a man who would be their best friend, a hot sexual partner and also a sensitive, emotionally expressive and tender person. Their ideal is not a sexual stud, but a caring, and atypically masculine, man.

At the same time that many men are articulating a desire to find a more emotionally expressive and sensitive partner, the gay ideal is a sexual superstar, a pumped-up icon. Sadownick describes him as "this buff dude one sees on every porn magazine and every gay advertisement that confuses gay men who naturally feel they could never measure up to those standards," and

yet find themselves attracted to aspects of that look--hard, lean body, young, a bit aloof. "There have always been paradigms in the gay world," Michelangelo Signorile says in *Sex Between Men*. "But it seemed in the past that there were more choices, more leeway about what was considered a gay stud." Signorile believes that "the already existing inferiority gays inherit for being gay contributes to their vulnerability to the current cult of body fascism." As a compensation for this inner worthlessness, a man becomes a great beauty, and or finds himself attracted only to Adonises." Sadownick adds that "In addition, racism fueled the imagery. The premium placed on young white boys is really high. This situation burdened many gay men of color. . . To make matters more complex, the rigid roles of gay looks encourage straight-acting behavior. On one hand, it reinforces feelings of internalized homophobia by valorizing straight-acting over gay acting."

Many men who are powerfully attracted to a virile and butch looking man may be confused that, in their fantasies, this mythologized man is capable of nurturing and emotional vulnerability--behaving in

ways that are completely at odds with the stereotype. Sadownick notes that "rather than develop a healthy lack of attachment to the body, gay men, shamed and abused during AIDS, find themselves more hungry for bodily perfection than ever." He quotes one man as saying, "Think, for a moment, of the images of



gay men in the '90s. What comes to mind? Big, buff, young, white. So perfect that their sexiness . . . becomes muted. This image had predominated over the human: The image of a gay man was overtly sexual: the Village People, in all their assorted sexual stereotypes; the Castro clone, with his over-emphasized basket and buns; the phallic superman of Tom of Finland. It was a radical revolution from the limp-wristed pansies of the '50s and the androgynous flower children of the '60s." None of these images glorified an emotion-

ally available, sensitive and expressive man who was softer than traditional American images of what it means to be a man. Perpetuated by the slick and glossy gay pornography industry, which is a socially acceptable and normal part of a gay man's life, the gay sex stud image is now synonymous with our image of the "true" gay man. Romance or any expression of love is never depicted in gay pornography. Younger gay men, who often seek out video pornography as the only source of gay sex education available to them, learn that their gay sexuality requires them to split off sex from emotions. So many gay men spend so much of their time participating in the cult of the body that many are genuinely afraid of the normal process of aging because they dread discovering that no one will want them if they are not body-beautiful with all their hair and an ever-ready attitude about sex.

Not everything about our gay sexual culture is problematic, of course. I have always maintained that gay men claiming the right to be sexual in any way we choose and defying all social convention to be fully sexual beings has been a strength and joy for us, and a sign of men-

tal health. Gay men, as a group, are probably the most accepting of diverse sexual practices and most articulate about our likes and dislikes of any other group in society. As a sex therapist, I regard this facility as a good sign--satisfying sex has to start with knowing what you like and being able to express it. But more and more, I am seeing the psychological fall-out of having accepted a hypersexual definition of ourselves as gay men. The cost has been exploring our emotions and capacity for intimacy. Even putting together the words "sex" and "emotions" will seem, to some gay men, a paradox. In splitting off our emotions from our libido, we may have done ourselves a disservice.

I don't know if impersonal sex is really just an acting out of patriarchal ideas of masculinity and privilege, or an act of personal and sexual liberation intrinsic to our natures, an honest and satisfactory expression of our gay identity. Every day in my therapy room I hear patients struggle with this question. It is a dilemma I am personally very familiar with. Can a man be consistently in touch with his own feelings, and have sexual play with other men be one form of emotional

connection, even if it is just "recreational?" Does every sexual encounter need to be a feeling-filled experience, or is there a time and place for shared celebrations of mutual attraction and sexual freedom, the gay equivalent of what Erica Jong coined "the zip less fuck?" I don't think there are any absolute or correct answers.

To separate sex from feelings and from love may be the ultimate homophobic act, even while it appears to be quintessentially liberated. This is certainly true if being gay is going to mean more than simply being sexual, if it will mean loving other men, not just fucking them. "The few gay men writing today who have undertaken the difficult path of gay individuation demonstrate that to let old attitudes go about sex and identity, one experiences a kind of death," writes Sadownick. "Learning how to feel itself is a kind of death; for at first, the repressed feelings have the potential to be overwhelming and sad. This leads to the possibility by which psychological truths can be experienced for the sake of the development of personality," and the whole person, not just the sexual dimension. It may be the ultimate mark of our maturity as a community that

we can question and challenge our own institutions and customs, even when it is the hallowed subject of gay sex.

**Michael Shernoff, M.S.W., is a psychotherapist in private practice in Manhattan, and is adjunct faculty at Hunter College Graduate School of Social Work.**



"I am I plus my circumstances." --Jose Orrega

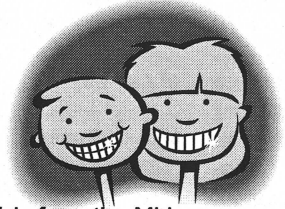
"There's too much beauty upon this earth for lonely men to bear."  
--R. LeGallienne

"This above all, to thine own self be true."  
--Shakespeare

"We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world."  
--Siddhartha Guatama

"When everything has its proper place in our minds, we are able to stand in equilibrium with the rest of the world."  
--Henri Frederic Amiel

"To be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness."  
--Bertrand Russell



## HUMOUR

My wife's from the Midwest. Very nice people there. Very wholesome.

They use words like 'Cripes!' 'For Cripe's sake! Who would that be, Jesus Cripes? The son of 'Gosh?' of the church of 'Holy Moly! I'm not making fun of it. You think I wanna burn in 'Heck'?



Firms keep going out of their way to give me credit. For that, I'm deeply indebted.

Don't just do something !!! Stand there !!!

Sign seen on a radiator repair shop truck: "Best place in town to take a leak."



### Understanding The Engineer

**The optimist:** This glass is half full.

**The pessimist:** This glass is half empty.

**The engineer:** This container is twice as large as it needs to be.

If a man is bald at the front, he is a thinker. If he is bald at the back, he is sexy. If he is bald from front to back - he thinks he is sexy.



Did you hear about the lawyer from Texas who was so fat when he died that they couldn't find a coffin big enough to hold the body? So they gave him an enema and buried him in a shoebox.

I recently saw a condom machine in a toilet which had a 'Tested to British Safety Standards' sign on it...

Underneath someone had scrawled... '....SO WAS THE TITANIC !!'

To all the people who have been complaining about the way Southerners talk, I have just two words for you: Fran Drescher.

"The doctor said he would have me on my feet in two weeks."  
"Was he successful?"  
"Yup, I had to sell my car to pay his bill."

Last week, I went to a furniture store to look for a decaffeinated coffee table. They couldn't help me.

My neighbor has a circular driveway. He can't get out.

I turned my air conditioner the other way around, and it got cold out. The weatherman said, "I don't understand it. It was supposed to be 80 degrees out today." I said, "Oops..."

When I was a kid, we had a quicksand box in the backyard. I was an only child ... eventually.

Four minus two is one and the same.

Feel lucky???? Update your software!



I'd give my right arm to be ambidextrous.

If I were a fraction, my goal would be world domination.

You know those shows where people call in and vote on different issues?

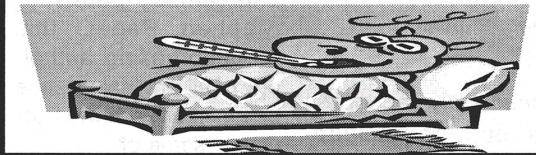
Did you ever notice there's always like 18% "I don't know"! It costs 90 cents to call up and vote, and they're voting "I don't know!" "Honey, I feel very strongly about this. Give me the phone. (Into phone) "I don't know!" (hangs up, looking proud). Sometimes you have to stand up for what you believe you're not sure about!"

I keep my .BAT files in D:\BELFRY

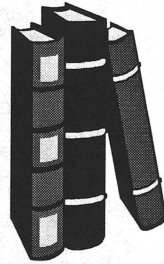
Some people hate waking up and getting out of bed. I enjoy it. I do it three or four times a day.

## REDNECK MEDICAL TERMS

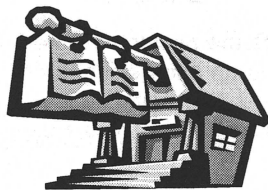
- Benign:** What you be after you be eight.
- Artery:** The study of paintings.
- Bacteria:** Back door to cafeteria.
- Barium:** What doctors do when patients die.
- Caesarian Section:** A neighborhood in Rome.
- Catscan:** Searching for Kitty.
- Cauterize:** Made eye contact with her.
- Colic:** A sheep dog.
- Coma:** A punctuation mark.
- D&C:** Where Washington is.
- Dilate:** To live long.
- Enema:** Not a friend.
- Fester:** Quicker than someone else.
- Fibula:** A small lie.
- Genital:** Non-Jewish person.
- G.I.Series:** World Series of military baseball.
- Hangnail:** What you hang your coat on.
- Impotent:** Distinguished, well known.
- Labor Pain:** Getting hurt at work.
- Medical Staff:** A Doctor's cane.
- Morbid:** A higher offer than I bid.
- Nitrates:** Cheaper than day rates.
- Node:** I knew it.
- Outpatient:** A person who has fainted.
- Pap Smear:** A fatherhood test.
- Pelvis:** Second cousin to Elvis.
- Post Operative:** A letter carrier.
- Recovery Room:** Place to do upholstery.
- Rectum:** Damn near killed him.
- Secretion:** Hiding something
- Seizure:** Roman emperor.
- Tablet:** A small table.
- Terminal Illness:** Getting sick at the airport.
- Tumor:** More than one.
- Urine:** Opposite of you're out
- Varicose:** Near by or close by



# BOOKS



mainstream's and science fiction's most notable and daring writers - gay and straight - creating worlds where time and place and sexuality are alternative to the empirical environment. Keith Hartman's "Sex, Guns, and Baptists" presents a disturbing view of how the world could end up if the Christian fundamentalists continue gaining political ground; Ellen Klages takes a 90s dyke back forty years to 1950s San Francisco where she discovers her modern sensibilities are utterly alien to the lesbians of the time; multiple award-winning Southern writer, Jim Grimsley, brings us to another world where aliens are all too human. These stories explore physical, emotional and moral landscapes vastly different from the familiar - where nothing is as it seems.



Review: From Kirkus Reviews , August 1, 1998



Baxter, Allan Steele, Charles Sheffield, Nancy Kress, and Shariann Lewitt. A respectable assemblage. The problem by no means particular to this series is the difficulty of producing distinctive, original work within previously defined parameters. Annoying, too, how often the phrase "deliciously sly" crops up in the editorial bits. -- © Kirkus Associates,

**Synopsis:**

Edited by world-renowned lesbian speculative fiction author Nicola Griffith and science fiction and fantasy publisher Stephen Pagel, this groundbreaking anthology of all-original science fiction stories brings together some of

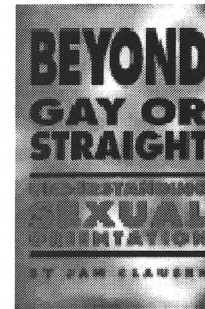
A companion volume to 1997's gender-bending BTL: Fantasy with, this time, science fiction themes and ideas given a gay/lesbian perspective though the contributors include non-gay/lesbians and mainstream writers. As before, there's a welcome diversity of subjects and approaches in the 21 stories here, ranging from the destruction of an intelligent alien species and a disturbing modern ghetto to the military, time travel, space travel, virtual reality, surgery, and religious fundamentalism.

Immediately recognizable authors include Rebecca Ore, Stephen

"The proper study of [humankind] is books" -- Aldous Huxley



The publisher, Chelsea House Publishers , October 11, 1997.

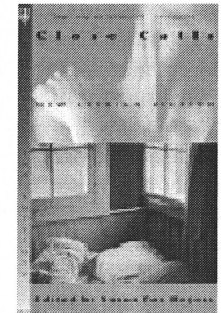


An absorbing and honest discussion of sexual identity. Is sexual orientation an inborn trait, or does it somehow develop in the

unfolding personality? Is it an unchanging characteristic, or one that may shift over time? Is it present in all cultures, or is it simply the way in which certain societies currently think about personal sexual identity?

In this remarkably candid work, author Jan Clausen explores the intense and often emotional debate surrounding these questions. Moving from historical and cross-cultural surveys to scientific studies of modern sexual identity, from the political and social ramifications of "being different" to a distinctly personal analysis, Clausen examines the spectrum of variations in sexual orientation, allowing the reader to formulate his or her own idea of what constitutes "the mystery of desire" and how it informs individual identity.

**Close Calls : New Lesbian Fiction** by Susan Fox Rogers (Editor) Paperback - 288 pages (October 1997)



**Reviews:** Gay Studies Editor's Recommended Book

Twenty years ago lesbian fiction thrived in a number of independently produced, alternative literary journals. Many of those journals have since folded, leaving fewer places for short fiction to appear.

From Kirkus Reviews September 15, 1996

## Gomorrah's

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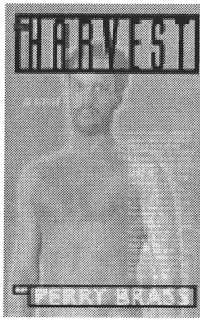


Rogers (Solo, 1996, etc.) demonstrates again her editorial skills with these **21 previously unpublished lesbian stories** arranged mainly--we're told--according to their narrative experimentation. But just how experimental these tales really are is another question--most of them simply adopt traditional storytelling modes as a means for narrating slightly extraordinary events and experiences. Ruthann Robson, in "**Choices**," does use a tricky structure to tell three stories at the same time, all about degrees of suffering. Jeanne Winer's "**The Trip We Took Last February**," on the other hand, features some lesbian heroics as a visit to Mexico leads to adventure for a woman who fears taking risks. "**Mainstreet**," Linda Smukler's stunning, almost unpunctuated analysis of one butch dyke's affection for barbers, is the collection's standout, but "Close Calls," Wickie Stamps' piece about a dangerous flirtation between a "Birkenstock" lesbian and the imprisoned murderer she's drawn to, pushes the fictional envelop. In "**Me and Cleo**," Gwendolyn Bikis provides, with her portrait of New York City homegirls, the kind of verbal electricity the rest of the collection lacks. Z,lie

Pollon's "**Mykonos**," a brief, jagged story, takes on the issue of lesbian rape, while Kathryn Kingsbury, in "**Wicked Stepsisters**," delivers an updated retelling of the Cinderella legend from the perspective of a smitten stepsister. Desire and its consequences among nature buffs are nicely handled by Karen Cook in "**Birding in Utah**," and Rhomyly B. Forbes's "**When You Wish Upon the Moon**" actually casts an aspect of nature as a character. The married or heterosexual woman in love with another woman is a recurrent issue well presented in Emily Fox's "**The House of My Child**." "**Wild Parrots Squalling Somewhere**" is Sharon Lim-Hing's exotic take on love in the wilds, while nutty postmodern narration is covered by Anna Livia in "**Lightning Dances Over the Prairie Like Lust at a Nightclub**." Not all hits, then, but still a strong new survey of the increasingly lively scene of lesbian short fiction. -- Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP.

### The Harvest

**Reviews:** Jeffrey Baines in *Gay Times*, London, England, Nov. 1997 Perry Brass is a hero to gay horror fans and you will not be disappointed by *The Harvest*. Set in an all-



too-familiar future, one all-powerful corporation runs America and guarantees health, happiness, and prosperity.

Transplants are the norm but the organs are removed from laboratory-produced humans. 'Hunky' Hart escapes and how can any self-respecting gay man resist his most valuable asset?

Steven Lavigne in *Lavender Magazine*, Minneapolis, MN, Dec. 19, 1997 (from "Literature in 1997: Brilliance and Boredom.") "The Harvest," by Perry Brass, is about a budding gay romance in a hateful futuristic America. It is one of the ten best books of 1997.



**Two Spirit People:** American Indian Lesbian Women and Gay Men (Monograph Published Simultaneously As the *Gay & Lesbian Social Services* Vol 6, No 2)

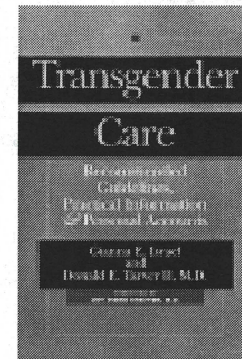
**Review:** *Two Spirit People* is the first-ever look at social science research exploration into the lives of American Indian lesbian women and gay men.



Editor Lester B. Brown posits six gender styles in traditional American Indian culture: men and women, not-men and not-women (persons of one biological sex assuming the identity of the opposite sex in some form), and gays and lesbians. He brings together chapters that emphasize American Indian spirituality, present new perspectives, and provide readers with a beginning understanding of the place of lesbian, gay, and bisexual Indians within American Indian culture and with

American society. This beginning will help you understand these unique people and the special challenges and multiple prejudices they face.

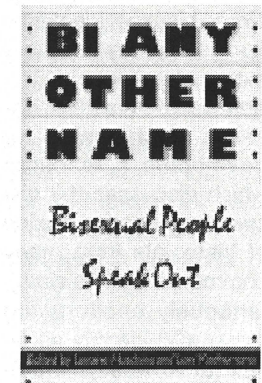
**Transgender Care:** Recommended Guidelines, Practical Information, and Personal Accounts by Gianna E. Israel, Donald E., li., Md. Tarver



**Review:** By empowering clients to be well-informed medical consumers and by delivering care providers from the straitjacket of inadequate diagnostic standards and stereotypes, this book sets out to transform the nature of transgender care. In an accessible style, Gianna Israel and Donald Tarver discuss the key mental health issues, with much attention to the vexed relationship between professionals and clients. They propose a new professional role, that of "Gender Specialist." The book contains a

wealth of practical information and accounts of people's experiences about coming out to one's employer or to one's friends or spouse. Several essays spell out the legal rights of transgender people with regard to insurance, work, marriage, and the use of rest rooms. The second part of the book consists of thirteen essays on a range of controversial topics.

**Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out** by Loraine Hutchins (Editor), Lani Kaahumanu (Editor)



A remarkable moving text which makes my community visible. The essays compiled in this anthology address the many struggles and contradictions that characterize bisexuality known to anyone who identifies as

as bisexual. As a bisexual woman I was very affected by the poetry and prose of many entries and often found myself re-reading passages multiple times. This text documents the personal experiences of bisexual individuals, indicating to me that I am not alone even though I often feel without a community or place to belong. This text is wonderful read for any individual, regardless of sexual orientation, as it explains the beautiful reality of bisexuality by referencing the lives of a diverse group of bisexual men and women. Its approach to defining bisexuality and explanation of what it means to form a strong bisexual identification in society today is extremely adequate. The editors of this text deserve much praise for developing a resource which discusses the discrimination and exclusion of bisexuals from many communities while simultaneously encouraging those who identify as bisexual to assert themselves with pride and seek alliances in order to form strong, supportive communities.

### **The Gift of Reading by Rayne Jarvis**

Unsure of what to give me as a Christmas gift my daughter's boyfriend asked her if I like

reading. Laughing, her response was quick and certain:

"Does she read or what!"

An absolute passion for books has been, throughout my entire life, a constant sustaining force of strength and inspiration. Many times in my life my love and capacity for reading have been genuine and most welcome lifesavers.

Without a doubt, books have not only taught me a great deal of what I know today, but have also been treasured friends, valued counsellors and at times simply a much needed refuge from the world. Above all else, I've always found it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to imagine a world without written words.

Even as a child my future hopes and dreams, the only truths in an insane world, were not only founded in but kept alive by voracious reading. Although many of those dreams failed to materialize my life has certainly not been boring. Like a novel each chapter has continued to unfold before me—from the extremely dramatic and profound, to the unexciting humdrum of daily existence.

However, despite my enthusiasm for reading, there was one lengthy

and devastating time in my life when I did not read at all. Ultimately and ironically it was a book, pulling me out of the depths of myself and into fantasy, that once again grounded me in reality. That book was the fuel needed to rekindle the embers of my dying love—for books and the stories within. To this day, this book, "The Thorn Birds," remains in my memory as a special friend and ally, that opened the door to a greater self-awareness.

As I continue to experience my newly-found identity as a lesbian after just recently coming out, books continue to expand and enrich this growing self-awareness. In fact, just getting up the nerve to go into the book store and look at and or purchase books with gay or lesbian content has been a rewarding and challenging growth experience. I have gained much confidence and self-esteem by doing this. I have gained important knowledge and insight through reading the shared experiences written about by others. The fire of my passion for reading continues to burn steadily to this day and will undoubtedly fuel the fires of all of my tomorrows.

**Rayne Jarvis is a local resident living in K-W.**

# KALEIDOSCOPE

## TRANSGRESSIONS

by Rayne Jarvis

During my life I have probably committed almost every supposable sin, to a greater or lesser degree. As a result will 'God's' (if there is a God) wrath be unleashed upon me? Does it mean I will, in an alleged afterlife, burn in hell?

All I can say for sure is that I have, at most times, endeavoured to be the best that I can be. Despite this effort I have often failed, at times miserably. Does this make me less human? (I can only hope that it doesn't.)

Maybe I am wrong, but somehow I feel that these failures have only enabled me to be more truly whole as a human being. I have often thought that my greatest achievement has been the gradual triumph over many personal difficulties and shortcomings.

When I look around, and see others fallen by the wayside, I can often truly empathize. Maybe this has been the greatest gift of all—the ability to stand or to step back and genuinely see—to not always be judgmental, but instead understanding, and

in some way or another, helpful to those still struggling.

Nonetheless, some so-called sins are not sins at all, except through the eyes of the narrow-minded and morally-righteous. In fact, many of those who condemn without thought or reason, are just simply being viciously cruel and hateful in spirit.

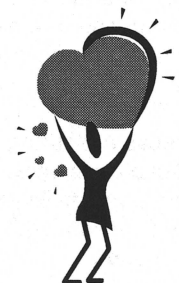
What is more, even flagrant transgressions are often only the flying, broken pieces of a shattering soul. However, this does not mean we should not be held accountable for those actions that are truly harmful to others. Notwithstanding a genuine need for self-protection, we still need to hold in our hearts an authentic sense of compassion. We all invariably need to join together in the true caring for one another. This can be accomplished in many diversified ways, which harmonize with the varying aspects of people themselves. It is only then, no matter how insignificant our efforts may seem at that particular moment, that we can help piece together again the



broken and rejected amongst us.

Simply resorting to stereotyping, either individually or as a community, only creates unwarranted fear which, in turn, leads to senseless condemnation and crushing alienation of select groups or individuals. Also, by failing to see ourselves reflected in those around us, we can quickly lose perspective. In this way a community rapidly becomes, in a veritable sense, no longer a community. Only understanding and sincere caring about each other—regardless of religious belief, colour of skin, economic standing, age, gender, ability or sexual orientation—will lessen the hate and prejudice: so prevalent in our world today.

**Rayne Jarvis is a local resident living in K-W.**



# MUSINGS OF REVERIE

## STILLNESS

By A.J. Mahari

Stillness: stubborn and aching within its own numbness for motion while endlessly searching for direction. Stillness sacrifices in the name of self-protection.

The screaming-quiet is so actively-still. Stillness is more than the absence of movement. Stillness is an angst rippling across an otherwise serene lake at 5 am. Stillness is freshly fallen snow strewn selectively as it floats to the ground. Screamingly-quiet stillness is the absence of sound.

When a tree falls in the forest followed by a frenzied foray of fear does it make a sound as it hits the ground? Is it then to stillness bound? Is this stillness an end or a new beginning: most profound?

Is stillness a blessing or a burden always beckoning the answer to the question: action, movement, when?

In life through all of your strife there is an omnipotent wisdom working when stillness is abundant. Stillness is never redundant.

The truth of a revered reflective absence of active action lends itself: like nothing else: to the potential for an ever-deeper inner understanding, compassion and a gratitude that brings with it still: satisfaction.

Stillness on the outside looks like a fall: but on the inside it is the way to journey according to your call.

Stillness....of mind, of heart or of body is seen by society as lacking. Upon stillness society has continually frowned.

**Is this stillness an end: or a new beginning: most profound?**



## A LAMENT

By A.J. Mahari

Mountains mirroring the magic of nature, mimicking the nightmare of a dying dawn. Mourning, growing grief in the first fear of a burgeoning beginning, angered within the angst of yet another day.

Another new day born again under the hot humourless sun. Heat honing in on the core of woundedness woven deeply within the idea of the absence of freedom fought for, sought after, yearned for....and for what?

Trying to taste this freedom from the tears that flow to soothe the brazen gut-wrenching burning in the belly of my desire.

Day gives way to night. Hard-won serenity lost to fright. Orange-red setting sun boastfully-bleeding, damaged by the unfulfilled potential burdened by the on-coming re-birth of a dreamy twilight: the echo of essence entrapped in the cyclical nature of time.

# MUSINGS OF REVERIE

## ALL

By A.J. Mahari

Waking to sleep and sleeping to wake; the ebb and flow of in and out and up and down; rising to fall, and falling to rise, ...in life this gives way to it **ALL....**

**ALL:** winter, spring, summer and fall; the seasons of your emotions that are filled with hurt, defeat, joy and triumph. Each season, in turn, will yield to you, as you continue to work, live, have faith, and learn, ...**IT ALL...** and will to you reveal your destiny, your life's call.

All of it: all of it: speaks to the silence between sounds. What do you hear in the absence of sound? Can you define it **ALL?** Do you know to what it is bound? Your soul yearns today for the unleashing of it **ALL.** Unleash your passion...for that is your desire and your destiny found.

Sounds serenade succinctly within the shifting sands of soul. **ALL** can be heard. **ALL** can be felt. **ALL** does take its toll.

What do you hear in those sounds sung so softly through your piercing pain?

Sweat-soaked raindrops rolling slowly down the cheeks of tree after tree, silence speaks: in all of the sound absent in the most loudly-quietest aspects of **ALL** that it is to just be.

Life in **all** of its splendor invites each of us to behold **all** of its wonder. We are invited to experience the awe, the beauty of each moment as it unfolds **ALL** that it contains within it.

Are you open to the reality of **all** that beckons your awareness?

Isolated interest in the reality of truth told to the test of time: all you have is all you know; all you see is what you dare to show; all you reap is all you sow: coveted candor cast forth through openly-hidden honour that speaks to all that you are when you are **ALL** that it is to just be.

## JEAN-PAUL PILON

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## The story of a relationship...

### There are two major aspects of spirituality:

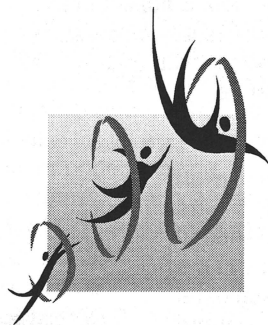
#### 1. A sense of self and personal authenticity

We humans have the unfortunate ability to become alienated from our true selves. Society tries to push us into acceptable roles and identities, but we don't always fit the categories society allows. Our suppressed gifts, abilities, and identities continue to poke their heads out, and part of a healthy spiritual path is to uncover these suppressed aspects of ourselves and live lives of authenticity. We discover the truth about ourselves.

The flip-side of this aspect of spirituality is the discovery that we do not exist as separate beings apart from everything else in the universe. Our sense of personal self is in a way illusionary or incomplete. We are part of the great web of the cosmos, connected to every other human, every other being in the universe. This is a sense of no self or selflessness, and is an experience of the great mystery of transcendence. Both aspects of self are important to a healthy spirituality.

2. Development of the spiritual qualities necessary to live in relationship with other people and the rest of nature.

Ultimately, spirituality deals with how we relate to each other and to all of nature. Healthy spiritualities encourage love, compassion, truth, generosity, forgiveness, tolerance, peace, and courage.



Healthy spiritualities increase our active concern for the environment, and see moral outrage at social injustice as a virtue. Unhealthy spiritual paths do just the opposite, they abet the spiritual qualities that lessen our ability to live in harmony with others. In fact, a good way to judge any spiritual path is to look at what it produces. Unhealthy spiritual paths foster hate, intolerance, greed, fear, envy, jealousy, waste, social injustice, discrimination, war, and a lack of compassion.

Some spiritual paths, especially religions, talk a fine line, but when it comes to action they are lacking. If you are considering a spiritual path, look both at its teachings and how the people following that path actually live their lives.

"I want to love you without clutching, appreciate you without judging, join you without invading, invite you without demanding, leave you without guilt, criticize you without blaming, and help you without insulting."

---Anon.

"A friend is one  
To whom one may pour  
out all the contents  
of one's heart  
chaff and grain together  
knowing that the  
gentlest of hands  
will take and sift it,  
keep what is worth  
keeping  
and with a breath of  
kindness  
blow the rest away."  
--A traditional Arabian  
Poem

"Each friend represents  
a world in us, a world  
possibly not born until  
they arrive, and it is only  
by this meeting that a new  
world is born."

---Anais Nin

## LABELS

By A.J. Maharj

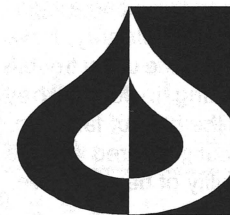
In today's society there is a label that carries with it a distinctive and all too often divisive definition for just about everything, everyone and anything said, felt and or thought about.

To what do we owe this regimented illusion of reality? Is this serving us or is this doing each of us a great disservice? The frequency with which labels are misinterpreted and twisted to mean often something negative and harmful to soul and spirit speaks to their dualistic nature and cross-purpose.

Labeled female, or male, labeled lesbian or gay, labeled fat or labeled thin, labeled butch or labeled femme, labeled able or labeled disabled: and forever trapped in the nightmare of the narrow-minded stereotype freely attributed to you as seen fit by endless segments of society; be they government, professional, work or personal. Labels sometimes bring us together and give us a sense of belonging and sameness but more often than not labels divide us. We live in a society with ever-

increasing isolation.

If you happen to not fit a given label or its polar opposite where then are you left? Diversity in any community cannot be celebrated, accepted or tolerated when it is classified this or that by a given label. Must we always have a name and a place for everything lest we not understand it, or lest we not know how to respond; to care; to live in harmony?



Within our differing-sameness there seems to be a never-ending quest to ascertain the basic facts as defined by culture, class and status in order for us to decide if, in fact, someone is "okay" or **not**. We often have such arbitrary means with which we decide whom to include and whom to exclude.

One can assume that many labels were created, initially to differentiate and delineate, however, labels alienate. They alienate us from each other in a way that we can put words to, and in a de-

finer way that we can then rationalize. Whenever labels are the currency of thought there will always be a "me" versus "you," and an "us" versus "them" by which everyone truly then will be short-changed.

This sociological phenomenon of labeling begins at an individual level. If I don't know the essence of who I authentically am, and have boundaries that set limits that allow me to differentiate where you end and I begin, then I am likely to need to use some other yard stick by which to measure or gage any interaction. Enter a label, usually followed closely by a judgment, followed by some degree of intolerance that can lead to a lack of respect, which can lead to the abusive expression of prejudice, hate, verbal and or physical violence. The minute one labels another there is a desire at some level to differentiate self from other. Why is it that so many in the human condition cannot live with the highly imperfect sameness that is mirrored back to self-- from other?

Labels are meant to inform us but they don't. They misinform us based upon our expectations. Labels belong "on" jars and not "to" people.

## "Hope as an Obstacle"

Hope is important, because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today. But that is the most that hope can do about the nature of hope, I see something tragic. Since

we cling to our hope in the future, we do not focus our energies and capabilities on the present moment. We use hope to believe something better will happen in the future, that we will arrive at peace, or the Kingdom of God. Hope becomes a kind of obstacle. If you can refrain from hoping, you can bring yourself

entirely into the present moment and discover the joy that is already here."

Enlightenment, peace, and joy will not be granted by someone else. The well is within us, and the present moment offers us profound joy."

by Thich Nhat Hanh from the book: "Peace Is Every Step"



## Love Gets Gentler With Time

"Falling in love and being in love are not identical. Falling in love is more intense, all-consuming and passionate; being in love is quieter, gentler and more nurturing. Falling in love is exciting; being in love is satisfying. Falling in love is transient; being in love is long-lasting.

Many people seem to get hooked on the high of falling in love. After the high has worn off--as it always does--they lose interest in their partner and begin searching for the next high. They have a series of short, incandescent affairs that promise fulfillment but don't deliver. Perhaps that's why people like movie stars and moguls, who

are used to getting a high from their celebrity, have more than the usual trouble remaining in love. They crave the high of falling in love, but get bored with the tranquility of being in love.

True love gets gentler, mellower, deeper and more fulfilling with time. It doesn't get more exciting.

## The Whole Is Greater Than The Sum of the Parts

Love involves sacrifice. There is no fulfillment in a loving relationship unless both partners are fulfilled. It is better to give up a little bit of your own happiness in order to ensure that your partner is happy. That's why making a good choice is essential. If you and your partner are too far apart, especially in the essential things--like values, outlook, temperament, background, education, goals and morals--then your sacrifice or

your partners will have to be too big.

When two people are very suited to each other fall in love, they often feel as if they've known each other all of their lives. They tend to be more alike than different in the ways that matter, though they may compliment each other in the ways that matter less. If you and your partner are soul-mates, if you love each other and care for each other, then the total happiness between you will be far greater than any happiness you could achieve alone."

From the Book: "Love Pain and The Whole Damn Thing," by Dr. David Leibow.

"Getting out of a bad relationship increases the probability of getting into a good one."

"Character is a person's most important characteristic"

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# SHADES OF GREY

## Bridging the Gap Between Ability and Dis-ability In A Handicapped World

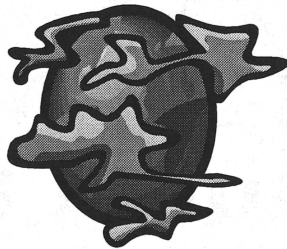
by A.J. Mahari

Able is viewed and defined most often as the ability to do, to function and to produce. Disabled being an opposing term, then immediately takes on the opposite meaning in the estimation of many. This opposite meaning would then leave many with the impression that disabled would mean that a person cannot do, function or produce anything that is of value to society.

Where disability is concerned, whether one is physically disabled or mentally/emotionally disabled or intellectually disabled (or any combination thereof) this qualified term that seeks to define fairly, does not. **Disabled does not speak to spirit and to heart.** The way in which society has chosen to view disability has enhanced a very powerfully-deep misinterpretation of worth and value and further marginalized very important groups of people in our society.

**Whether one is able or not does not define one's purpose in life.** Purpose is not an entirely concrete concept. Purpose cannot be measured only by what one does, has done, or will do. Purpose cannot

be measured by the degree to which one functions, has functioned or may one day function. Purpose is not measured by or contingent upon what one does produce, or has produced or may one day produce according to what society would



demand of each of its members. There are a myriad of things contemplated, being done, feelings being felt, and life being experienced, all within the confines of what society deems to be a void of ability.

**There is a very dangerous mindset that value and worth lie only with the able-bodied, the "well adjusted" in terms of mental health, and the brilliant when it comes to intellectual capacity.** What a tragedy for anyone who does not measure up to these arbitrarily defined standards that are defined by the powers that be within our patriarchal

and materialistic society, to ensure that they can attain more of what it is they already have, while others can lose more of what it is that they've never had to lose in the first place.

Who, then is poised to truly lose if the gap between able and disabled is bridged? It is always those who **have** who are most afraid of those who are the "**have-nots**" because it is the "**have-nots**" that mirror the possibility of loss to those who are able and who are "well adjusted," and who are of average or higher intelligence. Underlying all of this is the fear that is entrenched within the core of the defining societal power-base that could see any "**able**" person rendered obsolete by shifting circumstance or re-definition of the their ability or defined usefulness.

Ability in its widest scope has room for all levels and room for the acceptance and inclusion and nurturance of all in a civilized society. If this is not the case, then one could argue that civility has been the first casualty among us all. If civility is

## Bridging the Gap Between Ability and Dis-ability In A Handicapped World

by A.J. Mahari

compromised in the big picture, individually it will be much more difficult, to achieve and to maintain. Abled or disabled, self-sufficient or reliant, capable or incapable: these are not defined words that we can conceptually ally behind abled or disabled only. Each has a place and more than one role simultaneously within the reality of the human condition as it unfolds and as it is experienced, individually and collectively.

All aspects and conditions of living within this life have worth, and merit esteem, compassion and empathy. The human condition is a broken condition that does not offer us perfection. To whatever degree one is disabled is not a criteria upon which to isolate and compartmentalize that person: that living, breathing, multi-dimensional being, anymore than the degree or level to which one is abled is any justification for putting one on a pedestal.

Civility relies upon some working definition of equality. Equality is a relative term that is not as abundant in the trenches of life as it is in the pur-

suit of intellectual understanding and definition. A life lived, experienced and felt is at the very least equal to a life that is engrossed in the study of the living and being of those who are not the ones "paving" the way for the rest of us.

Some of us, merely (choice for some--not for others) to walk, or wheel, or crawl, or sit upon the path that is our journey in life without having necessarily any inclination to cease to exist or to cease to pursue our personhood because we may not fall

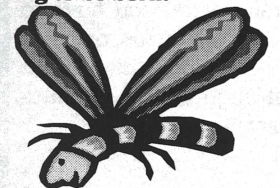


into that tightly defined "able" camp. Too many people are missing too much by creating yet another "**us**" and "**them**" situation in the realm of abled versus disabled.

We are all people first. How much could we enrich our lives if we could look past the packages and the baggage that each of us has to one degree or another? It no doubt depends upon how you look at it. Do you look at the forest, or can you not see the forest

for the trees?

All too often, in keeping with society's definition of abled the worth of that ability is measured in the dollars earned because, "money makes the world go 'round.'" Our world is a collection of societies in which dysfunction is the rule and not the exception. **Abled or disabled, we live in a wounded world that is handicapped by virtually everything we've ever acquired, accomplished or achieved.** Bridging the gap between ability and dis-ability in a handicapped world requires that each of us, individually adopt a newly transformed way of thinking wherein each human being is afforded their due respect, as such, and not deemed worthy, or more worthy according to their contribution as **defined** by segments of society. This bridge that is to span the gap between abled and disabled in this world, in you and in I, **is a world waiting to be born.**



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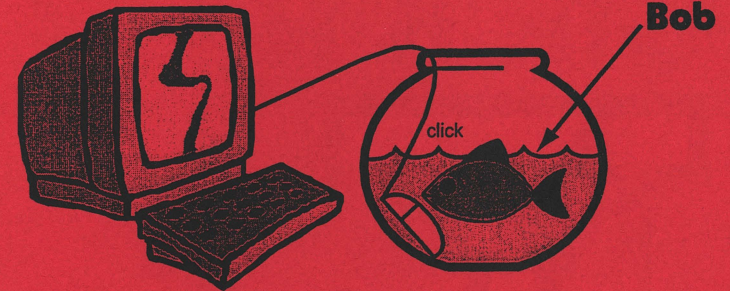
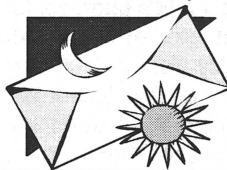
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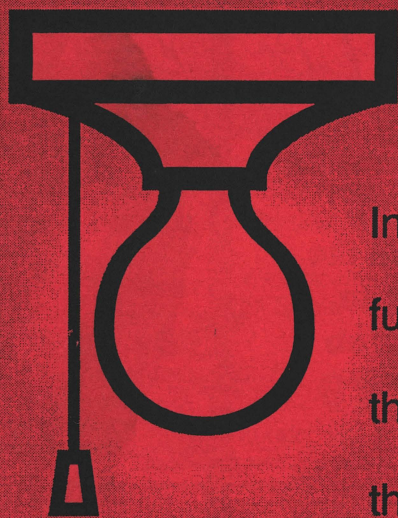
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