

The Voice

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Volume Two

Monday, May 1, 2000

Issue Eight



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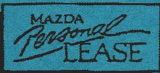
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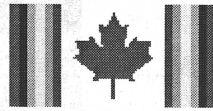
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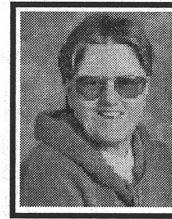
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Pseudo-Sameness?



Just how much does our understanding cross gender lines? To what extent do we have difficulty coming together and understanding each other's experience and interpretation of the world based upon our gender differences?

While there are many successful gender-mixed or integrated activities in our communities, are there enough? What is it about our quest for sameness that leaves us segregating ourselves? We are somewhat segregated from the straight world. We then can be further segregated by pursuing social activities that mostly involve only others of our own orientation and gender. Even then, it seems, often, for many that the other differences that exist between us only serve to further separate or isolate us.

Many groups and or organizations can fall into the trap of "pseudo-sameness" -- the illusion that be-

ing lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgendered somehow makes us more able to relate to one another. Whether or not this is the case, sometimes, more often than not I would venture to say that having more than one's orientation or gender in common is often needed in order to provide for a rich and fulfilling experience.

This can be quite a challenge when fear of being rejected based upon one's orientation is sadly still an issue.

Do we as communities and as individuals work hard enough at building the kind of bridges of understanding to the straight world that we need in order to continue to be more accepted?

Sometimes, in order to be understood and yes, accepted, we have to be willing to give too. We can't just approach the straight world with an attitude of being owed and of taking. It is up to us to learn compromise and to reach out as opposed to waiting to be reached out to. Are you reaching out?

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HAIDER OUTED

Joerg Haider, the de-facto leader of Austria's far-right Freedom party, is a closeted homosexual, according to recent reports in Britain's The Guardian, Germany's Berlin Tageszeitung and Austria's Der Standard.

Haider, 49, also has sex with boys below the Austrian age-of-consent, which is 18, the reports said, and he often has sex in neighboring Slovakia, where the age-of-consent for gay sex is 15.

The papers said Haider's current partner is a youthful member of the Freedom party who has worked as his personal secretary.

"We've known about Haider's homosexuality for about 10 years," the national gay group, Homosexual Initiative Vienna, said in a statement. "On the one hand we think it's positive that the rumors are no longer capable of ruining a political career; on the other hand, an earlier outing of Haider would have been justified."

Haider threw Europe into turmoil early this year when the Freedom party entered the Austrian government in coalition with the conservative People's party. Amid growing protests, he resigned last month as the party's official chairman while maintaining a leadership role.

Haider's opponents consider him a xenophobic, racist extremist who, as the U.S. Anti-Defamation League put it, has made "numerous statements utilizing Holocaust terminology or legitimizing Nazi policy and activities."

The Freedom party's parliamentary leader, Peter Westenthaler, called the reports of Haider's homosexuality "absurd... sleaze-mongering" and refused further comment.

CANADA DEFINES MARRIAGE

Canada's new gay marriage law won't be a marriage law.

The nation is in the midst of rewriting 68 federal statutes in areas ranging from pensions and insurance to in-

come tax and prison visits, so that gay and straight common-law couples will have the same basic rights as married opposite-sex couples.

But, seeking to appease conservatives, Justice Minister Anne McLellan inserted language into the legislation March 22 that reads, "For greater certainty, the amendments made by this act do not affect the meaning of the word 'marriage,' that is, the lawful union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others."

"We are providing reassurance to Canadians," McLellan said. "For the vast majority of Canadians marriage continues to be a unique institution."

The clarification was accepted by the House of Commons Justice Committee in an 11-4 vote on March 23.

Gay Member of Parliament Svend Robinson, a New Democrat from British Columbia, accused McLellan of "caving in [to] Neanderthal backbenchers."

ALBERTA BANS GAY MARRIAGE

The Canadian province of Alberta's Legislative Assembly voted to ban gay marriage March 16 even though marriage is regulated by federal law.

Detractors said the move was legally meaningless.

The gay group Equal Alberta denounced the vote as ill-founded and mean-spirited.

EURO PARLIAMENT ADOPTS GAY-RIGHTS RESOLUTION

The European Union Parliament adopted a resolution March 17 urging its 15 member nations to extend marriage rights to gay couples.

The vote was 265-125 with 33 abstentions.

The parliament also said it "deplores the fact that some Member States still have a discriminatory age-of-consent provision for homosexual relations in their criminal codes as well as other forms of discrimination, in particular within the army."

"I was doubting her [Anne Heche] too when I met her because I thought, 'You can't possibly be for real; you don't know what you're getting into.'"

Ellen DeGeneres to The Advocate, March 14.

First National Survey of Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals Moving Forward Again

Sandra Goundry and Stephen Samis are very pleased to announce that the litigation concerning the First National Survey of Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals has ended with an out-of-court settlement. Goundry and Samis are the Principal Researchers for the survey project.

The Survey was the first systematic attempt to gather data about lesbian, gay and bisexual Canadians at the national level. Samis and Goundry carefully designed and tested the Survey, which was funded by the federal government and distributed by EGALÉ during the spring and summer of 1998. Over 8,000 responses were returned to the survey office in Vancouver.

The researchers retain exclusive ownership and copyright of all materials and assets relating to the project, including the returned surveys and the database. EGALÉ has withdrawn from any further involvement in the survey project. In addition, EGALÉ will forward information related to distribution methodology to the researchers and destroy any survey information in its possession that could identify survey respondents. EGALÉ will also pay the researchers the sum of \$6,000.

"With the lawsuit behind us, we can get back to work," said Samis. "As a first step, we expect to have some start-up funding in place in the next few weeks to enable us to move forward with entering the returned surveys into our database. In the meantime, we will be working to secure funding for analyzing the data and preparing the final report. We hope to meet with the government funders soon to discuss the future of the project."

"Subject to funding, once the data entry is complete we look forward to analyzing the data and sharing our findings," added Goundry. "On a somewhat different note, we are grateful for all the support we received over the past 18 months and hope that we can rely on further support from the community, the funders and other interested stakeholders."

Further information about the completion of the project will be made available as soon as possible.

For further information, please contact the researchers by e-mail at natsrv@istar.ca or by phone at (604) [REDACTED]

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StopDrLaura

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NEW YORK, NY -- A group of veteran gay activists, public relations executives and media professionals have teamed up to create "StopDrLaura.com" As both a Web site and a same-named coalition, the group hopes to prevent Paramount from offering the "Dr. Laura" show this fall.

"Laura Schlessinger has called gays and lesbians 'biological errors,' 'deviant' and much worse," said Alan Klein, a New York-based public relations consultant and spokesman for StopDrLaura.com "We're not about to let her spew her defamatory pseudo-science on national television." Schlessinger's now-infamous "biological error" quote dramatically opens the StopDrLaura.com site, with an introduction using state-of-the art Flash technology.

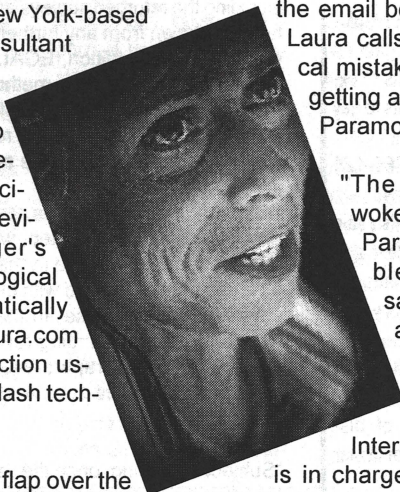
In recent weeks, the flap over the controversial talk show host has escalated sharply. Two weeks ago, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) pleaded with Paramount to control Schlessinger's on-air rhetoric. And just last week, another gay group, the San Francisco-based Horizons Foundation, launched a nationwide ad campaign to educate the public about the danger Schlessinger's anti-gay rhetoric poses to children.

Now, StopDrLaura.com takes the battle online. The ad hoc coalition began several weeks ago with the issuance of a simple email appeal. Titled "Stop Dr. Laura," the email encouraged netizens to contact Paramount, which has poured considerable resources into offering "Dr. Laura" on television this September.

"When Jimmy-The-Greek stereotyped blacks, he got fired," the email begins, "But Dr. Laura calls gays 'biological mistakes,' and she's getting a TV show from Paramount."

"The email really woke people up to Paramount's double standard," said the email's author, John Aravosis, a Washington-based Internet expert who is in charge of the coalition's online strategy. "Had Dr. Laura called blacks biological errors, Paramount would never have given her a show. But since her target is gays somehow that's ok. Well, it's not okay."

The original email has found its way far and wide, Aravosis says. "I was at a lawyers' conference in New York recently and 3/4 of the audience had received a copy, some of them up to 10 times," he noted.



With the new site, StopDrLaura.com hopes to expand its e-grassroots effort. In addition to encouraging people to contact Paramount, StopDrLaura.com features photos and virtual testimonials from a cross-section of Americans offended by Schlessinger's statements. Titled "Our Feelings on Being Biological Errors," the testimonials literally place a face on the targets-to-be of Paramount's upcoming show.

One such testimonial, by Emmy Award-winning producer David Lee, is already raising eyebrows. "It is outrageous that Paramount chooses to be in business with a woman who is literally dangerous," Lee is quoted as saying on the Web site. Lee is executive producer of "Frasier," a Paramount show.



"You would never promote someone who said the hateful things about other minorities that Schlessinger has said about gays," wrote Lou, a retiree in Kentucky in a second testimonial. "Why the double standard?"



Christopher Landon, a screen writer/director in Los Angeles was quoted as saying:

"No one is a biological error, not even you Dr. Laura."

Lorena Manuel, a college lecturer in San Francisco is quoted on the website saying:



"I have gay friends and a gay brother-in-law, and I'm appalled that Dr. Schlessinger would be allowed to inundate the airwaves with her unfounded views such as calling my friends and brother-in-law biological freaks and pedophiles."

Bruce Vilanch, a writer in Hollywood said the following:

"Certainly she has the freedom to speak her mind, but as a Viacom stockholder, I don't believe Paramount has a valid reason to make money off of her hate speech."



Susan Sarandon, an Academy-Award winning actress who lives in New York City, was quoted as saying the following:

"Dr. Laura has a right to her opinion, but I think it's irresponsible of Paramount to not give equal time, at the very least, to a person with a more enlightened and contemporary perspective. I'm totally against wasting the airwaves giving visibility to a person who is clearly in dire need of compassion, education, and a good shrink herself."



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Running with Scissors

By Randy Siegel

For most of us, our first introduction to same-sex sex is a landmark experience. For me, it was a defining one for after it I learned the difference between sex and sexuality.

Savoring the morning's first sip of steaming coffee, I felt the fog begin to lift. A fitful night's sleep had left me confused and frightened.

"Maybe I really am not gay?" I weakly suggested to a friend. "Maybe I can go back to the way things were?"

"No. It's too late for that," he candidly replied raising my panic level another notch.

Although I was not ready to admit it, he was right. Four days earlier I had left my recently-renovated home for a tiny apartment after telling my wife of 14 years I was gay.

What had I done? I had given up a comfortable life for what? Certainly more than sex? I wasn't even sure.

I had been faithful during my marriage. My experience with gay sex was limited to a schoolboy's playful experimentation.

I thought male sex would assure me I had made the right decision.

That night at my bimonthly massage, Toni's strong hands calmed my tense body and frantic mind. After the massage, I entered the steam room.

Seated on the hard slatted bench was a young, muscular man. He glanced my way.

He asked if I was staying in the hotel. I nervously explained, I lived in Atlanta, worked in the area, and regularly scheduled a massage at the hotel. He also worked in the area and used the hotel gym when

his closed for holidays.

His beautiful Hispanic accent accounted for his dark, handsome looks. I realized I was attracted to him. Heart racing, I fled from the steamy room.

He followed, sitting on a nearby bench to cool off.

"Should I ask him for a drink?" my mind raced as I frantically dressed.

"No! Get out of here!" I retorted. I quickly said good-bye and scurried out the smoked-glass locker room doors.

As the escalator reluctantly carried me to the parking deck, I chastised myself, "Here was your chance to find out and you blew it."

"You are a coward, Siegel!" I railed.

Maybe it wasn't too late. What if I was to "run into him" on the street and ask him for a drink? Pulling out of the hotel parking lot, I circled the block.

At 7:20 p.m. I made a pact with God. If he didn't come out of the hotel by 7:30, I would leave. I would know it was not the right time, nor the right person.

I pulled over to the curb and parked.

At 7:28 p.m., the wind picked up and a gentle mist fell on the downtown street. The back door of the hotel opened, and he emerged dressed in a crisp white shirt, black pants and carrying a black leather gym bag.

This was it. "Look at me, life!" I laughed. "I am running with scissors!"

I got out of the car. My jeans hung loosely on my hips, a reminder of the past months' stress.

Catching his eye, I crossed the street to meet him.

I lifted both hands in a gesture of sincerity when I asked him to join me for a drink. He agreed.

Once seated in my car, I riddled him with questions. Conversation helped calm my nervousness.

His name was Roberto. Born and raised in Columbia, South America, he had moved to Atlanta for three years. An international businessman, he had just returned that morning from London.

The wind blew harder signaling an approaching storm. We ran into the restaurant dodging the falling rain.

Roberto didn't drink. I did. We talked of many things: our careers, his love of opera and travel, our dreams and philosophies of life. I cut to the chase.

"You are gay, aren't you?"

He smiled and said yes. I told him my story.

The restaurant was smoky, crowded and noisy. An hour later, we were ready to leave. We paid our check.

Back at his parking deck, we talked in the car. The subject turned to sex, and the air became electric. I was candid.

"Would you like to come to my place?" I asked.

Without hesitation he agreed and followed me home in his car.

As we entered my apartment, my eye caught the blinking red light of my answering machine. I knew it was my wife.

The blinking light was forgotten

when we kissed. Never had kissing felt so right.

Roberto was sweet and gentle. I was not.

"Being with you is like having sex with a teenager," he tenderly teased.

Holding each other, I smiled. My questions had been answered.

Sexuality is more than sex. It's a vital part of who we are. For the first time, I could admit it: I am a gay man. I could never turn back.

Later that night, alone in my apartment, I stared out the window and thanked God for sending Roberto.

As guide and guidepost, Roberto beckoned the way. The fog had lifted.

Randy Siegel is an Asheville, NC-based writer who specializes in the challenges of coming out later in life. He can be reached through The Voice or [redacted]

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DYKE MARCHES: A HERSTORY

By Yolanda Retter

Lesbian in/visibility in the co-gender movement has been an issue since homosexual women and men began organizing. In the 1970s, "Gay Liberation" was an umbrella term that was supposed to include both lesbians and gay males. With the advent of feminism and analyses of sexism, lesbians who felt that their agenda was being subsumed under a male one, left to form their own movement and/or demanded that the term "lesbian" be used to distinguish female homosexuals from male ones.

One sees the effects of this demand in the name changes that co-gender organizations founded in the early 1970s, made in the 1980s. For example, the National Gay Task Force became NGLTF, by adding the "L" word to its name. Similarly, the Gay Community Services Center in Los Angeles, became the GLCSC for a time.

One 90s response to the invisibility of lesbians was Lesbian Avengers, founded in 1992 by six New York lesbian activists who wanted a lesbian direct-action group. The Avengers soon gained a reputation for engaging in guerrilla-type "zaps," street theatre and other political actions. According to Sarah Schulman, a co-founder of the Avengers, the group decided to have a lesbian march as part of the 1993 March on Washington.

Great ideas sometimes manifest simultaneously. Judy Sisneros, a member of the National ACT UP

Women's Committee, recalls that in late 1992, her group also began networking to produce a march, and later collaborated with the Lesbian Avengers and other D.C. groups. The first Dyke march drew 20,000 women. As a point of principle, no permit was obtained. According to Sarah Schulman, it was "the largest lesbian event in the history of the world." When the March reached the White House on its way to the Washington Monument, the Avengers stopped and demonstrated their prowess as fire-eaters. This activity has become a trademark of the Avengers.

Sarah Schulman, noted that by the summer of 1993, "the Dyke March had caught on around the country." The first San Francisco Dyke March in 1993, drew 10,000 women, while the one in New York City drew 3000. Chicago held its first march in 1996, and 1000 women showed up. The first LA March in 1994, drew 350 women, while 1500 showed up for the one in 1997. Lesbian activist veterans from the 1970s who attend the L.A. Dyke March, will note that unlike marches from the 1970s, these events are multi-generational, and multicultural.

Attempts to create a lesbian presence during gay pride, is like most lesbian projects, vulnerable to controversy. Some lesbians and gay men disapprove of a "separate" or "radical" lesbian event. Lesbians involved in organizing the event itself, may also differ vehemently with one another about political

ideology. For example, in 1998, long-time lesbian activist Alix Dobkin, was invited to sing and speak at the Philadelphia Dyke March. However, after Alix wrote an article in Chicago's Frontlines, on the importance of lesbian-only space and its not being open to Male-to Female transgender people, she was "disinvited" by the March organizers. In the end after much debate and struggle, she was reinvited.

The first Dyke March, in Vancouver, British Columbia, was held in June, 1995. Ireland held its first Dyke March in 1998. In the same year, Toronto held its third Dyke March. As in other dyke marches, dykes on bykes, leather, bare breasts, waving flags, cheering, singing and dancing were part of the event.

In Japan, according to The Daily Yomiuri newspaper, "More than 200 people" participated in the "Dyke March, Tokyo '97."

The Dyke March signifies an attempt to promote lesbian activism and visibility in a co-gender, often politically apathetic environment, where many agendas compete for contributors and participants.

In the midst of a co-gender movement that also seeks to integrate transgendered, bisexual and intersexed constituencies, the Dyke March, is a symbol of lesbian visibility, specificity, longevity and diversity.

Partriarchy

by A.J. Mahari

Patriarchy lives demanding as it
takes- it never gives
what it steals
about itself, so must it reveals
Like masters and slaves
still women are imprisoned
to what "he" craves
in some area of life
that is burdened by sexist strife
Women must empower themselves
and each other

Partriarchal attitudes erode
away at the soul of 'womanity'
over time like water infiltrating
rock

'Wo' to the 'man' who fails to see
the equal value of each woman
as she continues, fully herself,
to be

Partriarchy is a living failure to love
whose attempts at domination are
an affront to spirit -- an abomination!

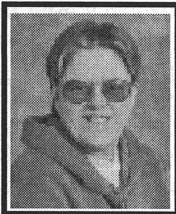
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Opinions: Respect or Abuse?

By A.J. Mahari



Opinions count right? Do opinions have to match yours or be "right" in your estimation to be as valid as you believe your

own opinion to be?

Opinions, by their very nature, reflect what each of us believe to be true and valid. Our opinions are based, largely, upon our own experiences, values, morals, and interpretations. Opinions are the spices of life in an environment of free-speech. They are to be cherished and respected. If they are not cherished and respected, whether we may agree with any given opinion or not, then we, ourselves, threaten the freedom of speech through which we can agree to disagree.

We must respect both differing opinions, and those who offer them.

Recently, I wrote an article for the Kitchener-Waterloo Record on the subject of sex in public places. Some voiced their vehement disagreement. I have no issue with this disagreement at all. Some of the feedback I received, while of opinions that differed from my own, was respectful. In fact it was quite interesting to listen to the perspective of others on this subject.

However, there was also some feedback that sank to the level of

name-calling. This was most unfortunate. After all if one really wants to be heard putting one's opinion across in a respectful and thoughtful way is the best way to ensure that you are being heard. It gets difficult to listen when the communication becomes abusive.

I suppose there were many who wanted to change my mind about the opinions that I put forth in that article. Is the point of expressing an opinion to *change* the opinion of others? Is not the expression of one's opinion in a 'free' society enough?

I think that these differences, that we have in common, make us who we are. Certainly, they are a reflection of the challenges facing all of us as LGBT communities.

Among the criticism, the question of my loyalty was raised. This was both challenging and interesting for me. I listened to what others had to say. I still have the same opinion about sex in public. I don't agree with it, regardless of the sex, or gender of those involved. I do care very much about "our community". I am not, as one caller suggested I might be, a "gay woman trying to be straight" which was explained to me by the use of the phrase "you are being thought of as an 'uncle-Tom'". This to me, was sad. Sad that I would be branded some kind of traitor to "our" community for speaking my own mind -- for putting forth my opinions -- opinions which are valid for me. The inference here seems to be that I must agree with

sex in the park, and or gay men cruising for sex in the park, if I am "truly gay" (of course I think of myself as a lesbian -- the term gay does not fit for me as a woman.)

Condemning someone who does not agree with you is not the way to facilitate respectful dialogue or to ensure that each person is respected. You don't have to like what I say, but, I would like you to respect my right to say it.

Resorting to name-calling and the casting of aspersions onto any person because one does not agree with their opinion is nothing short of controlling and abusive. There is far too much effort put into control and abuse and not nearly enough effort put into taking the time to dialogue respectfully. Why try to shut down what you don't agree with? Why not listen and learn. We can all learn from each other -- isn't that a substantial part of what "community" is about?

We are not the sum total of our opinions. We are more than that. Life presents us with growth opportunities. Love and respect can

thrive in the midst of differing opinions. What would be tragic is if we lost our freedom of personal expression to name-calling-bullying verbal abuse. A difference of opinion is not grounds for the accusation of a lacking loyalty. Each of us must first be loyal to his or her authentic self. Loyalty is not a "gay-duty". Being lesbian or gay does not mean holding to a 'party line'. Being lesbian or gay, does not take away one's right to the free expression of one's opinions.

Everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion without threat of abuse, name-calling, or accusation. "Community", at its best, is a collection of diverse opinions, the holders of which are not abused, but supported for the people that they are, in total -- regardless of their opinions. We must not let anyone or any tactic of anyone prevent us from speaking what is in our hearts and minds. Opinions shared count!

The opinions expressed in this column are those of A.J. Mahari, only, and are not made from any editorial standpoint of The Voice Magazine.

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Barebacking: A Different View
by Dr. Jeffrey Chernin

First, the good news about HIV infection rates: A survey of 7,650 gay and bisexual men in New York, as reported in the June 28, 1999 New York Times, has found that most men who have sex with men are engaging in safer sex, which has led to a major decline in infection rates. A soon to be published San Francisco survey will reveal similar findings, according to Dr. Ron Stall, an epidemiologist at UC San Francisco. Also, younger gay/bi men are adhering to safer sex guidelines in high numbers, contrary to fears that unprotected sex is on the rise.

In spite of the good news, a phenomenon known as barebacking has emerged. Barebacking consists of engaging in sex without a condom, and possibly pairing HIV-negative bottoms with HIV-positive tops. Some men who have sex with men have bareback parties, with an HIV-positive man becoming involved with several seronegative men.

There has been a strong reaction among queer leaders condemning the practice. Apparently, many leaders are afraid of a backlash against lgbt individuals in general and gay/bi men and a lowered interest in AIDS funding or medical care in particular. But focusing on whether barebacking is "right" or "wrong" can divert us from some weighty issues.

First, no one escapes from engaging in some sort of self-destructive behavior. These range from not exercising and eating poorly to smoking or drugging and drinking to engaging in risky behavior.

Second, self-destructive behavior lies on a continuum. Some self-destructive behavior is worse than others. Regarding sex, every gay/bi man has a line where on one side is safer sex, and on the other is risky sex (partly due to the oral sex debate). Crossing the line generally leads to regret, but gay/bi men can find it difficult to stay on the safe side of the line all the time.

At the other end of the spectrum, there is a group of gay/bi men who have given up on trying to maintain safer sex. Within this group, there are men who purposefully seek out risky sex. And within this group, there are two subgroups.

The first subgroup are risk-takers—Xtreme sports, driving dangerously, etc.—people who take chances for the thrill. Their motive for barebacking is clear.

In the second subgroup, reasons for barebacking are more complex. Some gay/bi men have been isolated or depressed for a long time and feel that life is not worth living. Other gay/bi men are tired of people dying and of

limiting themselves sexually. Yet other gay/bi men are fatalistic that they are going to become HIV-positive, and they have risky sex out of simple resignation. Drugs and drinking can alter thinking, so that making decisions regarding safer sex become more difficult.

What should we do about it, both individually and as a community? If you know someone who is barebacking, let him know that you are concerned. Condemning them will do little to change their behavior. In fact, doing so can cause further righteousness (it's my body and I can do what I want) or greater feelings of self-loathing, which can lead to further self-destruction. Expressing concern can challenge beliefs which would cause people to bareback in the first place.

Help them understand what they are doing to themselves by holding up a mirror. In other words, if someone tells you he is barebacking, communicate back to him by labeling it as sexual Russian Roulette.

Ironically, if we approach this issue in a new way, the barebacking phenomenon can help us grow individually and as a community. As difficult as it may be to believe, developing a better understanding of barebacking can help us better understand ourselves. For example, how you react to barebacking may say more about you than about barebackers. To illustrate, if you assume that straight people will stop caring about lgbt individuals because of the actions of a few people, it could stem from your own internalized homophobia—like not wanting visible drag queens in parades because of fear that the media will focus on them and then the general public will think that we are all drag queens.

Also, if you condemn gay/bi men who bareback, remember that self-destructive behavior is on a continuum. In other words, do you have self-destructive behavior that you don't want to look at? Focusing on other peoples' behavior can be a way of avoiding your own.

Furthermore, judging barebackers may mean that you are afraid of being judged. In fact, moral outrage at self-destructive behavior can mask individual issues. Thus, you can use your reactions to barebacking for introspection.

Finally, if you are a barebacker, I would encourage you to take some time to think about why you are doing what you do; I'm not referring to defending your actions, but rather taking a good look at why you put yourself or others in harm's way.

Jeffrey Chernin, Ph.D. is an author and psychotherapist in Carmel, California. He can be reached at [REDACTED] This article was submitted to The Voice by Dr. Chernin.

Starting a Small Business - Part 1

By Darren Kregar

MARKET RESEARCH

To be successful in business, you must have knowledge about your customers and your competition. Acquiring accurate and specific information about your customers and competition is a critical first step in starting your business and also expanding your own business. Market research should be ongoing for any business. You should be up to date on your competition at all times. You should also know if your competition provides a new service or offers a new product for sale. Your customers can also provide you with information on an ongoing basis regarding their needs and wants. Be prepared to listen to them and be able to change if necessary.

Who is your customer?

Knowledge of the customer enables you to determine the market size and what determines their buying decisions. It provides information which will assist in choosing a location, determining product or services to be offered, establishing prices and planning a selling strategy. Key issues to consider are: who will buy your product, who are the primary and secondary target groups, where do they live, how often do they buy, how much do they buy, when do they buy and what are their preferences and needs.

Knowing who your customer is will enable you to target your market more effectively. How to distribute your product, what mediums to use to advertise your product or service and the selling price that the target market is willing to pay can be also be determined more accurately.

What product or service are you selling?

An important aspect of market analysis is to ensure that the product or service meet the market (customers) needs. Issues to address are: what are the key features of your product or service, what are the current trends for your product, what regulations apply to your product or service and what packaging is required.

Who is your competition?

Is there competition that exists now and what new competitors are likely to enter the market in the immediate future? How will your product or service compare and what is the probable reaction of your competitors once you enter the market? Issues to consider are: who is your competition, what share of the market do they have, what are their strengths and weaknesses, what factors are there that could increase or reduce your business.

When researching your competitors, you may want to perform a S.W.O.T. analysis on each of your competition. This being their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to quality, price, service, location, reputation, experience and payment terms.

What price will you sell your product or service at?

The objective is to maximize profits while remaining competitive in the marketplace. Pricing can be based on either what the market is willing to pay or your actual costs. When determining the price of your product or service, it is critical to know all of your costs involved in bringing your product or service to market and to avoid under-pricing or operating at a loss. If the market is not willing to support a price level to cover your costs, it will be necessary to either reduce costs or alternatively, abandon the product or service. Key issues to consider are: what control do you have over price, what are the competitors price, what price and sales volumes are needed to achieve profit objectives and are your prices quantity sensitive (i.e. the more you buy, the less you pay)

Where are you going to sell your product or service?

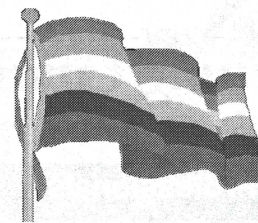
Are you going to sell your product through a wholesaler who then sells your product to the retailer or do you plan to sell your product directly to the customer via your own retail location? Does your level of capital restrict your choice of distribution levels. If you are selling a retail product, you may find it difficult to get your product placed in larger stores located in malls or plazas. To sell your product in these same locations directly may not be economically feasible. When selling your product or service directly, the location you choose should be studied. Key issues include: what is the pedestrian and automobile traffic near your desired location, what competition is located nearby, what is the demographics of the neighbourhood and what other business in the area will attract your target market.

As you may have noticed, market research involves the analysis of your product, preferred location, selling price, competition and target market. Upon completion of your analysis you should be able to determine your promotional and selling strategies such as where to advertise your product or service, what image you are attempting to build and the advertising budget.

Part 2 of 'Starting a Small Business' will discuss the various sources of information in order to do your market research.

Darren Kregar is the owner of Economical Tax Services (ETS). ETS provides business consulting, bookkeeping and payroll services to small business. Darren has over 8 years of experience with small business and has graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University's accounting program.

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GAY MONEY

by Bonnie J. Babin,
Investment Planning Counsel of Canada

10 "MORE" TAX-SMART INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

1 CLAIM INVESTMENT EXPENSES AS TAX DEDUCTIONS

Do you incur various expenses relating to your investment activities? *Be aware of the types of expenses that are deductible for tax purposes.*

2 DON'T GET A TAX REFUND

Do you receive an income tax refund? *Income tax refunds generally mean that tax has been overpaid during the year. Action should be taken to minimize refunds.*

3 MAKE YOUR INTEREST EXPENSE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Do you have non-deductible debt, such as a home mortgage or a car loan and virtually no debt relating to his or her investments? *Take steps to turn non-deductible debt into tax deductible debt where possible to reduce after-tax interest costs.*

4 BUILD PLANNING INTO YOUR TAX RETURN PREPARATION

Do you prepare your own income tax returns? *Tax return preparation or review by an income tax specialist can uncover a number of current tax saving and planning opportunities.*

5 SAVE TAX BY STARTING A PART-TIME BUSINESS

Do you have a hobby or certain expertise that could be turned into a profitable

business? *There are a wide variety of expenses that can be deducted for tax purposes by a business owner.*

6 CONSIDER UNIVERSAL LIFE INSURANCE AS AN INVESTMENT

Do you have a well diversified portfolio and healthy cash flows, and are looking for additional investment options that are tax sheltered? *Consider universal life insurance, which has an investment component and provides tax-free death benefits..*

7 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR EMPLOYER'S PENSION PLAN

Does your employer have a company pension plan? *If enrolment in an employer pension plan is optional, assess the merits compared with the RRSP contributions that could otherwise be made.*

8 GET YOUR INVESTMENT ADVISOR AND YOUR TAX ACCOUNTANT WORKING TOGETHER FOR YOU

Do you have an accountant who provides tax advice? *The combined efforts of a tax accountant and an investment advisor can maximize a client's wealth.*

9 CONTRIBUTE EQUITIES AS A CHARITABLE DONATION-SAVE TAX

Do you regularly contribute significant amounts to charities? *A gift of securities instead of cash can result in a significant tax savings.*

10 DOWNSIZE YOUR HOME IN RETIREMENT TO IMPROVE YOUR CASH FLOW AND LIFESTYLE

Are you a senior who is house rich and cash poor? *Downsizing a home in retirement can free up funds that can be used to provide a steady cash flow.*

Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Please respond to e-mail address: abase@sentex.net Fax(519) [REDACTED]

Bonnie will be holding the following seminars this Spring, with guest speaker Lynn Archbold, Barrister and Solicitor:

May 24th. - Understanding Investment Choices -- June 7th. - Asset Protection

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PAULA'S PRIDE

When I originally purchased my home, I was thrilled at the idea of finally being able to have a dog again. I bought a Cockapoo puppy and somewhere along the line my maternalistic yearnings kicked in and I decided to purchase a female for breeding. When I was searching for her I found Max, my first Himalayan male - and what a charmer! It wasn't long before I realized that Max was a better dog than the dogs were, or at least by my expectations. I was thrilled at being able to give and get affection on my terms and not having my life controlled by the needs of the dogs. Shortly thereafter I revised my plans and started breeding Himalayans.



PERSIAN Colour Point Carriers. The second generation of a pointed/non pointed mating will be half pointed, blue eyed kittens and half solid, copper eyed kittens. Since I have pointed, solid and bicolour adults, I can anticipate a delightful variety in most litters. It is my personal belief that the Himalayan inherited much of their playfulness and sociability from the Siamese (but fortunately not their voice) adding to their placid and gentle temperament. They also adapt to life indoors better than most cats, and were billed in the 90's as being the closest thing you could get to a dog without all the aggravation.

by Paula Millard of Paula's Pride

A LITTLE BACKGROUND ABOUT HIMALAYAN CATS

The Himalayan cat is a breed developed by man with the aim of maintaining the Persian body type and structure as well as obtaining the colour points and blue eyes of the Siamese. It took approximately 10 years of controlled, selective breeding before the first Himalayans were recognized and given Purebred status in 1955. "Himalayan" refers not to a place, but to a temperature sensitive gene which results in the darker colours concentrating at the cooler points of the body (extremities of ears, nose, toes and tail). One can breed Himalayan to Persian and register the offspring as purebreds. The first generation of this mating will all be solid coloured and copper eyed. The Canadian Cat Association will recognize them as HIMALAYAN Non Pointed and The Cat Fancy Association will call them

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Alaska's Inside Passage

By Julie Casto

Alaska's Inside Passage is also known as "The Panhandle" or "Southeast". Spectacular scenery, abundant wildlife, Native cultures, astounding history and exceptional hospitality are hallmarks of this region.

Visiting Alaska's Inside Passage is easy because its communities are linked together by a network of air routes, waterways, and roads. Highways connect to the Inside Passage on both the northern and southern tips. Air traffic is available year round to most of the communities. While cruising is to be the most popular choice to view this part of the country.

Skagway - In the Heart of Gold Rush Country

In 1897, the cry of "Gold in the Yukon" brought many prospectors from throughout the world which sailed the Inside Passage to Skagway. Here, enroute to Dawson deep in our Yukon territory, prospectors were tempted by the 80 saloons, painted ladies and the quick fingers of gamblers and thieves. Today, the wild days are gone, but the memories linger on. You will also find Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, WP&YR railroad, antique auto and bus tours, and daily dramatic renditions of this bygone era.

Haines - The Alaska of Your Dream

On the shores of North America's longest fjord is Haines. Haines is surrounded by spectacular peaks, glaciers, lakes and rivers, abundant

marine life, birds and wildlife. Its meadows and roadsides are bursting with flowers. Haines is renowned for highly talented native and resident artists. Fishing is life for the residents and exciting for the visitor.

Juneau - Where Adventure Runs Wild

Juneau, Alaska's Capital City, with its warm and friendly residents, is nestled at the base of the towering mountains overlooking the Gasineau Channel. You can hike miles of scenic trails through temperate rainforests, tidal beaches and up mountains capped by alpine meadows. The area's beauty is best viewed from the air and sea. View the Mendenhall Glacier, the state's top attraction. Juneau offers convenient access to

Continued on page 47

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Sappho

By Mary Ann Moore

I'd love to go to Lesbos this summer and hang out with women I met when I travelled to Crete in 1995. There I could visit the sacred cove at Eressos allegedly the birthplace of Sappho. We would write poetry in the style of Sappho, dance to Greek music and paint with some instruction from Los Angeles artist Caz Love.

It's unlikely I'll come up with the money for Lesbos (actually called Lesvos by the Greeks) for this summer but I can enjoy a Lesbos style retreat at home. Greek salad topped with feta and oregano, music from Crete, incense burning, a pot of crocus on the table while I read the lyric poetry of Sappho.



Sappho was born on Lesbos about 612 BCE (before the common era), a Greek island that can be seen from the western shores of Turkey. She was the first poet to describe, in the first person, inner thoughts that came from the soul. Just as women travel to Lesbos today to live in the style and spirit of Sappho, in Sappho's day, young women travelled to Lesbos to live in Sappho's company for a while and then return home. Her poetry was meant to be accompanied by the lyre and with dancing. Sappho probably taught her pupils to dance and sing at festivals or rituals to honour Aphrodite. Sappho used the word *hetairai* to describe her companions which describes a close bond in

which one sleeps on another's bosom.

One writer said of Sappho that she found love not to be a passion that wells up from within but a gift of Aphrodite. When Sappho's poems say "you", she is usually directing them to Aphrodite. We have had to rely on the opinions of scholars and translators to tell Sappho's story as only small portions of her poetry have survived. One of her poems is intact, the rest are fragments found in ancient textbooks and among mummy wrappings in Egyptian tombs.

Sappho was married for a time and had a daughter called Cleis. Some scholars think that rather than Sappho's daughter's name, the word is an allusion to *kleitoris*, clitoris. Was she a lesbian? She was definitely a woman loving woman. She did write about men but she wrote about her own active desire rather than her desirability to men. In one poem called "the desire poem", Sappho describes a scene with a man and a "sweet voiced" woman. Sappho goes on to describe her state of arousal at seeing the couple, especially the woman: "... the slightest glance at you puts my speech to flight!"

Most importantly, Sappho wrote about love. The following is from one of her lyric verses as translated by Suzy Q. Groden:

There are those who say

an array of horsemen,

and others of marching men,

and others of ships, is

the most beautiful thing on the dark earth.

But I say it is whatever one loves.

For further information about "Where the Muses Sing: Women's Quest in Lesvos", June 25 - July 9, 2000, with Carol Christ, Caz Love and Kathryn Richer Harris, contact Kathryn Richer Harris/Ariadne Institute, [redacted] Portland, Oregon 97206. Telephone:

(503) [redacted] or at www.goddessariadne.org. There is also a tour of Lesbos for women loving women through the Sappho Project. The tour called "Come Home to Lesbos" is from June 6 - June 20, 2000. You can request a brochure by e-mailing [redacted]

Mary Ann Moore is a writer in Guelph. She will be giving some one day writing retreats as well as a weekend retreat called "Remembering the Goddess: Mapping Your Spiritual Journey". Call her at [redacted] for more information. Mary Ann's CD of poetry, *When My Heart is Open*, is available in Waterloo at Words Worth Books, in Guelph at the Book Shelf, Macondo Books and Ki Design and in Toronto at WonderWorks and Book City. It's also available online at indigo.ca and chapters.ca.

- 22 Actual Newspaper Headlines, Collected by Journalists
1. Something Went Wrong In Jet Crash, Expert Says
 2. Police Begin Campaign To Run Down Jaywalkers
 3. Safety Experts Say School Bus Passengers Should Be Belted
 4. Drunk Gets Nine Months In Violin Case
 5. Survivor Of Siamese Twins Joins Parents
 6. Farmer Bill Dies In House
 7. Iraqi Head Seeks Arms
 8. Is There A Ring Of Debris Around Uranus?
 9. Stud Tires Out
 10. Prostitutes Appeal To Pope
 11. Panda Mating Fails: Veterinarian Takes Over
 12. Soviet Virgin Lands Short Of Goal Again
 13. British Left Waffles On Falkland Islands
 14. Lung Cancer In Women Mushrooms
 15. Eye Drops Off Shelf
 16. Teacher Strikes Idle Kids
 17. Reagan Wins On Budget, But More Lies Ahead
 18. Squad Helps Dog Bite Victim
 19. Shot Off Woman's Leg Helps Nicklaus to
 20. Enraged Cow Injures Farmer with Ax
 21. Killer Sentenced To Die For Second Time In 10 Years
 22. Kids Make Nutritious Snacks

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A two bedroom log cabin at a Lesbian Resort on peaceful Oxbow Lake in the Muskoka's.

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Sundays

Westminster United Church (an affirming congregation): Services are held each Sunday at 10:30 am. The Church is located at 543 Beachwood Dr. in Waterloo.

AWARE K-W is a Christian gay-positive group with roots in the Christian Reformed Church. They meet every second Sunday evening of each month. For more information, call Gary [redacted] at [redacted] or Fred at [redacted].

KW-Friends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Cosmic Bowling, meets every Sunday at 3:45pm at the Brunswick Frederick Lanes. **Sunday May 21 is the last day of this season.** For more information contact Phil at [redacted] or [redacted]. Returns in Sept.

Tuesdays

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: gqe@uoguelph.ca for details.

Wednesdays

Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group We meet every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Call us for more details: [redacted] or toll-free [redacted] or [redacted] email info@gomorrah.com

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 ACCKWA at (519) [redacted] (Kitchener).

Women For Sobriety

Create a New Life: a drug & alcohol addiction support group for gay women meets Wednesdays, 7pm to

8:30pm, Oasis Club, 146 Wyndham St., Guelph. For more info, call Marilyn at (519) [redacted]

GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Groups explore issues in sexual orientation; Hagey Hall Rms. 373/378, University of

Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Information: [redacted] **A social gathering follows the discussion groups weekly from 9pm to 11pm.**

THE COMING OUT DISCUSSION GROUP

- Wed May 3 Coming Out to Yourself
- Wed May 10 Coming Out to Others
- Wed May 17 Coming Out to Parents and Other Relatives
- Wed May 24 Where do I Fit into the Queer Community?
- Wed May 31 Addiction to Love: Self-Affirmation vs Affirmation by Others

THE RAINBOW COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GR.

- Wed May 3 Planning meeting
- Wed May 10 The Queer Community - what is it?
- Wed May 17 Travel as LGBT people
- Wed May 24 What is Gay Pride?
- Wed May 31 TBA

Alice's Dinner Club, a Hamilton gay and lesbian group of food connoisseurs meets every 2nd Wednesday at 6:15 pm. For information call Joan/Barb at [redacted] or Michael at [redacted]

Thursdays

Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group (FTM - MTF) 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 at the Hamilton AIDS Network, 512 James St. N. For further details, please call (905) [redacted] ext.43, or e-mail Janet at: [redacted] www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/cafe/8922/

TRIP-PRIDE FUNDRAISER!

Saturday, May 20

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DRINK SPECIALS!

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24 Charles Street West, Kitchener

Info Line: 519-570-2406

Toll Free: 1-877-635-2352

Saturday May 8

Pride Day Fundraiser at Club Renaissance - Door prizes! Drink specials! Club Renaissance is located at 24 Charles Street West (Kitchener) across from the KW Bus Terminal. Info Line: [redacted] Toll Free: 1-877-635-2352.

Anselma House needs volunteers. Anselma House, a crisis shelter for abused women and their children, is recruiting volunteers for their spring training session. The next training session starts May 6. Call Mary Kalau at [redacted] ext. 12.

Friday May 12

Ellen DeGeneres in Concert, one night only, Friday May 12, 8pm, Massey Hall, Toronto. For more info, call [redacted] or link to www.masseyhall.com. Tickets also at TicketMaster, [redacted] Presented in association with Toronto Pride 2000.

Dance for the GLBT Community at the CAW Hall, 611 Silvercreek Parkway North, Guelph. Doors open at 9:00 pm. Presented by the Rainbow Chorus. For more information call Cory at [redacted] or Robert at [redacted] Or visit our website: www.webpoint.net/~cory/

Saturday May 13

Cosmic/No-Tap 10 Pin Bowling Tournament The KW Friends of Dorothy's, Kitchener & area's only gay/gay-positive "cosmic" bowling league, needs you to come out and raise money for The Canadian Cancer Society (Breast Cancer) and Sick Children's Hospital (HIV/AIDS). Contact Phil Vanderمولen or Paul Curzon at (519) [redacted] or [redacted] (See ad page 29 for more details)

9th Annual London Lesbian Film Festival will be held at the McKellar Theatre, Room 290 of the UCC, at the University of Western Ontario, on Friday May 12th and Saturday May 13th, 2000. Both the Friday evening and Saturday afternoon screenings will be for womyn only. There will be a BBQ at the Spoke following the Saturday screening featuring live entertainment

and local artisans. For more info about the festival, email [redacted] or visit our website at www.lfff.lweb.net

GBLT Dance in Brantford. The Brantford LGBT Community is sponsoring their first GBLT Dance on Saturday, May 13th. The dance will be licensed. The organizers are asking that those interested contact them during the day at [redacted] x 34 or via email at [redacted] for information on the exact locations and time.

Sunday May 14

Waterloo-Wellington Region Pride Committee Meeting at 3 pm. Location: Conference Room, Davis Centre Library, University of Waterloo. Inquiries can be directed to the RPC at [redacted] Visit our Pride 2000 page at <http://www.rainbow.on.ca/pride2000/> NOTE: The next committee meeting is on Sunday, May 28.

Thursday May 18

10th Annual Inside Out Lesbian & Gay Film & Video Festival of Toronto, Canada's largest lesbian and gay film festival, runs from May 18 to 28 at the Famous Players Paramount in Toronto. Advance box office and program information will be posted at www.insideout.on.ca by May 1st.

Friday May 19

PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meet 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. For information, call Evie at [redacted] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [redacted] (Cambridge) or email them at [redacted]

May Events are continued on page 32

Special thanks to David Welbourn for his compilation of community events online at The Rainbow Community Center.
www.rainbow.on.ca/events

KITCHENER-WATERLOO

ACCKWA (The Aids Committee of Cambridge, K-W and Area) 85 Frederick St. E., Kitchener, Ont., (519) [redacted]

Anselma House: A crisis shelter for abused women with or without children. 24 hour crisis line: (519) [redacted]

Brethren Mennonite Council For Gays and Lesbians, P.O. Box [redacted], Eastwood Square, Kitchener, Ont, N2H [redacted]

K-W Distress Line- (519) [redacted]

Global: is available to help anyone in the Laurier community who is dealing with LGBT issues. Staff, students, or faculty can reach GLOBAL directly at the club's e-mail address [redacted] Laurier Peer Help Line 884-PEER.

GLOW Phone Line: 884-GLOW. Information and peer support.

Sexual Assault Center: KW.....(519) [redacted]

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

Women's Centers: UofW (519) [redacted] ext. 3457

WOODS: Women Out Opening Doors Socially is a social club for lesbians and lesbian-positive women in K-W and area. (No contact for Kitchener was made available at time of printing) In Guelph the contact person is Debbie at [redacted]

GUELPH

ACGWC (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 204-85 Norfolk Street, Guelph Ont., (519) [redacted]

GUELPH QUEER EQUALITY (GQE) University of Guelph - gqe@uoguelph.ca

HOWL: Hanging Out With Lesbians is a social group for women (lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gay friendly) ages 25 and up who are active in Guelph and area. Women may contact HOWL through Outline (519) [redacted]

OUTline: A support and resource phone line for people dealing with LGBT issues at the University of Guelph. Phone lines

are closed Wednesdays and Saturdays (for the summer) Open 7 to 10 pm other evenings. Call (519) [redacted] <http://www.uoguelph.ca/~outline>

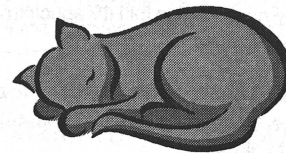
Rainbow Chorus: is a choir that performs and will also be hosting dances for the LGBT community every month through to July and then starting again in September. For information you can contact Robert at [redacted] or Cory at [redacted] <http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Sexual Assault Center: Guelph.....(519) [redacted]

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Help Line: [redacted]

Sexual Assault Center: Cambridge.....(519) [redacted]



If you have a group or an organization that you would like listed here please call, write, or email us at The Voice. (contact addresses are on page 2)

HAMILTON

Alcoholics Anonymous-For the location and time of the Gay, Lesbian and Alternative Lifestyles Group in Hamilton call: (905) [REDACTED]

Alternatives for Youth- 126 James St. South, Hamilton - [REDACTED]

Anonymous HIV testing by appointment [REDACTED] --walk-in sites: YWCA--75 McNab Street Hamilton, Ontario Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. [REDACTED] for more information Hamilton General Hospital Outpatient Department Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. [REDACTED] for information

Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Centre at McMaster University, Hamilton Hall Room 412 - Call [REDACTED] ext. 27397

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth Line 1-800-268-9688

Gay Fathers Support Group-3rd Tuesday of each month. For information Call [REDACTED]

Greater Hamilton Gay & Lesbian Business Association (905) [REDACTED]

GLBT Centre at McMaster Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:30 to 4:30 at Hamilton Hall, Room 412. (905) [REDACTED] Ext. 27397 or e-mail: [REDACTED]

www.msu.mcmaster.ca/services/glb/glbt.htm

Hamilton Aids Network -- [REDACTED] Anonymous Testing for HIV appointment only -- [REDACTED]

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police-General Assistance: Jane Mulkewich, GLBT Task Force Complaints against Officers Street Crime/Hate Crime: [REDACTED]

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Public Health Department-Sexually Transmitted Disease Services, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 to 5:30 pm. A walk-in clinic; no Health Card required. Hamilton General Hospital, Outpatient Clinic

Community Education [REDACTED] to book a presentation or consultation

Emmanuel House Palliative Care Good Shepherd Centres (905) [REDACTED]

MCC--Centenary United Church 25 Main Street West Hamilton (McNab Street Entrance) 2nd and 4th Sunday: 2 to 5 pm [REDACTED]

Narcotics Anonymous Hamilton: (905) [REDACTED] Brantford: (519) [REDACTED] St. Catherines: (905) [REDACTED]

PFLAG--Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians & Gays. For information call [REDACTED]

Sexual Assault Center: Hamilton.....(905) [REDACTED]

Sexual Health Information Line [REDACTED]--Confidential telephone counselling and information provided by a Public Health Nurse regarding sexual health issues--M-F 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m

Street Health Centre-- Wesley Centre [REDACTED]

The Golden Horseshoe Leather Association (Hamilton) Monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month & there is a bar night on the second Saturday of each month. Men interested in the Leather/Denim lifestyle are invited to attend both. For more information email Bill at: [REDACTED]


Women's Centre of Hamilton-75 MacNab Street South, Hamilton [REDACTED]

KW FRIENDS OF DOROTHY'S

KITCHENER & AREAS ONLY GAY/GAY POSITIVE COSMIC BOWLING LEAGUE INVITES YOU TO COME OUT AND RAISE MONEY FOR CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY --BREAST CANCER SICK CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL --HIV/AIDS "COSMIC/NO-TAP"

10 PIN BOWLING TOURNAMENT

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CONTACT: PHIL VANDERMOLLEN OR PAUL CURZON

Registration can also be done directly with the bowling centre at [REDACTED] (Darlene, Sue or Jeff). Cash, Certified Cheque, Money Order, VISA and MASTERCARD Payable to Brunswick Frederick Lanes.

BOWLERS DO NOT NEED TO BELONG TO A LEAGUE TO PARTICIPATE SPACES ARE LIMITED... RESERVE NOW!!

Emma Feels Witty

Single mum and two-time Oscar winner Emma Thompson has signed on to star in an HBO original movie based on lesbian playwright Margaret Edson's Pulitzer prize-winning work, *Wit*. The play takes place during the final weeks of spinster professor Vivian Bearing's life as she struggles with late-stage ovarian cancer. We hear her reflections on work, chemo, body image issues, and mortality, as she comes to realize that stoicism ain't all it's cracked up to be. Actresses Kathleen Chalfant and perpetual gay booster Judith Light both won kudos from critics when they shaved their heads to portray Bearing off-Broadway. Perhaps the role will mean a second Emmy for Thompson, who picked one up for guest starring on *Ellen*.

All About... A Mexican Lesbian?

Lovely Latina Salma Hayek has been longing to show her butch side for a while. The curvaceous actress has a long-in-the-works biopic planned about the cross-dressing, mustached Mexican painter

Frida Kahlo and her quirky relationship with artist-husband Diego Rivera. Unfortunately Salma's pet project has been wallowing in "development hell" for quite some time. But word is, fab queer director Pedro Almodovar, who is as *caliente* as ever after winning an Oscar for his flick *All About My Mother*, is thisclose to giving Ms. Hayek an opportunity to bind her bosoms. The Spanish director apparently stumbled on the project while he was in Tinseltown preparing to give that hard-to-follow, long-winded Academy Award acceptance speech, and now he's thinking about making the Miramax film his next feature. If Almodovar signs off on the script, the film may shoot as early as this summer, when Alfred Molina, who will play Rivera, is on hiatus from the CBS sitcom *Ladies Man*.

Gere-ing Up for Some Sapphic Action

Believe it or not, there will be something for dykes to look forward to in *Dr. T and the Women*, the upcoming Richard Gere flick. In the film, Gere plays a gynecologist having a mid-life crisis (gee, that's a

Continued on page 43

Brad Douglas *Sales Rep.*

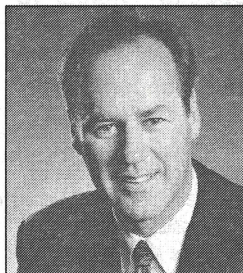
Office: 519-824-9050 Fax: 519-824-5183

Direct Line 519-824-9950 ext. 218

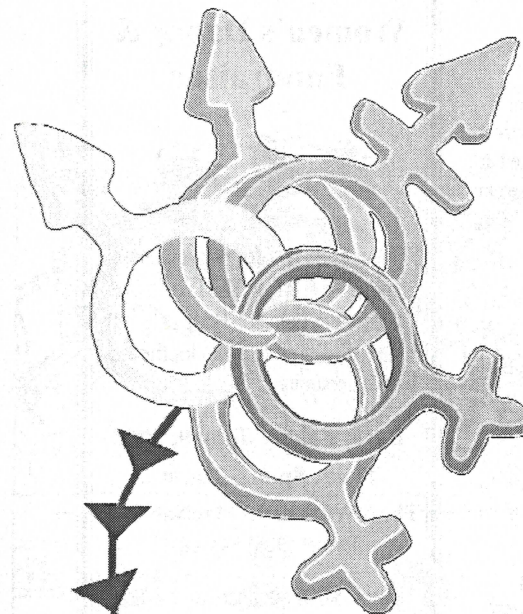
E-Mail: bdouglas@royalcity.com

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(All ads must be submitted in electronic or camera-ready versions.)

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(approx. 2" w x 7" h)

\$30 QUARTER PAGE
(approx. 4-1/2" w x 2-1/2" h)

\$20 BANNER AD
(approx. 4-1/2" w x 1" h)

\$15 SPOT AD
(approx. 2" w x 2" h)

The Deadline for arranging Tables is **May 15, 2000!**

\$35 One Table
(8' x 2-1/2')

\$30 One Table
(6' x 2-1/2')

\$20 Half Table
(4' x 2-1/2')

Cheques payable to Regional Pride Committee, Waterloo-Wellington (RPC). A receipt will be issued, however we do not have charitable status at this time.

Thank you for your support in building a proud community!

REGIONAL PRIDE COMMITTEE, WATERLOO-WELLINGTON

P.O. Box #40028, Waterloo Square Postal Outlet, Waterloo, ON N2J 4V1

Guelph: 519-836-9156 Kitchener-Waterloo: 519-578-6248

rpc@rainbow.on.ca http://www.rainbow.on.ca/rpc/

Continued from page 26

Saturday May 20

Pride Day Fundraiser at Club Renaissance -
- Featuring the Club Ren Girls! Door prizes!
Drink specials! Club Renaissance is located at
24 Charles Street West (Kitchener) across from
the KW Bus Terminal. Info Line: [REDACTED]
Toll Free: 1-[REDACTED]

Wednesday May 24

Understanding Investment Choices - Bonnie
J Babin, IPC Guest Speaker Lynn Archbold, Bar-
rister & Solicitor Legal Issues Confronting Gays
& Lesbians. There is no admission cost for these
workshops. If you or any of your family or
friends would like to attend, please R.s.v.p. to
Linda at (519) [REDACTED] The last seminar in
this series is on June 7.

May 25 - May 27 - May 28

CHRISTIAN LESBIANS TO HOLD GATHERING
Christian Lesbians OUT - CLOUT - will hold a
spring weekend event in Waterloo Ontario May
26-28. CLOUT is a progressive, anti-racist,
creatively spiritual movement among women
from a variety of Christian backgrounds. The
event will be held at the First Unitarian Church
of Waterloo from 7p.m. on Friday, May 26 to 3
p.m on Sunday, May 28. The cost is \$55 Cana-
dian or \$40 U.S. which includes 4 meals and
registration but does not include accommoda-
tions.

Women's Dance & Fundraiser



Finnian Cole, creator of the Lesbian
Comic Strip A Day In The Life, in con-
junction with Hamilton Pride presents
'Out Proud' a pride event for the les-
bian community.

Date: Friday June 9, 2000

Time: 8p.m. - 1a.m.

The YWCA at 75 MacNab St S.

Phone: (905) [REDACTED]

Tickets: \$6 in advance at the Wom-
en's Bookstop 333 Main St E. Ham-
ilton, Ontario. (\$8 at the door)

The night promises food, drink, door
prizes, a 50/50 and a draw for an origi-
nal hand painted T-shirt of the comic
strip characters. All proceeds go to the
filming of the situation comedy based on
the popular comic strip. For more infor-
mation about Hamilton Pride, check out
www.gayhamilton.com/pride

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Saturday June 3rd

8:00 P.M.

At 519 Church Street, Toronto

Tickets \$10.00 - available at This Ain't The Rosedale Library and Woody's



NEW IN HAMILTON

Kindred Spirits: We are a social and recreational group for lesbians and bi-sexual women in the Hamilton/Burlington/Niagara area. The environment will provide a judgment free/non prejudice forum to explore social possibilities with fellow lesbians and bi-sexual women. We will go hiking, camping, clubbing, go to restaurants etc. There is a \$5 membership which will cover administration costs. We are a non-profit organization. For further information please call (905) [redacted] or: [redacted]

B R A N T F O R D

A Rainbow of Hope.
Brant County HIV/AIDS Support Group.
Call [redacted] ext.261 for information. All calls confidential.

GBLT adult social/support group of brantford and area. A safe place to meet people and be yourself. call [redacted] ext.34

GBLT youth support group of Brantford and area. [redacted] EXT 261

Pine tree Native Centre Of Brant Presents: **PFLAG...** Parents, Families & friends of Lesbians & gays Support group meetings held 3rd Tuesday each month. 7:00-8:30pm. all welcome. call [redacted] ext.34 for details.

The Coalition for gay,bisexual,lesbian and transgendered youth of Brantford and area. (519) [redacted] ext.261. call and leave message. All calls will be returned. We advocate for you.

If we are what we eat, I'm fast, cheap and easy.

Why is it that all of the instruments seeking intelligent life in the universe are pointed away from Earth?

Nothing is as inevitable as a mistake whose time has come.

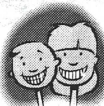
It all looks the same if you're not the lead dog.

I used to be schizophrenic, but we're OK now.

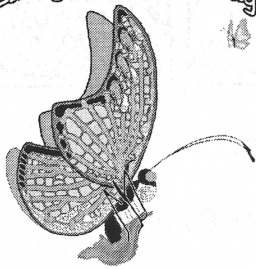
Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon? The food is terrific, but there's no atmosphere.

Camouflage condoms: So they won't see you coming.

Shareware author dies: .GIF at eleven!



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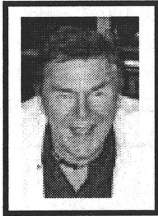
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HOUSEHOLDS ALIKE IN DIGNITY

By Charles W. Westfall



In the recent and ongoing debate about same sex relationships, the objection that they attack traditional family values is heard from all sides. Furthermore, opponents like to say that allowing them would sell society out to pedophiles, perverts and irresponsible clods, incapable of love.

I really don't know what world these people have been living in. It certainly isn't mine. I'm sure it's not yours either.

So, Bill C.23 has passed and Vermont has legislated in favour of "Civil Unions" between same sex couples. A gradual inroad to understanding and acceptance is being built. It is being built, moreover, by those who know that equating Lesbians and Gays with antisocial and criminal elements in society is a major blunder. Oh, we have our share; but, so has everyone else.

In addition, the defence of "Traditional Family Values" seems to ignore the fact that many of these values have placed unreal expectations on family members or been used to exclude others from the "family" fold. That's what the title of this piece is all about. The opening lines of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" do not take sides. They just point out how warped family values can become when they are not founded in genuine love.

Those who defend "Traditional Family Values" like to use Scripture and the Judaeo-Christian Tradition to support their position. Taken too literally, this foundation could prove tenuous.

For one thing, if the Genesis story of creation is accepted, there are major problems from the start. Either there was a lot of incest for the first few generations or God had a Rib Factory in which he could turn out men and women in assembly line fashion.

Then, right there, close to the start, Cain kills Abel, in a fit of sibling rivalry, and establishes the family as a potentially violent unit of society. This is a factor that becomes more and more apparent each day, with new revelations of violence and abuse among family members.

Then Jacob cheats Esau out of his inheritance. A slave-girl bears Abraham a son and both are exiled to the desert to fend for themselves when Abraham's wife finally conceives. Then Abraham almost kills that child and on and on it goes, with adultery, incest, murder. Family power struggles seem to dominate as the human family tries desperately to claim some kind of identity invested with dignity.

Evidences of this struggle have existed to our own times. Notably, the view of family as a patriarchal institution in which the man rules and the woman is some kind of a lesser being. Only recently, has this

view begun to be challenged and revised.

Still, women are still "given in marriage", like a piece of property. Only recently has the promise to "obey" been removed from many marriage rituals. Mr. Moms are becoming more prevalent as women claim careers of note. Women, however, are still not considered ordainable as Ministers of Religion.

Furthermore, marriages today are often entered into out of convenience, necessity or fear. Certainly, there are marriages that make the grade and families worthy of emulation. but, there are also "marriages" that make a mockery of the word and concept.

As well, in a world characterised by speed and change, it is not surprising that "Common Law" relationships are becoming the partnership of choice. Long term commitment is no longer thought of as an attainable ideal.

So, when it comes to family values, I wonder which has the best chance of succeeding: a forced or strained togetherness; a temporary arrangement; or, a public commitment, made and worked at by persons who really love one another and are disposed to nurture the kind of growth in patience and understanding that will help that love grow. In the last analysis, it doesn't really matter, then, whether the partners are of the same gender or of different genders. It is the genuineness of the love that will make the relationship work.

If you like reading novels, one of the best and most entertaining I

have read on this matter is "Call Me Uncle", by Eric Shaw Quinn. Published by Dutton:Penguin Books USA, it doesn't deny the problems; but, it celebrates the beauty. If you can't find that one, try "La Cage aux Folles" or "The Birdcage" or, even in a more circumspect way, "In and Out". These movies represent treatments of a sensitive issue undertaken with compassion and humour.

I guess, more important to all of us, especially as Pride Season approaches, is the reminder that many of us do need and want a sense of acceptance and belonging: a sense of family. Since so many others are hesitant to help us find this, the answer would seem to lie within our own reach.

So what if everyone else lets us down? If we begin to let one another down, then we have no more right to talk about family values, traditional or not, than a school of fish, flock of birds or crowded Food Court or Bar. For me, to be part of a family, any family, that deserves dignity and respect, has to mean more than that.

Charles W. Westfall is a writer living in Hamilton. This article is a Voice exclusive.

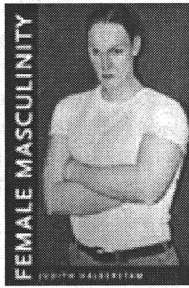
Pride Season is approaching. It's all year round, of course, but is more openly celebrated in the warm summer months. In Hamilton, Pride Days are June 8 to June 11. They include a number of activities, highlighted by a City Hall Rally and March followed by an afternoon of Fun and Games and evening Dance at Dundurn Park Pavilion. For further information, contact

or GOMORRAH'S at 1-800-368-7676. Plan now to help make this year's Pride Celebration here the biggest and best ever.

Female Masculinity

by Judith Halberstam

Paperback - (October 1998) 329 pages



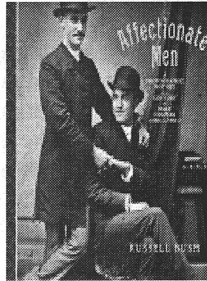
Readers who have followed the postmodern gender debate in the university presses (ranging from Thais Morgan's sedately twisted analyses

of Victorian male lesbianism to Judith Butler's acclaimed Gender Trouble) will delight in the latest little earthquake: Judith Halberstam's deft separation of masculinity from the male body in Female Masculinity. If what we call "masculinity" is taken to be "a naturalized relation between maleness and power," Halberstam argues, "then it makes little sense to examine men for the contours of that masculinity's social construction." We can learn more from other embodiments of masculinity, like those found in drag-king performances, in the sexual stance of the stone butch, and in female-to-male transgenderism. Halberstam's subject is so new to critical discourse that her approach can be somewhat scattershot--there is simply too much to say--but her

prose is lucid and deliberate, and her attitude refreshingly relaxed. Essential reading for gender studies and a lively contribution to cultural studies in general.

Affectionate Men : A Photographic History of a Century of Male Couples (1850's to 1950'S)

by Russell Bush, Ron Lieberman
112 pages 1 Ed edition (November 1998)



"Affectionate Men" assembles antique prints from all parts of the world, forming an idiosyncratic record of love between

men. Over a period of 100 years (1850-1950), we can see the changing styles in clothes, hair, and attitudes, but what remains constant is their expression of affection and love. 300 photos.



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WHAT DOES COMMUNITY MEAN TO YOU?

In June The Voice will be featuring some thoughts from those in our "community" about "community". We'd like to hear from you.


Community, itself, means many things to many people; as does community involvement. Many believe we don't have "enough" active involvement in our local communities. What do you think?


Write to us by May 20th and we'll include your comments. What better time to examine and to dialogue about community than the month in which we celebrate PRIDE?

-- Editor

THE VOICE MAGAZINE ON LINE

<http://www.thevoice.on.ca>

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Was Emily Dickinson A Lesbian? by David Bianco

Since the first publication of her poems four years after her death, many literary critics have painted Emily Dickinson as a passionless, reclusive spinster who pined away for an unidentified man she referred to in several verses as the "Master." But in recent years, feminist scholars have suggested that Dickinson's passionate friendship and creative collaboration with her sister-in-law, Susan Huntington Gilbert, may have been the most significant relationship of her life.

Dickinson and Gilbert were born within nine days of each other in December 1830. Dickinson was from a prominent, old Massachusetts family. Her grandfather had been one of the founders of Amherst College, and her father served for many years as the school's treasurer, in addition to holding several posts in state and federal government.

In 1847 or 1848, probably while attending Amherst Academy, Dickinson met Gilbert, whose father was an innkeeper in Amherst. Shar-

Continued on page 44

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SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY

Bent Coppers

By Howard Watson

It used to be said, in the days before the relaxation of the law, that when a gay man was chased down a dark alleyway in Soho by a policeman one could never be sure whether he was going to arrest you or take you back to his place. No doubt using his shiny helmet to light the way.

The golden age for the British bobby was from the twenties to the fifties, personified by Jack Warner's constable in the movie *The Blue Lamp*, where he was murdered by a working class criminal, improbably played by the late, and very closeted, Dirk Bogarde. Warner successfully transferred this screen persona to the small screen in *Dixon of Dock Green*; beloved by Mary Whitehouse's moral minority.

Geoffrey Gorer, in his book *The English Character*, described the British bobby as being 'for many the ideal model of masculine strength and responsibility'. To the general

public the police were not only the upholders of law and order but also guardians of public morality; operating on the front line against the criminals and perverts were threatened to corrupt decent society and drag it into a quagmire of immorality. Perverts, of course, included practising homosexuals.

Traditionally, the gay community has viewed the police with suspicion. The use of 'pretty policemen' to entrap cottagers and the policing of cruising areas has caused many gay and bisexual men to distrust the boys in blue.

Take, for instance, Quentin Crisp's comments on the police, which may be rather extreme but fairly accurate on how many felt towards the police:

'Though they did not arrest me until 1943, they knew that I was in a weak position and constantly threatened me for their own and one

another's amusement... Even now I could never wittingly become acquainted with a policeman; nor would I, except under torture, betray anyone to the authorities.'

Strong words, indeed, but not all felt as Crisp did:

'He was a very large man, very fair in colouring, plainly of great strength. His expression was absolutely English in its complete absence of curiosity, its certainty that it knew the best about everything, its suspicion, its determination not to be taken in by anybody, and its latent kindness.'

The above description is of a character from *The Cathedral* by Hugh Walpole, who was one of the most successful authors of the twenties and thirties, based on his chauffeur, and lover, of twenty years, Harold Cheevers.

Cheevers was a bluff, burly Cornishman, who had served in the navy and the police. He was a supreme athlete and had once been revolver champion of Great Britain. Despite being married with two sons, Cheevers and Walpole were lovers until Walpole's death in 1941. Before his death, Walpole had commented that: 'I have found a human being I can utterly trust and believe in.'

Walpole had searched for years for what he called the 'ideal friend' before he found love on his doorstep with his ex-policeman lover.

J.R. Ackerley, author of *My Father and Myself* and literary editor of *The Listener*, also longed for such a companion, but never found him,

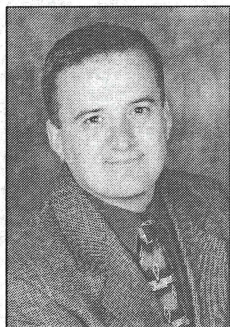
despite servicing two generations of the police force.

Ackerley's friend, E M Forster once expressed in a memorandum to himself the desire to 'love a strong young man of the lower classes and be loved by him and even hurt by him'. Thanks to Harry Daley, Ackerley's 'intellectual policeman', Forster's wish came true when he was introduced by Daley to Bob Buckingham, a married London bobby, remaining lovers for half a century.

Legend has it that when Harold Wilson, the then Prime Minister, heard that Tom Driberg, the infamous Labour M.P., was planning to marry, he made the infamous aside about 'buggers can't be choosers', or words to that effect. If true, it shows Wilson's ignorance of the facts, as Driberg's sexual preference was fellatio. He once performed, what I now believe is called the Clinton manoeuvre, on a strapping young constable beneath Waterloo Bridge; which brings a whole new meaning to the phrase 'bobby on the beat'.

Howard Watson is a writer who lives in London, England. This article is a Voice exclusive.

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My Child is Gay

by Barb Chandler

Imagine that your teenager tells you one day that she or he is lesbian or gay. Suddenly you are faced with some very challenging issues that you are not prepared to deal with as a parent. You've entered a very alien world, a world that you never thought that you would be involved with. What can you expect? What are some of the issues surrounding being a parent of a gay or lesbian youth?. Accepting your child's homosexuality, and educating yourself on the subject takes time.

The initial news will come as a shock, even though you suspected, you're stunned. Your unspoken suspicions have been confirmed. You never thought that one of your children would be homosexual. Tears spill, anger flares, disbelief sickens. Take your time to organize your own thoughts and feelings regarding the

information you have been given, before beginning to address the parenting issues around having a gay or lesbian child.

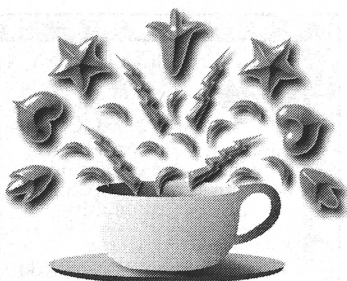
After you have recovered from the shock of this announcement, you will need to begin to face some issues that parents of gay and lesbian youth have to deal with.

"Why did he/she tell me?"
"Why is my child homosexual?"
"Is homosexuality a mental illness?"
"Can therapy change sexual orientation?"
"What are we going to tell loved ones?"
"Who can I turn to for support?"

It is reasonable to assume that your son or daughter took you into their confidence because they love and respect you very much. Sharing this aspect of themselves with you is important to their mental health. This process, which is referred to as "coming out," has been found by mental health researchers to be strongly related to psychological adjustment. The more positive the gay or lesbian identity, the better one's mental health and the higher one's self esteem.

There is no simple reason that a person is homosexual, just as there is no simple reason why a person is heterosexual. Many scientists share the view that sexual orientation is shaped for most people at an early age through complex interactions of biological, psychological and social factors. Gay and lesbian people are from all types of cultural backgrounds, races, religions, and nationalities. They work in all occupations and health researchers, the treatments and their out-

Janelle T. Wielhouwer, M.S.W.
 Psychotherapy



comes are poorly documented, and the length of time that clients are followed up after the treatment is too short." In 1990 the American Psychological Association stated that; "scientific evidence does not show that conversion therapy works and that it can do more harm than good."

You should not confide in any other family member without your child's permission since it is his or her life you are discussing. If you get their permission, you should not tell anybody unless you have reached the point where you are not defensive about your child's homosexuality. Unless you can be positive about your own feelings more than likely you will communicate your unhappiness or doubt to others.

It is very helpful that you talk with people outside your situation. The knowledge that there are other parents who have gone through very similar situations such as yours helps you to realize that you are not alone, and provides you with sympathetic people who can help you to clarify your thoughts and feelings. Therefore, when you are ready to share your feelings with someone outside of your family. A resource which is very helpful to parents with a child who is gay or lesbian is PFLAG, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. PFLAG has chapters in most major cities.

Resolution takes time. Don't despair. You will evolve as a wiser parent with some very valuable parenting skills. You might never had thought you'd need these skills, however, through mastery you have become a stronger parent..

Entertainment from page 30

stretch) who is thrown for a loop due to the unusual events that surround many of the female patients in his life. But get this - Gere isn't the one getting the most talked-about action in film. It's sweetie Kate Hudson, cute spawn of Goldie Hawn, who shares a luscious liplock with doe-eyed lovely Liv Tyler in the Robert Altman film.

Rudin Bets on Driving Mr. Albert

Gay producer Scott Rudin, who counts such high profile flicks as *Wonder Boys* and *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut* among his credits, has made another unconventional move. In a pre-emptive bid, the Hollywood heavy-hitter has purchased the big-screen rights to the upcoming nonfiction book *Driving Mr. Albert* by Mike Paterniti.

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Was Emily Dickinson A Lesbian?

Continued from page 39

ing a love of nature and literature, the two girls quickly became friends and began exchanging letters. The first known letter from Dickinson to Gilbert dates from 1850 and shows an established intimacy between the two: Dickinson writes of wanting to "steal a kiss" from "Susie."

Over the years, Dickinson's letters to Gilbert were filled with increasingly passionate and homoerotic phrases, even after Gilbert married Dickinson's brother in 1856. Most critics have dismissed Dickinson's language in these letters as just a reflection of custom in the mid-19th century, when female friends rou-

tinely expressed their feelings for each other in ardent terms.

Yet Dickinson's references to Sue as an "absent Lover" whom she wants to hold and kiss, and to herself as "Susan's Idolator [who] keeps a Shrine for Susan" suggest a deeper love. "Susan knows / she is a Siren," Dickinson versified in one letter, "and that at a / word from her, / Emily would / forfeit Righteousness...." There haven't been many good friends, past or present, who get "hot and feverish" (in Dickinson's words) at the prospect of seeing each other again, or who express desperate grief at being separated. "I miss you, mourn for you, and walk the Streets alone,"

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Dickinson wrote urgently during one of Gilbert's absences from Amherst. "Often at night, besides, I fall asleep in tears, for your dear face."

Aside from the romantic content of the correspondence, the sheer volume of it hints at Gilbert's importance in Dickinson's life. During almost 40 years of friendship, 30 of which were spent as next-door neighbors, Dickinson sent Gilbert 267 letters and "letter-poems" (as Gilbert called them) - three times the number she gave to any other friend or acquaintance. The worn folds of the paper on which these poems were written suggest that Gilbert read them again and again. Though Dickinson wrote to other correspondents on formal stationery, the notes and poems to Gilbert were often on scraps of paper that indicated a casual intimacy.

Besides being her muse, friend, and confidant, Gilbert also served as Dickinson's primary reader. Dickinson gave Gilbert drafts of poems for comments and suggestions, though she sent only finished poems to others. Gilbert repeatedly encouraged her friend to publish her poetry, but Dickinson was hesitant to do so.

The support that Gilbert gave to Dickinson's work stands in sharp contrast to the response her poems received from Thomas Wentworth Higginson, an eminent literary scholar whose name has been linked romantically with Dickinson's. In 1862, after receiving some of Dickinson's work in a letter, Higginson dissuaded her from publishing what he called her "remarkable, yet odd" verses. "Thank you for your advice," Dickinson wrote back, "I shall implicitly follow it."

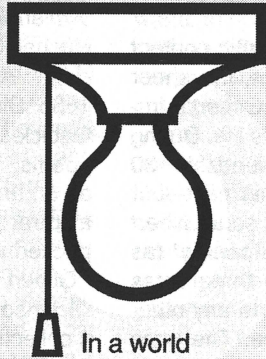
Except for seven poems that

friends submitted for publication, Dickinson's work remained unpublished in her lifetime. Instead of publishing, Dickinson produced her own arrangements of verses, neatly stitched together into books, or fascicles. At the time of her death in 1886, Dickinson had amassed 40 fascicles containing almost 1,800 poems. What critics have viewed as an uneventful and hermetic life appears in fact to have been packed with creative production.

Gilbert was the original choice of Dickinson's sister, Lavinia, to edit a collection of the poet's work after her death. But Lavinia became impatient with Gilbert's methodical slowness and took the project away from her. The task of producing a first collection of Dickinson's work fell instead to two unlikely people - Higginson, who had discouraged Dickinson from publishing in the first place, and Mabel Todd Loomis, the mistress of Gilbert's husband, Austin Dickinson. One Dickinson scholar believes that it was Loomis who, out of jealousy for Gilbert, crossed out or erased Gilbert's name from many of Dickinson's poems and letters, thus obliterating her importance.

Though it may be anachronistic to call Dickinson a lesbian, the fact remains that Gilbert played a major role in her life and art - arguably a much larger role than any of Dickinson's male friends and admirers. It was Gilbert who prepared Dickinson's body for burial and who penned her friend's obituary in the *Springfield Republican*. "To her life was rich," Gilbert wrote, leaving a portrait of Dickinson very different from the more common one passed down in literary history - that of a lonely, unfulfilled spinster.

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Alaska's Inside Passage

Continued from page 21

Glacier Bay National Park, Tracy Arm Fjord, the Taku River, Admiralty Island & Pack Creek Bear Reserve.

Sitka - Part Russian, Part Tlingit, Totally Beautiful

Sitka is considered Alaska's most beautiful seaside town. Sitka's past is a unique blend of Tlingit and Russian cultures. Here you can enjoy a lively performance of the new Archangel Dancers or the traditional dances of the Tlingit. A trip to Sitka offers a memorable Alaskan experience.

Ketchikan - Alaska's Native Cultural Center

Native Culture comes to life as visitors experience the worlds largest collection of totem poles, Native dance and craft demonstrations, ancient artifacts and other cultural activities. Unique shops and galleries are located within an easy walk through town and along Historic Creek Street. A visit to Ketchikan would be extra special during 2000, as the community celebrates its Centennial.

A special 7 day cruise is being set up for July 28th. For rates and information, please call Julie @ [REDACTED]



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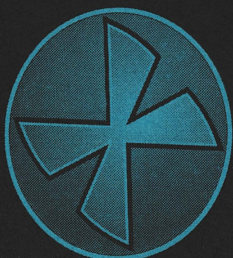
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