

The Voice

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The Voice

Serving the
**LGBT Communities of
South Central/Western Ontario**

Volume Three

November 2000

Issue Two



*Heather Bishop: Part
Two of Exclusive
Interview page 32*



Connie Kaldor: Exclusive Interview Page 36



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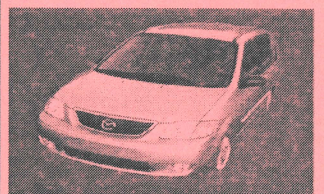
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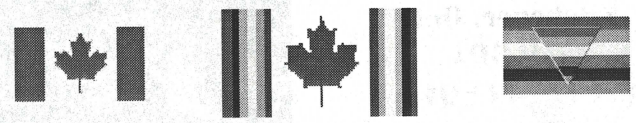
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The Commercialization of Our Culture By Ms. A.J. Mahari

Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered culture is quickly being commercialized. In this world of shiny expensive products and oh-so-brief sound-bytes there we are working our way into commercials, oh yay, eh?

So, are we truly being ever-increasingly assimilated into "mainstream-culture" or are we just an untapped market of previously oppressed consumers not yet adequately pandered to?

Are we mistaking the marketing of more and more companies as some kind of genuine acceptance? Should we be? Is this what it means? What do you think?

I am not so sure that we are meeting with the kind of inclusion and new-found acceptance that I've heard talk of. I am a little more skeptical about that. Let's not forget the degree to which money talks in our society. Money may be the only thing that gets more attention than sex. Money is the bottom

line and sex is sold in the chase for money. This new-found money-grab has met with an unspent playground - Queer Culture. Are we buying it?



I suppose that this suddenly in vogue *visible* visibility can't really hurt -- or can it? After all, what's wrong with the world seeing "who we are" in two minutes or less and all because we use this product or that product. I'm sure there won't be any stereotypical fall-out to this association - yea right!

The commercialization of our culture is not going to further enhance the understanding of it in "mainstream society". Don't forget, for one minute, that tolerance is far from acceptance. Don't be fooled by the commercial spin-doctors anxious to line the inside of their pockets with your money. Gay money, is money, plain and simple.

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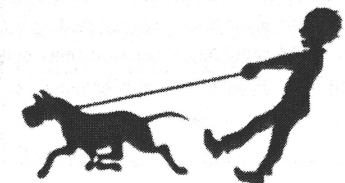
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I would like to comment on your October Shades of Grey column: "The Invasion of Lesbian Culture" This is a very complex situation. One side is taking a stand based on what they want the world to see. The other side is taking the position that money is the goal of life.

I feel that a couple of opportunities have been overlooked. I do not know Mr. Mills other than in a professional way. I am an adult webmaster also. It makes no sense to me why he would show non-lesbian porn on a lesbian site. It does not market well and is a waste of time. I also do not see why the similarity in names evokes such vehemence when statements of 'on our turf' and 'lesbian culture' are raised.

Porn is a viable business and if you were to poll your circulation I believe you would find that a large part of 'lesbian culture' would embrace the chance to have 'their own' porn available. (I recommend making it a membership site). Porn elicits a human response in gay, lesbian and hetero people, just differently.
-- Magus

I just finished reading the Shades of Grey article, "The Invasion of Lesbian Culture". I have to say that I am infuriated at the degree to which the lesbian community seems to feel they should have a monopoly on the thoughts and feelings of the universe. Porn is about fantasies and if you surf around you would find that there are many depictions of lesbians, and heterosexuals engaged in any number of sex acts. Its quite impossible to suggest that every website on the net that relates to lesbians should depict them as your group believes they should be depicted.

Funny that you should think that men like Jim Mills should open a website and depict lesbian womyn in the way you wish to be depicted when you never would allow him close enough to your culture to determine what it is actually like. Luckily the whole world does not think as you do, some people have an open mind and some people are glad the world is a diverse place.

-- Lauren

Just thought you should know that a porn site (the kind you hate) has made this site [The Voice] their "useless website of the day". -- Jim Mills

Having read "The Invasion of Lesbian Culture" article, I can understand why you're upset with the cyber squatting. Lots of good work and effort can be distorted by a one letter address change. I do have a few questions however. I assume there is a legitimate type of "lesbian porn". There have to be women out there who enjoy it. So is the issue that men are looking at something they shouldn't or perhaps lesbians and men find the same thing erotic and sexy? And if this is the case, can men and lesbians look at women in porn and be judged the same or do both of the groups objectify and demean women? Or do both groups just think its sexy?

-- John, Alaska

I have just read the article by AJ Mahari and I can understand her rage, but I would like to put forward the counter-notion that it is in fact rampant commercialism that is the prime enemy of all who do not pursue the "mainstream". On an individual basis people tend to leave each other alone to get on with their own lives, as soon as someone sees they can make money from it, however debased the instincts they are appealing to, suddenly all manner of exploitative rubbish pours out. Sadly the internet is not immune from this.

My sister and her partner live in a classic suburb surrounded by traditional nuclear type families and she faces no hostility from those people as individuals, however open up a newspaper or any other form of media and the stereotyping and hostility are there. Though I feel that free enterprise is the best way to harness human productivity, the way in which this leads to exploitation, the deliberate scape-goating, spreading of malicious lies and innuendo can only lead to a spirit of distrust and paranoia. I am a straight man but I feel no need to oppress my sisters or to pry into their lives. I have one of my own that takes all my time to get right without pointing fingers at others. Please realise that not all men are the same and do

not judge us by the same twisted standards that the media use when portraying Lesbians. Thank you and good luck in all your endeavours.
-- Doug Brinklow, London, U.K.

I was pointed to A.J Mahari's article "The Invasion of Lesbian Culture" by a friend of mine who thought it was amusing.

While Ms. Mahari makes many valid points about Mr. Mills' website, I believe the outrage expressed by the community is extreme. My take is that the site clearly states that it is a pornographic site which features lesbian pornography. Now, the latter term is what I believe is the sticking point in this issue.

The argument presented by "feedback from the community" is that lesbians do not make love in that manner and that it is a site to serve the needs of men only. Lesbian porn is just that- porn. Heterosexual porn is almost always non-representative of the way "real heteros" make love, as is the case with gay male porn.

I whole heartedly agree that the site does nothing to accurately portray the Canadian lesbian community, but such is the internet. The same power that enables you to send your message to people all over the world, allows people like Mr. Mills, to make statements which may anger some people. I don't wish to turn this into a free speech rant as I'm sure the lgbt community knows full well the rights afforded on the internet.

As to the objectification of women in porn (in general), I am most interested in hearing the views of your readers as to why they think the women agree to the shoot. Sure, money is a factor, but if it is as dehumanizing as they suggest, why would any women (or any ONE) for that matter want to be viewed as a sex object? Are men who do the same thing equally as objectified?

My last comment is with regard to the general anti-male sentiment in the comments quoted in the article. "Men just don't get it", "Men think they have the right to everything", "[Men have] thick skulls". I find it very ironic that an article trying to dispell the generalizations and stereotypes which people cast on

lesbians would cite quotes which do the exact thing to males. Are all straight men, in Ms. Mahari's opinion, ignorant, oppressive, and "thick skulled"?

A view I try to get others to adopt in terms of sexuality is that of acceptance. It is not hetero vs. lgbt. Many hetero people disagree, and they continue to foster opinions like those expressed in the article, mainly that lesbians are not really lesbians, just waiting for the right man. But, as demonstrated by the comments cited, lesbians can be equally ignorant of other sexual orientations.

I honestly hope that a majority of gay people do not regard the majority of straight people as "out to get them" and exploit them.

I welcome any comments you may have about my opinions and I really am genuinely interested in establishing a dialogue with respect to my last point. -- Ty, Ottawa.

I have read many of your thought provoking articles, and consider your magazine the tops in Canadian Lesbian Readings. All of your articles are terrific. --Winnie Louck, Ottawa

HAVE YOUR SAY



If you have something that you like to say about what you read in The Voice send a letter to the editor. We'd like to hear from you!

You can email us at [redacted] or go to our web site at www.thevoice.on.ca and click on **HAVE YOUR SAY** and use our form mail. If you'd like to snail mail us our address is on page two.

LESBIANS PARTY ON LESBOS

A lesbian tour group from Britain was welcomed in Sappho's home town on the Greek island of Lesbos in mid-September after organizers agreed to tone down some of their activities.

Among other changes, a "Wet Pussy Pool Party" was re-named.

Eressos Mayor Polydoros Abatzis had objected to brochures for the tour, saying they "cast our town in a vulgar light," and had threatened to ask a court to ban the tour.

"Everyone should enjoy the sexual life they want and all are welcome in Eressos," he told Britain's The Guardian. "But what is not acceptable is to insult the image of our entire community and for tour operators to plan trips here with profit as their only motive. It is unfair that Lesbos and lesbianism should always go together."

Tour organizer Rachel Woodgate commented: "Not all lesbians want that staying-in-a-muddy-tent-in-Cornwall experience. What we are offering wouldn't have raised an eyebrow in the gay men's resorts in Mykonos.

"It's outrageous talking about

[moral] corruption," she said. "Greece invented the word homosexual. You go into any museum and it's filled with pictures of women with huge breasts and men buggering each other."

B.C. COURT UPHOLDS BOOKS BAN

The highest court in the Canadian province of British Columbia ruled Sept. 20 that the Christian-dominated school board of the Vancouver suburb of Surrey had the right to ban three gay children's books from the kindergarten and first-grade curricula.

The B.C. Court of Appeal stated: "A religiously informed conscience should not be accorded any privilege, but neither should it be placed under a disability. [Society] cannot make religious unbelief a condition of participation in the setting of the moral agenda."

The board's policy and the court ruling both allow the banned books — Asha's Mum's, Belinda's Bouquet, and One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dad, Blue Dads — to remain in the school library.

TRANVESTITES MURDERED IN GUATEMALA

Between six and 10 transvestites are murdered each year in Guatemala, reports the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

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The two most recent victims were Beverly Lineth and AIDS activist Astrid La Fontaine.

According to IGLHRC: "Astrid was a sex worker in Zone 1 of Guatemala City. She was attacked with gunshots while working on a street corner in the early hours of May 20, 2000. Her attacker and murderer stepped from a car nearby and shot her. Beverly Lineth was murdered in the early hours of July 5, 2000. Beverly was known to her companions as a calm, shy and highly ethical person. Her colleagues say that she had been a sex worker for only one year and a half."

Lineth was beaten beyond recognition, apparently with a pipe.

Local activists blame "paramilitary forces" for the attacks and say the police are of no help.

According to IGLHRC: "The National Civil Police (PNC) hound and harass transvestites, taking away the money they earn, arresting and abusing them, and, in some cases, raping them. The PNC offers this vulnerable group only terror, not protection.

GAYS HAVEN'T HURT AUSTRALIAN MILITARY

Australia let open gays into the military in 1992 and they haven't caused any problems.

That's the finding of a new study by Aaron Belkin of the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military at the University of California at Santa Barbara and Jason McNichol, a doctoral student in sociology at the University of California at Berkeley.

Now, senior officials, commanders and military scholars admit that lifting the ban has contributed to greater equity and effective working relationships within the ranks, the report said.

Gay soldiers and commanders served successfully in recent active deployments in East Timor, the study found.

The report, "The Effects of Including Gay and Lesbian Soldiers in the Australian Defense Forces: Appraising the Evidence," is on the Web at www.gaymilitary.ucsb.edu

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Confessions of a Late Bloomer

Questioning Sexuality
and the Bath House Blues

By Randy Siegel



Another married man called the Gay Hot Line questioning his sexuality. "How can I be sure I am gay?" he asked.

"Visit a bath house," my friend offered from the other end of the line.

"What kind of advice was that?" I later asked.

"What easier place to experience gay sex?" he replied.

He had a point but still I questioned his advice. I wasn't convinced sex was the litmus test for determining sexuality. Besides, I couldn't imagine anyone going to a bathhouse cold. When I was married, just the thought of visiting a bathhouse would have sent me reaching for the Imodium.

Since coming out and divorcing, I have visited my share of bathhouses. They appeal to my Virgo sense of efficiency. No smoky bars. No mindless small talk. No chance of disappointment when the package is unwrapped.

Bathhouses are about honest sex. With a minimal of game playing, everyone subscribes to the same set of rules — sex without strings.

I went out of town for my first visit to the tubs. "Don't play in your own sandbox," a good friend had advised.

Heart pounding, I slapped down

my \$25 (\$15 for the locker and \$10 for the membership) and was horrified when the attendant asked for a photo I.D. I hadn't planned on leaving a paper trail. Now, this man knew who I was (as if he cared).

After signing a receipt, I was issued an industrial-looking rubber, trial size of lube and a ratty white towel. Once buzzed through the door, I walked into a fully equipped gym in which only a handful of partially clad men were working out.

At my tiny half-locker, I removed my shoes and socks. As soon as my feet hit the floor I knew I had made a mistake. I should have brought flip-flops.

The floor was sticky. I was best not thinking about it.

I stripped, wrapped the flimsy white towel around my waist and tied the locker key around my wrist, stripped off my watch, ring and clothes. I was stripped of all the things that told others of my place in the world. I was no more than another dick.

Leaving the locker room, I entered a dark, narrow hallway. Posters promoting safe sex decorated the walls.

Doors lined either side of the hallway, and a few were opened. Glancing in, I saw naked or near-naked men on tiny cots anticipating sex.

I spotted a beautiful 20-something stud seated in one of the tiny rooms. Sticking my head in his doorway, I asked if he wanted com-

pany. Shaking his head from side to side, he motioned, "No." Rejected, I scurried down the hall.

A 40ish muscular man and I made eye contact. Entering his room, I closed the door and dropped my towel.

Within minutes, it became obvious he was a bottom and wanted me to screw him. When I asked him for a rubber, he suggested we go bareback (anal sex without a rubber). I froze, made a lame excuse and fled his room in horror.

I am HIV-negative and planned to stay that way. Visiting bathhouses didn't make me any less committed to safe sex. Even so, using a rubber didn't guarantee my safety.

Bathhouses put me at higher risk for contracting HIV and any number of other venereal diseases. I found out the hard way.

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Several years ago, I developed an itch in my groin area and little red dots began to appear on my white underwear. When I naively told a friend, he freaked and drove me immediately to a pharmacy.

That night, I washed my sheets in scalding hot water and bathed myself with NIX. Humiliated, I swore off bathhouses forever, but months later I returned. I had to ask myself why.

Sex wasn't the only reason why I went to bathhouses; I also went hoping for connection. Whenever I felt isolated, lonely and craved connection, I thought of the tubs.

Sex without strings is sex without connection, and I want more. Bathhouses are easy but leave me feeling empty. They are risky, too.

I hope the married man on the Gay Hot Line ignored my friend's advice. Even if visiting a bathhouse did confirm his homosexuality, it probably would not affirm it. Sexuality is so much more than sex.

Randy Siegel is an Asheville, NC-based writer and speaker who specializes in the challenges of coming out later in life. He can be reached through [The Voice](#) or at [redacted]. This article was submitted to [The Voice](#) by Randy Siegel.

"Everything has been overwhelmingly positive. We're talking fan clubs, support from the gay community. I'm getting marriage proposals from men and women and wonderful naked photos of men. I mean, just insane amounts of positive contact and two — literally — letters saying, 'You're evil, I hope you die'."

—Survivor winner Richard Hatch to Newsweek, Aug. 28.

Right On, ONTV

By Charles W. Westfall



A Fairy Godmother she isn't. A Fairy Lover she isn't. She might be a mother; but, she acts as if she's God.

Dr. Laura, you say? Right on. But, right off. ONTV has cancelled her show and I, for one, say that it is a smart move.

A letter to the editor of The Hamilton Spectator, published recently, declared that "the powerful homosexual lobby has triumphed again". Sorry, honey, that just won't fly. Her show was dumped because no one was watching it. No one was watching it because it was boring. I should have spelled that with a capital "B".

After three weeks of exposing myself to the incredible machinations and misfirings of logic that made up the Dr. Laura show, I wondered how it ever got aired in the first place. Cleverly juxtaposed segments and carefully chosen cases of individuals, who had found the answers to various problems by themselves, were presented as evidence that Dr. Laura had helped them find the right thing to do.

That she would help everyone "find the right thing to do" was, in fact, a theme that was trumpeted at the viewing audience during every commercial break.

Admittedly, she recruited experts and paparazzi to support her performance. However, she was gen-

erally demeaning towards them and asked leading questions that would bolster her own reputation. They also helped to limit the amount of input they could provide.

And, a performance it was. Carefully scripted and orchestrated. In fact, watching Dr. Laura in action reminded me of watching a well-engineered automaton going through the motions of reaching out and helping but having no real emotional involvement in the process.

After all is said and done, the only person she really helped was herself. How else could she afford a token ad in Variety apologising for her remarks about homosexuals. Oh yes, the letter writer I referred to above, complained that the cancellation of her show as an example of "reverse intolerance". I wonder if the writer were kicked, ridiculed, insulted and rejected for a large part of his life, he would be quite so free in his accusations. Hey, I've got to be able to say, "Ouch!"

I have to acknowledge the fact that some people need formulae and hard lines to help them make decisions. At the same time, as a counsellor, I could never advise a client that what I was telling him or her was "the right thing". I could only outline the possible outcomes of the decisions that needed to be made. And, top of the list, is the fact that the kind of moral absolutism espoused by Dr. Laura has become the foundation for bigotry,

bias and persecution more often than not.

To use people's problems and misery in an effort to aggrandize oneself is reprehensible in any context. The wonderful sitcom "Frasier" serves only too well to demonstrate this fact. Would that Dr. Laura had chosen to imitate this show rather than Geraldo and Jerry Springer.

To let the likes of Dr. Laura get away with the kind of insulting and denigrating comments she is reported to have made is to roll back time and undo much of the progress that has been made in terms of understanding and acceptance.

That progress was obtained through great personal sacrifice

and hard work. We can't allow a Fairy Godmother like Dr. Laura to undermine it.

Congratulations, ONTV, for a wise and timely decision about your programming. You have demonstrated a remarkable and laudable community awareness and responsibility and a shrewd sense of what works on TV.

No matter how hard she and her producers tried to work her magic, Dr. Laura just couldn't meet that challenge.

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

"My own personal view is that people ought to have the right to enter into any kind of relationship they want to enter into. With respect to how that's affected or regulated by the state, those are state decisions. Different states are likely to make different decisions based upon their own wishes and desires of the people of the state, and that's perfectly acceptable."

— Republican vice-presidential candidate Dick Cheney - September 8, 2000

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FROM THE HEART
Women For Women
By WINNIE LOUCKS

A feeling of sensitivity, or lack thereof, has me, and several other sisters quite upset as of recent months. Therefore, I decided to write this.

Women of today need to know how to get out of an abusive situation. They need to know how to tackle the harassment in their lives; how to overcome their poverty; how to handle what finances they do have and so on. They are actually getting the courage to do something about these issues; and many more.

She needs the support of her Sisters and Brothers.

She needs the backing of a supportive legal system.

She needs the support of her religious convictions.

Long gone is the belief that any man is the sole support of his family. We, as women, have been pulling our weight in all aspects of the family unit, in actively fulfilling our roles as loving partners, good providers, and educators, and in sharing responsibilities in the community for decades.

Indeed the role of male dominance and supremacy has changed drastically in the past twenty years. Much work, still has to be done, to improve our society, our lifestyles, and our very best efforts *have to come from - us.*

In all fairness however, there is a

new breed of male out there, who is ready to support us in our convictions. (some already are) It is indeed very refreshing to witness these happenings and to eventually feel, we can work side by side in comfort, without gender interference to make this world a better and safer place to live.

Women of color, aboriginal women, immigrant women, disabled women, lesbian women, women in rural and urban centres, poor women, women with reading and writing difficulties, older women are making use of centres all across Canada to be heard and validated.

There are stories I could tell you of family violence in our rural areas because of isolation, and many other factors, not yet addressed. Elder abuse is now very much in the forefront of our concern because of our aging society, government cutbacks in health facilities, inadequate homecare, and much needed medication.

New Canadians are arriving in this "Promised Land" also feeling isolated and having to cope with a new lifestyle, religious differences, language and other barriers.

**Why do we feel so helpless?
Why do we continue to persecute
our own gender?**

A lack of understanding on our part perhaps. In the past five to ten years we have been consistently facing increasing workloads, grievances and burnout rates as well as mental breakdowns and suicides.

Canadians have been known to sit on their laurels on women's issues. There are those among us - strong activists - who wish through persuasion to divide us by promoting their individual struggle.

These attitudes are hurting us all. Our common bond of being women has played a role in holding us together from the beginning of our struggles. Let's give ourselves a shake, get on the same page and plan a new strategy!

Now, more than ever, solidarity is needed in our ranks.

We are complacent. Why can't we see the enormity of our power? The old school of "Rock the Cradle, but Not the Boat", no longer holds water. Collectively we can move mountains. When we are few in number, the energy demanded of us seems inadequate for the task, and the barriers insurmountable.

It is only through our coming together and caring about the issues that all of us, as women, face that we can hope to address the indiscriminate injustice that patriarchy has violated us with for centuries. We have been brushed aside by all Political Parties - - our self esteem suffers greatly - - We can, and

must work diligently together in solidarity, and harmony to overcome these obstacles.

As we go to our conventions and conferences, the struggles will be even greater. With a unified front and clarified objectives we will not lose. Though there will always be scars - we can heal a great deal.

Affirmative actions must be taken to secure our position in society before it is too late. The misappropriation of women's programs,

"I MYSELF HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT FEMINISM IS:

I ONLY KNOW THAT PEOPLE CALL ME A FEMINIST WHENEVER I EXPRESS SENTIMENTS THAT DIFFERENTIATE ME FROM A DOORMAT"

REBECCA WEST, 1913

jobs, and security will be eliminated if we pay attention to what our government's policies are when it comes to the needs and rights of women. We must not give into bureaucratic mismanagement or apathy.

IT WILL TAKE SOLIDARITY!

This was submitted to The Voice by Winnie Loucks, who lives in Ottawa, Ontario.

"I know this will come as a shock to people all over the world, but not all gay men are thin and good looking. Some of them are slightly beefy, but adorable men, who look a lot like me."

—Actor John Goodman who plays the gay lead in the new Fox TV series Normal, Ohio, to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram,

Pets:
Good for your Health and Well-being
By Dr. Jeff Chernin



I recently saw the Christopher Guest movie, "Best in Show," which is about people who own show dogs. After seeing the movie, I noticed that the affection that the characters had for their dogs reminded me of the importance that pets play in the lives of LGBT people.

While animal-lovers are not confined to the LGBT community, pets have a special place. One reason is that pets have been with us through a lot. My dog has been with me through the break up of a long-term relationship, a move from Dallas to Los Angeles, and the death of friends and family members, among other life changes. I have heard many stories from friends and psychotherapy clients about what their pets have meant to them in terms of being there during rough times.

They are truly there for us. Pets sense our moods, and when we are down, they tend to stay close by to be a bit more protective or do a little more to grab our attention.

Another reason pets are so important is that pets are givers of pure, unconditional love. There are times when I have scolded my dog, yet within thirty seconds (or less), he was wagging his tail, ready to love me. Pets can almost instantly forgive us for our mistakes.



For those of you who have never owned a pet, I can understand that you may think I am exaggerating or anthropomorphizing pets. In fact, I used to be rather judgmental of people and their "beloved" pets, until I got one. I also used to think that people went overboard, doting too much time and attention on them.

Now that I'm a pet owner, I have a greater appreciation of the importance of pet ownership. In addition to my own experience, I have had clients who were depressed and when they acquired a pet they were able to feel better by getting outside of themselves. They were able to think about something besides their own troubles, and they became invested in another's welfare. They had companionship and would tell me that they feel less lonely.

Another reason having a pet is important is that for some LGBT people, having a pet is like a training ground for having children. Couples often learn to communicate and work out differences with each other about their pets, and when they are ready to begin a family, they have a background in learning how to compromise and find creative solutions when it comes to the welfare of another.



Having a pet can even help you increase your human social support. Many people develop bonds and friendships from meeting at dog parks, while walking their dogs, or at training classes. There's also a certain camaraderie among pet owners, as pet owners can talk about their pets for hours.

Among the different types of pets, dogs can help you stay fit. A dog can help you log 10 to 15 miles or more per week of walking, and some people take even longer walks and hikes. People also often report feeling a bit safer to know that their dog would bark at and/or even bite an intruder.

To gather more information while you're surfing the web, you may want to look at a couple of worthwhile LGBT pet organizations. The first is The Lesbian & Gay Veterinary Medical Association at: <http://www.lgvma.org>

This organization is involved in encouraging and supporting LGBT veterinarians, but it also has links and ideas for people who are interested in acquiring more information, like the following

quote on zoonoses (diseases that can be transferred from pets to humans) and HIV disease: "The United States Public Health Service states that pets present only a minimal health risk to immunocompromised persons. Current research has demonstrated that pets provide many physical and psychological benefits that outweigh the risks of zoonoses. Caring for a pet results in many physical health benefits. Pets decrease blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels. They reduce morbidity and mortality related to heart disease. Pet ownership can lead to fewer office visits and a reduction in minor health problems. Pets can provide emotional support at a time when it is most needed. Pets decrease feelings of loneliness and increase feelings of intimacy and constancy. It is crucial for health professionals to consider the many health benefits that pets provide to immunocompromised persons before making any recommendations about pet ownership."

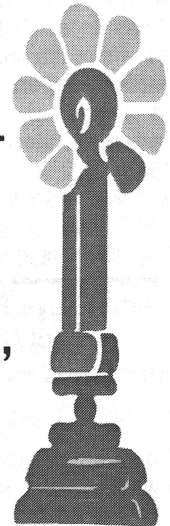


This is also why the organization PAWS (Pets are Wonderful Support) can be of such help to people with HIV disease. Their mission is to keep clients with HIV and their pets together, as well as to disseminate information to clients and to the general public on pet ownership. To find out if your city has a PAWS chapter, go to www.pawssf.org/chapters.html

While I mention all of these benefits of pet ownership, I should not overlook the simple fact that having a pet is fun. But then again, having fun is also essential to mental health.

Jeffrey N. Chernin, Ph.D., resides in Los Angeles, California. He can be reached at [REDACTED] This article was submitted to The Voice by Dr. Chernin.

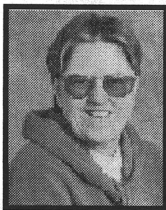
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In Search of Morality

By A.J. Mahari



Moral issues are an inescapable part of who we are. Each one of us has to face his or her own personal and moral questions. It is in

the search for our own morality that we define ourselves, our beliefs, and our ethics - the system or code of morals by which we choose to live our lives.

Our morals are the foundation upon which we base our interpretation of 'right' or 'wrong' conduct and/or character. Our values, the social principles and standards that we accept and hold, are the base from which we strive to make choices. How we decide to measure the morality, conduct, or values of others depends upon the degree to which we have fostered our own search into the realm of morality.

Immanuel Kant, the eighteenth-century German philosopher and a deeply religious man, held that

a person should decide for him/herself the moral laws that he or she will follow. There is a stark contrast to be found between Kant's "*autonomy of the will*", and "heteronomy," which is allowing someone or something else - often religion - to decide the moral laws that you will adhere to and live by.

Although it seems that everyone, when asked, has a definition of religion, philosophically speaking, the debate is far from over. Religion is many things to many people. The effect that religion has upon the ground-work of each individual's search for morality often contradicts Kant's "*autonomy of will*" through the pressured-influence that results from certain concepts and dogma thrust upon individual followers. Herein lies one of the most prolific dilemmas that has to be faced and explored in one's search of his/her own morality.

In my search for morality one thing is crystal clear - whatever morality I have found is mine. It does not have to reflect the morality of others. Having said that, I'm lead to ponder what on earth it is that leads so many to judge and devalue what they consider to be a lack of morality on the part of others. How often are these conclusions drawn based solely upon the morality of the observer? What does the observer's morality have to do with the morality or lack thereof of those being observed? Where is the respect for differing moral realities? Why do so many want only their moral conclusions to count?

In Search of Morality and the Quest For Sexual Freedom

Why do we leave so much hanging on this supposed quest for sexual freedom? Do we leave more hanging on this issue than heterosexuals? Does it matter?

Morality is often seen or judged to be a virtue when it comes to sexual conduct - if and when said sexual conduct unfolds according to the religion we practise or mirrors our own in such a way that it falls within what we can understand and therefore tolerate or accept.

We, as a sub-culture with further divided sub-cultures, cannot afford to let inclusion or acceptance always mean agreement if it comes at the expense of our own morality. Do we have room to disagree in an environment of respect? Why is that when one makes a statement that reflects his/her own morality in the 'gay community' it meets with cries of homophobia, trader, 'uncle-Tom', "straight-acting", and so forth? There is no "gay party-line" that I know of. There is no base meaning to being LGBT, beyond the orientations the letters stand for. Those letters do not denote sexual mores that one has any "duty" to adopt or to endorse.

To say that just because someone is LGBT they must ascribe to any given model of morality is heteronomous and it flies in the face of one's "autonomy of will". To say that just because someone is LGBT they cannot take offense at something that they feel strongly conflicts with their own morality is tantamount to bigoted-oppression, peer-pressure, and a discriminating diatribe reflecting some mentality, in the arena of "us" versus "them".

What is this quest for sexual freedom? Is it really just about, or all about sex? For some it is quite likely that the answer is, yes. To me, it is much more about being accepted for who I am in the totality of my being. For me, being a lesbian and being accepted has little to do with sex. There is so much that makes me who I am, aside from my orientation or sexual practice. Why does it seem that for many in society, *everything*, sooner or later ends up to be about sex? Does it have to be?

In the quest for sexual freedom there are so many "fringe" groups lining up to be a part of 'gay' sub-culture. Do we welcome all comers? A moral question - yes. My answer -- NO! Will we ever all agree - absolutely not. Is there room for the vast differing moralities that each of us brings to our community? I hope so. In theory, I see this absolutely. In practise, sadly, I see this as more of an illusion than a reality.

We must continue to be in search of our own morality. We must be amenable to change and not allow our morals, ethics, values -- or religions for that matter -- to paint us into rigid black and white corners of finger-pointing judgment. We need not deny our moral reality for anyone. Dialogue is valuable - attacks are not. There must be room within our individual moral mindsets to absorb the collective chaos that our different perspectives poignantly purvey through our continued-intolerance of one another.

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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Domestic Violence (Part 1 of 2)

By Dr. Charles E. Corry, Ph.D., F.G.S.A.

Those who abuse and batter their lovers and children come in every shape and size, from every income level and social strata, of either sex, and irrespective of sexual orientation. But when people involved in intimate partner violence are examined certain characteristics are commonly found. Such people tend to have been abused as children, raised in a single-parent home, have substance abuse problems, live in poverty, or suffer from mental or physical health conditions, and a few other identifiable conditions.

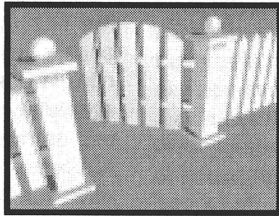
These characteristics are, of course, human problems, and have nothing to do with gender or sexual orientation of the abusers. In fact, the most common form (50%) of domestic violence (DV) involves mutual combat between the partners. Nor is intimate partner violence limited to heterosexual couples. Research suggests that lesbian couples may, on average, be the most violent relationships of all. While gay couples appear to abuse each other at about the same rate as heterosexual couples the sample sizes in the studies for both gay and lesbian couples are small and the likely errors correspondingly large.

Specific causes of intimate partner violence have been proposed. For example, Prof. Donald Dutton at the Univ. of British Columbia, among others, has suggested that men who batter commonly suffer from Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). It is estimated that about 2% of the population suffer from BPD and 75% of the diagnosed cases are women. Other examples abound and, try as one might, no gender-specific cause for domestic violence can be found.

Despite feminist dogma, no relationship has been found between domestic violence and the patriarchy. In fact, domestic violence appears

to be more common in matriarchal societies. There are major difficulties in obtaining reliable statistics in this area but mental health studies consistently show that in heterosexual couples only about 25% of the time is domestic violence solely male-on-female. The same studies show that 25-30% of the time the violence is exclusively female-on-male, with the remainder mutual combat. However, one agreeable result emerges from these studies: The safest place for a woman is in her home with the biological father of her children.

The rational approach suggested by these results would be to deal with violence between intimates as a human problem and treat the underlying causes. If we are to treat the underlying causes a fundamental issue is the lack of consistent definitions, used in a standard fashion, defining violence between intimate partners. Before we can attempt to solve any problem we must first define it.



Violence is defined in general as an act carried out with the intention, or perceived intention, of causing physical injury or pain to another person. Accidents, play, sleep disorders, nightmares (often a problem with combat veterans), and self-inflicted injuries all fall outside the definition of violence.

In any relationship, some level of violence must be considered normal. In a family environment that encompasses the commonplace slaps, pushes, shoves, and spankings that are usually considered an acceptable part of raising children or interacting with a spouse. Injuries such as bites, scratches, and bruises inflicted during extremes of passion are normal violence as well. Also, about 10-15% of couples engage in some mutually-acceptable level of S&M and that too falls within 'normal' levels of violence. Couples who engage in games of

bondage and domination probably fall within this range as well.

Between normal and abusive violence lies those areas where violence against one's partner may be justified. Such acts would include self-defense, e.g., alcohol might cause loss of control in either partner; to prevent harm to others, e.g., the children; and to prevent harm to one's partner, e.g., they may be delusional and attempting to jump out of a window.

On a more dangerous level, abusive, or severe violence is defined as acts that have a high potential for injuring the person being attacked. Included in this definition are punches, kicks, bites, chokings, beatings, shootings, stabings, or attempted shootings or stabings.

Such physical acts do not include emotional abuse: the denigration, lies, slander, and degradation generally conceded to be the most common form of abuse used by women. But men are by no means adverse to using emotional abuse as well. Domestic abuse seems to always include emotional abuse and may, or may not, include physical abuse. Continued emotional abuse may escalate to include physical abuse.

If emotional and physical abuse are combined and continue over time it is regarded as battering. Battering does not refer to a single argument, nor does it mean the occasional conflicts that many couples have that may grow to yelling at each other and some pushing or shoving. Rather, battering involves beating and verbally abusing an intimate partner over a long period of time.

If the above definitions are accepted then it is possible to begin some quantitative measure of intimate partner violence. The most extensive and respected analysis is the National Family Violence Survey (NFVS) whose first results were published in 1975. Those surveys are based on the Conflict Tactics Scale, now considered the standard for evaluating family violence. The NFVS results have been replicated in over 100 independent studies. As measured by the NFVS, the frequency for overall violence in relationships during 1992 in the U.S. was 8-12% for male-on-female, and 9-10% for female-on-male violence. For severe

violence, about 2% of couples reported male-on-female, and 3-6% reported female-on-male violence. As noted above, about half of this violence is mutual combat. Mental health surveys in Canada produce similar results and consistently show slightly higher female-on-male violence.

Note, however, that criminal justice surveys produce markedly different results for reasons beyond the scope of this article.

The NFVS surveys also show that, except for severe female-on-male attacks, domestic violence decreased significantly between 1975 and 1992. In general violence in the home has been decreasing for centuries.

Clearly, either or both partners may engage in violent behavior in a relationship, either during an isolated incident, or as battering. In most cases such behavior is outside the range of what can be dealt with under colour of law. Realistically, only severe violence can be controlled by action of the State. For example, the most effective approach to mutually-combative couples is therapy. Problems such as BPD, and other physical and mental problems, are best dealt with by appropriate medical treatment rather than by the police and courts.

End of Part 1 - Watch for part two in the December issue of The Voice.

In addition to his work on domestic violence against men at: <http://www.dvmen.org>, Dr. Charles E. Corry currently consults on the design and administration of large databases. He is a Fellow of the Geological Society of America and has published widely in the earth sciences and oceanography. His home page at: <http://boulder.earthnet.net/~ccorry> will lead you to his essays, adventures, poetry, and other publications. Dr. Corry currently resides alongside Bear Creek in Colorado Springs, Colorado, U.S.A.

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Domestic Violence Against Men:
<http://www.dvmen.org>

A Voice exclusive.

Elegant Healing from Abuse

By Judy Saltarelli, M.A.



Many members of the community have experienced some form of abuse. Some have been physically, emotionally, sexually or financially abused by same-sex partners.

Others were abused as children. And many have known abuse or threats of abuse from a homophobic society. Many continue to suffer the after effects of abuse because of the cost of therapy or the perception that therapy itself is almost as painful as the abuse was. During the last 10 to 15 years several new therapies have been developed that are gentle, elegant in their simplicity, and much less expensive than traditional psychotherapy.

The effects abuse can have on your life vary, depending on your individual circumstances. The single most important determining factor, in my view, is your emotional reality. Emotional reality refers to your very personal, subjective experience. If you were feeling vulnerable at the time of the abuse, for whatever reason—illness, dependence, powerlessness, previous abuse, or young age—you likely would have been more profoundly affected than if you had been feeling strong and had some measure of control or support. The incident is recorded in your psyche based on how you experienced it.

Emotional reality may sometimes be different from historical reality. Historical reality is defined by objective observations and evidence. In therapy we focus on emotional reality in order to heal your wounded soul. If you were to lay charges against an alleged abuser, however, the courts would determine guilt or innocence based on historical reality. Victim impact statements are one of the few opportunities in the legal process for discussing emotional reality. The task of determining

historical reality in court can be devastating for survivors because defense attorneys strive to prove that it differs from the complainant's emotional reality. To the survivor, being questioned or disbelieved may feel like being re-abused.

Although not the only response to abuse, post-traumatic stress is a common reaction. We are now beginning to differentiate several forms of post-traumatic stress reactions. Most common is the initial crisis response, which often resolves spontaneously within a few months. If it does not resolve, a survivor may develop a partial or full-blown post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Psychiatrist Judith Herman also postulates a complex post-traumatic stress response that she says is more common in people who were repeatedly abused over long periods of time. Research indicates

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that up to 3% of the population has clinically diagnosable PTSD, while a much larger number of people have some symptoms.

The American Psychiatric Association notes that major symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder fall into three main categories: intrusive symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyper arousal symptoms. Intrusions include flashbacks, nightmares, "re-experiencing" the event, and intense floods of emotional reactions that seem to be without cause or way out of proportion to the apparent trigger. Avoidance symptoms include emotional numbness, the inability to form close emotional relationships with others, avoidance of specific situations, and a wide range of dissociative reactions. Hyper arousal symptoms include being in a frequent or constant biological state of alarm or panic, irritability, insomnia, and problems with memory or concentration. Children may develop learning disabilities or attention deficit disorders. Depression, physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches, etc.), alcoholism or substance abuse, poor impulse control and suicidal ideation may also occur.

Most therapists believe that recovery from post-traumatic stress disorder requires long-term intensive supportive therapy, sometimes supplemented by medication. Herman notes in her excellent book "Trauma and Recovery" that a reasonable recovery from complex post-traumatic stress triggered by repeated abuse over a long period of time typically requires 7 – 10 years of intensive psychotherapy on a weekly basis. This extended therapy enables clients to receive unconditional support while they fully discuss their experiences and explore their emotional responses and behavioural adaptations. They can also explore new approaches for dealing with personal relationships in the safety of the therapist's office. While this process is quite effective, it takes a long time and is expensive both financially and emotionally.

During the last 15 years new approaches to trauma recovery have been developed that dramatically reduce the time necessary for healing. One example is Eye Movement

Desensitization and Reprogramming or EMDR. No one is sure exactly how EMDR works, but it is thought to adjust memory traces in the brain. In the Desensitization stage therapists move their hands back and forth quickly and the clients visually track these hand movements while concentrating on their own mental images of the disturbing events and the emotions that accompanied them. Then, in the Reprogramming stage, clients are asked to think positive thoughts while tracking a different set of hand movements. After each set of movements clients discuss their thoughts with the therapist. EMDR sessions may be longer than traditional psychotherapy sessions; however, very few sessions are usually required to de-traumatize a given memory. It can be an extremely emotional process, especially for clients who tend to dissociate. It should be done only with a highly qualified practitioner.

Other new therapies, based on ancient oriental approaches to healing, involve a combination of counselling and acupressure. Typically, the client would think about the traumatic incident or unwanted memory while gently tapping or lightly touching a series of acupressure points on his or her own body. No disrobing is involved, and no needles are used as in acupuncture.

To understand how acupressure therapies work, let's look first at how traumatic experiences are processed in the body. When we have a traumatic experience, it is as though at a primal level we perceive a threat to our very existence. We are afraid "it" is going to get us. On both psychological and energy levels, we instinctively try to keep the threat external. Yet our very experience itself is internal: we can only perceive it by using our biological body. Our adrenalin races, our pulse increases, our blood circulation is diverted from internal organs to our muscles, and so on. As a survival mechanism, we may try to neutralize or contain the threat by building an emotional wall around it. The memory of the threatening event sits frozen in time behind our blockade: alive, as it were, and ready to attack again at any time. The maintenance of this wall requires

Continued on page 30



GAY MONEY

by Bonnie J. Babin,
Investment Planning Counsel of Canada

Retirement Planning - RRIFs, LIFs, and Annuities

Turning your RRSP money into income is a major financial decision. Because Canadians have been able to save for retirement on a registered (tax-sheltered) basis for many years, many will have accumulated a substantial sum of money.

When the time comes to draw an income from your RRSPs, you will have a variety of options. Making the right decision for you is extremely important because it will affect the rest of your life. With all the changes that retirement brings, you need to make the best use of your RRSP money to enjoy your retirement to its fullest.

Cash

You can withdraw all, or a portion, of your RRSP funds as cash, as long as the funds are not locked-in pension funds. This is not generally recommended because heavy taxation could result. Any amount of money withdrawn from an RRSP is considered income for that year. Withdrawing from your RRSP could cause you to pay more than 50% tax on the withdrawal. As well, any income earned on these funds once they are withdrawn is no longer tax sheltered.

Annuities

You can use your RRSP savings to purchase an annuity. This will provide you with a guaranteed income for life or to age 90, depending on the type of annuity you choose.

The amount of income provided through an annuity is determined at the time of purchase, depending on the amount of money deposited, the current interest rate, your age, your gender, and the number of years for which the company promises to make payments. You decide how often you wish to receive payments (from monthly to annually) and if you want your payments indexed to help offset inflation.

Annuities will provide you with guaranteed payments and require no investment management. However, once you purchase an annuity, you cannot change the payments or make a lump sum withdrawal.

Annuities come in many forms. Single life annuities will pay for the duration of your life, while a joint life annuity will provide payments during the lives of you and your spouse. You can also add a guaranteed period during which payments continue to a named beneficiary if the annuitant should die.

Investment Planning Counsel
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RRIF's

A Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) is designed to offer you investment and payment flexibility. Funds can be invested in your RRIF in the same manner as they could in your RRSP.

You can choose the amount that you want to withdraw each year, subject to a minimum set by Revenue Canada. Depending on your investment and pay out choices, the RRIF can also provide inflation protection. You can also choose to make a lump sum withdrawal from a RRIF, over and above the payments that you are already receiving. But be careful, you could deplete the funds too early.

LIFs

A Life Income Fund (LIF) is a retirement option for Locked-In RRSPs, LIRAs (Locked-In Retirement Accounts), and pension money. LIFs work the same as RRIFs, with these differences:

- source of funds (LIFs come from locked-in or pension sources).
- LIFs have a legislated maximum and minimum income flow (RRIFs only have a minimum).
- The maximum income flow ensures that there are funds left at age 80.
- LIFs must be collapsed by the end of the year in which you turn 80 and the proceeds must be used to purchase a life annuity (RRIFs can continue indefinitely).

ANNUITY	
PROS	CONS
Guarantees regular income for life or to age 90	No inflation protection unless fixed percentage indexing is used.
Provides a death benefit during guaranteed term (for life annuity) or to age 90 (for term certain annuity)	No income after age 90 for term certain annuities
Joint and survivor annuity provides a regular income for the lives of you and your spouse.	Less flexibility than a RRIF

RRIF/LIF	
PROS	CONS
RRIFs/LIFs can work exactly like RRSPs - only with pay outs	May require some degree of investment management
Range of investment choices	LIFs have a minimum and maximum income each year
Income flexibility with extra withdrawals if needed (subject to legislated maximums with LIFs)	With LIFs, you must purchase a life annuity by the end of the year in which you turn 80
Provides a death benefit equal to the remaining fund value	

Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

Please respond to e-mail address: [REDACTED]

Fax: (519)836-6949

Sundays

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

AWARE K-W : Christian gay-positive group Meets every 2nd Sunday of each month. For more information, call Gary at [redacted] or Fred at [redacted]

KW-Friends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Cosmic Bowling - Sundays at 3:15 pm at Brunswick Bowling Lanes - Frederick St. Mall. For more information contact Katherine at [redacted] or Mark at [redacted] or [redacted]

Mondays

The Lesbian Discussion Group meets (New Time - New location) on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. For more information call 743-5015 email: [redacted] www.thevoice.on.ca Lesbian Groups

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 meets every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Call us for more details: 905-526-1074, toll-free 1-888-338-8278 - info@gomorrah.com

Rainbow Chorus: Holds rehearsals every Wednesday Night. The first rehearsal of the new season is Wednesday September 6th, 7:30-9:30 pm at the Guelph Unitarian Fellowship, 122 Harris St. at York Rd., Guelph. For more information call Robert at [redacted] or [redacted]

<http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Discussion Group: A group for people aged 16-25, sponsored by ACKWA and held in Waterloo, 7:00-9:00 pm. To join, or for more information, call ACKWA 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: 884-4569. **A social gathering follows the discussion groups weekly from 9pm to 11pm.**

THE COMING OUT DISCUSSION GROUP

- Wed Nov 1 - Growing Up Different
- Wed Nov 8- Is Your 'Gaydar' working?
- Wed Nov 15- Friends or Lovers?
- Wed Nov 22- What One Wants From Relationships
- Wed Nov 29 - Sexuality
- Wed Dec 6 - Role Models & The Media

RPC'S RAINBOW COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP

- Wed Nov 1- Aging Queer
- Wed Nov 8- Gossip Among Queers
- Wed Nov 15- Sexual Economics
- Wed Nov 22- Queer Art
- Wed Nov 29 - Transgenderism
- Wed Dec 6 - Escapism -Substance Abuse

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]

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. 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/

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KITCHENER-WATERLOO

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

Anselma House: A crisis shelter for abused women with or without children. 24 hour crisis line: (519) 742-5894

Brethren Mennonite Council For Gays and Lesbians, P.O. Box 43031, Eastwood Square, Kitchener, Ont, N2H 6S9

NEW: Coffee Club - Attention: Lesbian and Gays -- If you like to drink coffee and just chat but you don't feel like there is anyplace to go where you can just be yourself, now there is. For more information call - Peter at [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 00global@mach1.wlu.ca Laurier Peer Help Line 884-PEER.

GUELPH

ACGWC (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 2 Quebec St, Suite 206, Guelph Ont., (519) 763-2255

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) 836-4550

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) 836-4550.

outline@uoguelph.ca
www.uoguelph.ca/~outline

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

K-W Distress Line- (519) 745-1166

L.O.O.K - Lesbian Open Outreach Kitchener is a supportive and social organization for lesbian/lesbian positive and bi-sexual women in the K-W area.

Contact AJ Mahari at [REDACTED] or

email: [REDACTED]

or [REDACTED]

www.thevoice.on.ca

Click on [Lesbian Groups](#)

Sexual Assault Center:

KW.....(519)741-8633

Waterloo Region Alliance For Equal Rights-Kitchener-(519) 743-[REDACTED]

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

WOODS: Women Out Opening Doors Socially is a social club for lesbians in K-W and area. In Kitchener call [REDACTED] In Guelph call Debbie at [REDACTED]

Rainbow Chorus: is a choir that performs and will also be **hosting dances for the LGBT community starting again in September.** For information you can contact Robert at 853-5489 or Cory at 763-3335 <http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Sexual Assault Center:

Guelph.....(519)823-5806

CAMBRIDGE

Sexual Assault Center:

Cambridge.....(519)658-0551

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) 522-8399.

Alternatives for Youth- 126 James St. South, Hamilton - 527-[REDACTED]

Anonymous HIV testing by appointment 905-546-3541--walk-in sites:YWCA--75 McNab Street Hamilton, Ontario Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. 905-546-3541 for more information Hamilton General Hospital Outpatient Department Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. 905-546-3541 for information

Community Education 546-3541 to book a presentation or consultation

Emmanuel House Palliative Care Good Shepherd Centres (905) 308-8401

Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Centre at McMaster University, Hamilton Hall Room 412 - Call 525-9140, ext. 27397

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

Gay Fathers Support Group-3rd Tuesday of each month. For information Call 522-[REDACTED]

Greater Hamilton Gay & Lesbian Business Association (905) 526-[REDACTED]

GLBT Centre at McMaster Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:30 to 4:30 at Hamilton Hall, Room 412. (905) 525-9140, Ext. 27397 or e-mail: gibt@msu.mcmaster.ca www.msu.mcmaster.ca/services/gibt/gibt.htm

Hamilton Aids Network -- 528-0854 Anonymous Testing for HIV appointment only --546-3541

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police--General Assistance: 546-4925

Jane Mulkewich,
GLBT Task Force 546-4910
Complaints against Officers 546-4776
Street Crime/Hate Crime: 546-3831

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

Kindred Spirits:a social and recreational group for lesbians and bi-sexual women in the Hamilton/Burlington/Niagara area. (905) 541-[REDACTED]@hotmail.com

Narcotics Anonymous Hamilton: (905) 522-0332
Brantford: (519) 759-2558
St. Catherines: (905) 685-0075

PFLAG--Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians & Gays. For information call 662-[REDACTED]

Sexual Assault Center: Hamilton.....(905)525-4162

Sexual Health Information Line 905-528-5894--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 777-7852

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 Secretary - Ron at [REDACTED] or phone (905) [REDACTED]

Women's Centre of Hamilton-75 MacNab Street South, Hamilton 522-0127

Sunday November 4 & 11

Welcoming Congregation, from 9:30-4:30pm on two Saturdays, at the First Unitarian Congregation of Waterloo, 96 Dunbar Rd South, Waterloo - 742-0432. the program has something to offer anyone in gender issues, sexual diversity, or various forms of oppression in our society. Led by facilitators Lee Dickey and Lee Horton, the group will have an opportunity to explore thoughts and feelings around these issues in a safe environment. Origins of beliefs around sexuality, gender socialization, and homophobia will include some of the issues covered.

Sunday November 5

The Regional Pride Committee of Waterloo-Wellington (RPC) will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, November 5, 2000. Members of our community are invited to meet at 12 noon for an informal potluck brunch in the Conference Room of the Davis Centre Library, University of Waterloo. At 12:30 the Meeting (AGM) will begin. Inquiries can be directed to the RPC at rpc@rainbow.on.ca

Friday November 10

Heather Bishop and Connie Kaldor (together in concert) at 8pm, at the Emmanuel United Church, 22 Bridgeport Rd. W., Waterloo. (Details on page 35)

XTRA's Gay Life & Style Show runs from November 10-12, 2000 at the Metro Tronto Convention Centre. Exhibits on multimedia, fashion, travel, cuisine, design, fitness, arts, health, financial, and more. Call 416-229-2060 or link to www.gayliveshow.com for more details.

GLBT Community Monthly Dance

at the CAW Hall, 611 Silvercreek Parkway North, Guelph. Doors open at 9:00 pm. Presented by the Rainbow Chorus. Contact Robert at [redacted] or phone (519) [redacted]

for more information. members.home.com/rainbow.chorus/

Next dance is on December 8th!

Friday November 17

PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meet at 8:00 pm. PFLAG is a support group for those with an LGBT family member. Call Evie at [redacted] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [redacted] (Cambridge) or email them at [redacted]

Strange Sisters - Buddies In Bad Times is located at 12 Alexander Street, Toronto. Phone: 416-975-8555., Buddies' perennial sexy lesbian cabaret.

Saturday November 18

HYPE Presents: Technique, an industrial house party at Fed Hall, University of Waterloo. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 at door. Check out www.hypecanada.com or contact Alan Fraser at [redacted] or by e-mail [redacted] for more details.

Saturday November 25

Mr. Leather Toronto Competition 2001, After Party, & Dungeon Dance at The Docks, 11 Polson Street, Toronto. Doors open 8pm, show & contest at 9. Dance 11:30pm - 6am. Complimentary bus service from Ramada Hotel and Church St. to The Docks, 8pm to 3am.

Thursday November 30

Buddies In Bad Times', located at 12 Alexander Street, Toronto is having its auction and annual fundraising extravaganza. Phone: 416-975-8555.

Friday December 1

World AIDS Day The United Nations and World Health Organization Joint Program on HIV/AIDS has declared December 1st World AIDS Day. This year's theme from the UN AIDS Project is "Men Make a Difference". (ACCKWA's local plans see page 15)

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

B R A N T F O R D

A Rainbow of Hope. Brant County HIV/AIDS Support Group. Call 753-4937 ext.261 for information. All calls confidential.

GLBT adult social/support group of Brantford and area. A safe place to meet people and be yourself. call 752-5132 ext.34

GLBT youth support group of Brantford and area. 753-4937 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 752-5132 ext.34 for details.

The Coalition for gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgendered youth of Brantford and area. (519)753-4937 ext.261. call and leave message. All calls will be returned. We advocate for you.

For any further information about events in Brantford email: gbltadultsocialbrant@yahoo.ca

Alternative Youth Centre

Fundraiser - Wednesday January 17th - 8pm at Club Renaissance, 24 Charles St. W., Kitchener. Cost is \$20.00 a ticket. DJ, dancing, food and fun. For more information contact Laura Shell at [redacted]

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Sunday 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

SOUVENIRS of a trip - what could be more fun? Our ancestors enjoyed the same thing and souvenirs were made for almost every location. Most of the souvenir pottery and porcelain pieces of the nineteenth century were made in England or Germany, even if the picture showed a North American scene. In the twentieth century, the souvenir china business seems to have gone to the manufacturers in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, England and America. Another popular souvenir item is the souvenir spoon, made of sterling or silver plate. These are usually made in the country pictured on the spoon.

Elegant Healing from Abuse

Continued from page 21

large and ongoing subconscious expenditures of energy.

Acupressure is thought to create an energy impulse or vibration that travels through the client's own energy pathways, or meridians, to the site where the trauma has been stored and blocked. Thinking about the incident helps the vibrations to localize the appropriate blockage. The energy vibrations then remove the blockage, much like the way vibrations set up by marching soldiers destroyed the walls of Jericho. The experience that had been stored behind the wall is then exposed and can immediately be recognized as being from the past and no longer a threat. The client can see that "yes, that happened, and I survived! I'm ok now!" Clients often give a huge sigh of relief, and may even laugh or giggle.

Emotional acupressure is a very gentle process, and it usually doesn't involve a huge re-experiencing of unwanted emotions. It's highly effective, especially when the client and therapist together have accurately identified and isolated a specific memory or negative thought pattern. In my practice, clients usually only need one session (2 or 3 hours) to defuse a given memory. If the client has experienced a single abusive or traumatic incident, they may need a total of less than 4-6 sessions, including regular supportive counselling. If they have been subjected to repeated abuse over a long period of time, they may need more time in therapy to defuse a number of memories and to explore and resolve a variety of negative influences on their life. They will need time to assimilate the healing, and support along the way. But even this requires much less time than traditional intensive psychotherapy. The therapist's role is to help the client identify troublesome memories and issues, to pace the work, and to offer ongoing support as the client heals.

While Emotional Acupressure, or tapping therapy, works more quickly when clients are able and willing to discuss their traumatic

experiences with their therapists, discussion isn't absolutely necessary for healing. Tapping therapy has been used successfully for children who can't or won't "talk about it", as well as with adults who were reluctant due to embarrassment or shame. All that is needed is a phrase that represents the experience, such as "what that man did to me" or "the time I don't want to talk about". Sometimes the tapping removes enough anxiety to permit comfortable discussion, but many clients have successfully resolved very troubling issues without the therapist ever knowing exactly what the issue was.

You can find out more about these new therapies by searching the web for Emotional Freedom Technique, Tapas Acupressure Technique, Be Set Free Fast, and EMDR. While there is not a great deal of scientific research yet, except for EMDR, there are hundreds of anecdotal reports describing the success many therapists are having. It appears true that healing can now be gentle and elegant. Therapy doesn't have to hurt so much any more.

Judy Saltarelli is a Counsellor and Personal Productivity Coach at A Different Way in Waterloo, Ont. This article is a Voice exclusive.

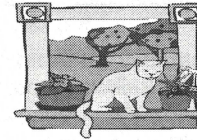


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For more information call A.J. at [REDACTED]

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www.thevoice.on.ca



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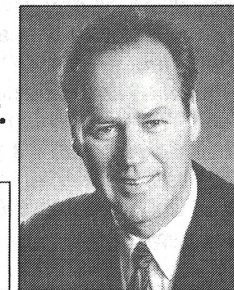
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ROYAL CITY REALTY LIMITED

With Heather Bishop (Part 2)

By Ms. A.J. Mahari

This is part two of an interview with Heather Bishop. Part one appeared in the October 2000 issue of *The Voice*. Her new CD is "Heather Bishop Live" and it is a testament to the life that Heather Bishop lives and shares with her listeners.

In her song "Homeward Bound" Bishop sings about joy. When asked what the greatest source of joy in her life is, Bishop replied, "I think the greatest sense of joy is when I just stop. When I stop and am present in my being in the moment. When I can take the time to notice the sky and to smell the air and pat my dog, or whatever -- man, this is it, this is it -- and then I remember that this moment right now, like you and I talking on the phone, this is it."

This reminded me of that movie, "As Good As It Gets". You have to sit there and ask yourself if you know joy in any given moment (which essentially is as good as it gets) and if you can't answer yes you won't have any peace. "That's right, so this moment is what I've been given, and it's perfect. And that is my struggle, to realize that and when I do that, then, I do know joy." said Bishop.

In both of her songs, "Homeward Bound" and "Sleeping Beauty" Bishop sings of the gift that life is. I asked her when she had a feeling

or an awareness of having opened her gift and Bishop responded, "I think, really, only in the last couple of years. That's because all of us have to walk through the shadowed side. I was two or three years on that journey and going through some very serious abuse issues as a child that lock you up and I had been locked up by those issues and so having gone through them, not that they are really ever over, it just opened me up like a flower. In spite of how horrible the pain was to go



Heather Bishop

through that journey, and how endless it seemed when I was in it -- I just wanted my life to end -- I am so grateful now for that journey."

Once one goes through that darkness the light is not only so much lighter but then one sort of has a way of having the light in any future darkness. "Absolutely, I agree with you." Bishop replied, "And that song, "Sleeping Beauty", reflects that kind of universal journey where we are living our lives, going along, and then, all of a sudden, this little light or light-beam comes through. You are attracted to it and follow it. It's sort of like coming out, you know, before you come out, you think when you're out life would be so much more difficult. But, after you come out, you realize that the opposite is true. It was harder to live in the

closet. The same is true, I think, about the light and the dark. When you are living that life, before you clean up all that stuff, it seems like I cannot possibly go through that, can't make it through that darkness, I can't clean it up. But, when you get to the other side you recognize that what was really difficult was the way that you lived before."

When I asked Bishop where her courage comes from she said, "I've come to understand, I think, that some of that courage comes from my surviving as a child, in a hostile world. My journey really affected me. I became a survivor. For some reason it made me really quite tough." Bishop thinks that often until someone else reflects back our journeys to us we often don't realize the full scope of them. She was just given an award in Regina, where she grew up. The "Smith Street" Award (named because the first gay club in Regina was on Smith Street) was created for her to recognize the work that she had done in the gay community, in the very early '70's. "We talked to the police and I would do radio shows and go and talk to medical students and psychiatry students - you know, we were trying to get people to quit giving us shock treatments and beating us up and putting us in jail.

The woman who presented that award was around in those days and when she started talking about my life it was like listening to somebody else's life. You get disconnected from your own courage is I guess what I was trying to say."

On the back of Heather Bishop's CD, are the words: "It takes courage to walk the crooked mile stretching out before us ..." I asked Bishop how she would

describe the crooked mile that is stretching out before her. Her answer, "It is all tied to courage. It is a crooked mile and it takes a lot of courage to walk it. I can look back now and see how very crooked my mile has been and that in the future it will continue to be crooked. My prayer is always to ask that when I fall off the path could you nudge me back up. Could you shine a light on it if I start going in the wrong direction. I think the crooked path is the real path. I think the straight path isn't living but that it is just existing. The crooked path takes you through everything and it allows your soul to live. It allows you to be everything you were meant to be. It is completely and totally spiritual and the whole reason that we are here. I have no doubt that we've come from that great collective love in the sky, and that we are down here to learn more and then go back. I think that most people on the planet are asleep. It is the much smaller percentage of people that are awake. It takes a lot of courage to be awake. And that's what my song, 'Sleeping Beauty' is about. When you wake up, it's like you said, then, the light is brighter."

As someone who hasn't heard all of Bishop's past music I stepped out on a limb and said to her that I felt that her newest CD was likely her very best work to date. Bishop responded, "I think it is too. It's partly 'cause I don't take myself so seriously anymore [laughing], which lets the gift flow through."

I just had to ask Bishop about her song "No Bourbon Boogie". It's so lively, based on a true story, told very well and so entertaining. I asked Bishop what the experience

that the song recounts was really like in real life and what kind of bar they were really in. Bishop, laughed, and said, excitedly, "A strip bar! But I had no idea because there was nothing on the outside that indicated that. I don't go to bars, I don't drink. So I'm pretty out of it. My friend, who was the bass player, really wanted to have a bourbon, you know it was the whole idea of being in the south and having a bourbon. We'd been working hard all week so I thought, well, I gotta take her somewhere and right across the parking lot was this sign. It just said, 'Bar'. So I said, 'Come on, I'm going to take you over and buy you a burbon.' So here we are in this bar. We both walked in and our eyes must have been the size of saucers. All the waitresses were topless. That was the first thing. And, then all the dancers come out, and it's like, **oh my God!!** And then when this one woman came over and took off her glasses [Bishop's base player's glasses] and cleaned them on her nipples it was just unbelievably funny. The women just wear these little G-strings that you're supposed to stick money in. There were two things interesting for me. One is that I had always heard that quite a high percentage of strippers are lesbians and I'm quite sure this woman was. The second thing was I was expecting the feeling in the bar to be that the men were just lechers and that these poor women were suffering under that kind of energy but when I went in it was the complete opposite. The men were all rather sheepish like when we walked in it was like their wives had just walked in. They were acting like little boys who had been caught with their hands in the cookie jar. These women

were just so cool. They would just go up to these guys, shove their crotch in their face like you want this, is this why you're here, come on big boy? The guys would turn all red. It really taught me a lot about what those women's lives are like."

I then observed how interesting it is that that was going on right in the bible belt. Bishop eagerly said, "Oh that was the thing! And then there wasn't any burbon!! It wasn't allowed -- no hard liquor. [laughter] These women can run around naked but there's no hard liquor allowed, that makes good sense. It was too hysterical for words."

When asked where this took place Bishop said, "It was in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. That's where they make the cigarettes anyway. You couldn't go anywhere there but every place was filled with smoke. Everybody smokes - but we couldn't get any burbon."

Bishop then spoke about her friendship with Connie Kaldor, "We go back a long way, we started out in the business together in Regina. The first time I saw here sing, I just about died I thought she was so tremendous. This would have been about 1972. I ran up to her afterwards and I said, 'Hi, I'm Heather Bishop, and I think you're wonderful.' And that was it. We became friends. I keep teasing her because I have a bunch of old tapes that I made of Connie singing and playing way back then, songs that she has never recorded. I keep threatening to release them. Connie and I are really good friends. I am probably her biggest fan. I think she is just an absolutely brilliant songwriter and entertainer."

When asked how she would compare her and Kaldor's styles Bishop said, "I think that we are very different. We are similar, though, in that we are both Prairie Girls and we have that same kind of sentiment that runs underneath everything that we do. She's a lot different writer than I am. Connie approaches subjects from a different perspective than I would. She's probably written a hundred songs that I wish I'd written. She is by far my favourite song-writer."

I then asked Bishop about Kaldor's doing some back-up vocals on her new CD and she said, "She's done back-up vocals on most of my CD's. She and her husband both did back-up vocals on this CD. They came and put back-up vocals on five or six of the songs."

I asked Bishop if she and Kaldor have performed together in the past. "Yes, we have. In fact, what's going to be fun about it is, in 1979, Connie and I did a tour together and it's been about 21 years since we've double-billed. We've played festivals together in that time. We are both really looking forward to it."

What Bishop likes most about singing with Kaldor is her humour. "She is so much fun and she is so generous, with herself and with her talent. She is the consummate Canadian musician. She is supportive of everyone. She is brilliant herself. She manages to capture the Canadian persona perfectly. I just can't say enough good things about her. She's just a wonderful gal."

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Friday, November 10, (8:00 p.m.)

Emmanuel United Church

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General Admission Tickets: \$17 (adv); \$20 (door). On sale in Waterloo at Words Worth Books (100 King Street South), in Toronto at Wonder Works (79 Harbord Street).

Phone Orders: 1-800-265-0710 (Sanderson Centre Box Office)

Note: Connie & Heather are also performing Sat November 11, in Toronto.

Concert Web Site: www.sentex.net/mja/ckhb/index.htm

Coming Soon: Lucie Blue Trembla, February, 2001 in Waterloo and Toronto.

With Connie Kaldor

By Ms. A.J. Mahari

Connie Kaldor got her start in music, essentially, in church. *"My father was a minister. Our whole family sang. We grew up singing from an early age - we were forced to sing. Music was always a part of our life. Classical music, church music is a good base, it teaches you harmony-sense."*

When I asked Kaldor how she went from singing in church to making music a career she said, *"I was bad, a very very bad girl - no" [laughter] "I just loved it. I was in theatre, acting and I always really liked music."*

The examples of Joni Mitchell, Carol King, Sylvia Tyson and many other female artists spurred Kaldor's interest in music. She was most influenced by their strength and the fact that they weren't just banging a tambourine in someone else's band but that they were writing their own songs. Kaldor enjoyed writing songs herself and those role-models let her know that she too could do her own thing.

In terms of Kaldor's musical style she believes that her four years in theatre school were as much an influence as were her role models. She has always had a great love of show tunes, theatre music and musicals. Kaldor believes that it is the musical story-telling that is a part of her work that makes it different from the standard style of many folk-singers.

"I am lucky that I live in a generation that has enabled me to pull from such a rich musical history."

Kaldor likes the level of smart song-writing that goes on in folk music. It is challenging. *"I like musicals, I have a certain sappiness in my nature. I like something that challenges and makes you think. There's music that's made for you to go up and down with on an elevator and then there's music that is made for you to think about, listen to and feel. The folk music scene was a big enough grab-bag to tolerate all the little stylistic things that I did. That's what I still like about it. It's a place where a person, young or old, can get up and sing what they are thinking and feeling and people will listen to it. I like the independant nature of the folk scene. I don't need to get sucked into the big machine to be able to make a living and to be able to do something important. There's politics involved in it too and room to complain. That's what I like about the [folk] scene"*

Kaldor likes the level of smart song-writing that goes on in folk music. It is challenging. *"I like musicals, I have a certain sappiness in my nature. I like something that challenges and makes you think. There's music that's made for you to go up and down with on an elevator and then there's music that is made for you to think about, listen to and feel. The folk music scene was a big enough grab-bag to tolerate all the little stylistic things that I did. That's what I still like about it. It's a place where a person, young or old, can get up and sing what they are thinking and feeling and people will listen to it. I like the independant nature of the folk scene. I don't need to get sucked into the big machine to be able to make a living and to be able to do something important. There's politics involved in it too and room to complain. That's what I like about the [folk] scene"*

Kaldor believes that her audience has moved beyond the folk scene and that in Canada you can't just be involved in folk-singing. She believes her audience increases mainly by word of mouth. When asked why that is, Kaldor said, *"Be-*



cause there aren't enough people. Because your records aren't on the radio people hoard them and buy them for their friends. There is almost a cult-feeling."

I asked Kaldor, whose latest CD, is called, **Love Is a Truck**, if she thinks that folk music is on the rise or decline, she said, *"Oh, I don't know. I think anytime there's new people doing it, it's on the rise. I think that there is room for it to be an expression for people who don't fit in another category. As the radio gets narrower and narrower, I think the internet is going to open up a lot for my scene, for sure. Where do people go to listen to music that isn't like what they hear on the radio? How many people say, 'I listen to the radio, I love that music?' Most people are listening to it, in transit, 'cause there's nothing else. But, there are people who are looking for something different. I think that folk, or the song-writer's scene, or whatever style, jazz, or what have you is a forgiving place, a place that will accept many different styles as long as there is something going on."*

When asked if there is a difference between the folk scene and lesbian folk music, specifically, Kaldor said, *"I haven't played it much myself just because of my sexual politics, although my songs have been sung there. I think a lot of the folk-singers made that cross-over because they were talking about political change. Initially that is what that scene [lesbian-folk] was about. The women in the scene, because there weren't that many in the scene initially because the opportunities for women were so slim there was a real camaraderie, you know, there was me, Ferron and Heather Bish-*

op, I could name you at least 10 artists that came out of Canada, half of whom were involved in the women's scene and half of whom were not." There is a common ground there. Fesitvals used to only hire one woman's act per show in spite of the wide-ranging talent and variety that so many women had to offer. Kaldor also said that years ago there was an unwritten rule that it was not acceptable to play two women back to back on the radio. *"That needed go right out the door, like h-e-l-l-o, you know, we're holdin' up half the world."*

I asked Kaldor if love is the theme of her new CD and she replied, *"It is the theme, which is rare because I've only had one other record, 'Prairie Theme', with a theme."*

Kaldor had 24 songs to choose from for inclusion on her newest CD and so decided to go with the theme of love and then included those songs. *"It allowed us to do some songs that were not connected in terms of style but that were in terms of the theme."*

Kaldor considers having kids to be the most creative thing she's ever done and the most profound example of how love has been experienced and expressed in her life. She added that, *"I am lucky that I do have love in my life. I treasure it. It's much more important than almost anything else. It's one of the great gifts on this planet."* Kaldor strongly believes that love is certainly more important than career and record contracts. She believes that a lot the decisions that are made in the world are upside down because the gift that love is, is not taken into consideration in so many of those very important decisions.

Kaldor's personal favourite song from **Love is a Truck** is the song, "Winter". She explains that is the case because, "It's a song that I'm growing into. It's a song that I just keep liking time after time."

When asked how **Love is a Truck** compares or differs to her previous work, Kaldor said, "I think I've been getting more and more spare in my records. And I like that. I think it's a singer-driven record. It's a vocalist-driven-record, which is nice. I think it's sweet. It's a personal record and I like that and I think there's a sense of performance to it. It's not a live album. There are some moments, though, that have that kind of feel to them. I've spent almost my whole career with people saying, 'Geez, you're show is better than your record', you know, and from that I can take that the sense of immediacy in a show. You never know what a record is until you get the feedback from other people because a record is something that



you send out. It's like a letter and you're waiting for a response. The songs on **Love is a Truck** are solid tunes. It's me singing them, and that's what you hear. The songs are personal. I think it gives a better sense of what my show is and what I'm doing out there as a live performer."

How does Connie Kaldor judge success?

"That's a good question. I think if you're doing good work and you're solvent and you're happy and still doing it... I think that's always the [measure of] success with a musician - are you still able to do it? Are you still able to get people excited about it, touch people in a show, touch people with your music? A million dollars in the bank wouldn't be bad either but I could be a bookie and get a million dollars in the bank. [Money in the bank] is not necessarily a success in a music-industry sense. I think if you get too hung up on the commercial success it diverts you from doing the music. Are you able to say something? ...real success would be to have a house-cleaner in once a week" [laughs] Success has to be a personal thing. It hinges on your feeling good about what you are doing and whether you've worked hard and gotten better. Do you still find joy and pleasure in it yourself."

"To me, ordinary things and lives are extraordinary. Part of what your job is as a song-writer is to be a troubadour, in the true sense of the

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word, in terms of going out and finding people's stories and telling them for those who cannot tell them creatively themselves."

When asked how long she and Heather Bishop have been friends, Kaldor said, "About a billion years. I met Heather Bishop at a waffle-picnic once. A high-school friend had somehow got me this gig at a waffle-picnic. She was there. I sang some songs and Heather said she wanted to record them 'cause she wanted her band to do them because we don't have very many women performers and Heather wasn't writing at that point. She has a tape that I know she's going to blackmail me with some day, of me sitting in the living room singing all of these things. But you see there were so few female-performers out there, and I was solo then. It was just me and buck-skin skirt and a guitar, you know. You banded together because there was a common ground. You were the oddity. I wasn't singing in a band. I wasn't singing sappy love songs. I helped her do a record. There were five or six women in that scene that have kept in touch over the years. The ladies club - our own ladies auxillary.

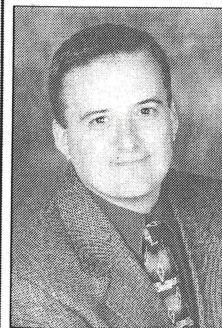
We performed our very first tour together. No one would hire us. It'll be two-for-the road. It was a success. We had a show so we could get a review and some press. It was kind of the beginning of both of our solo careers. I don't think we've done a double-bill since then."

When I asked Kaldor what fans can expect to see from a show featuring both her and Bishop she said, "The best damn show you've ever seen in your entire life! [laughter] We'll probably do some things together and do separate sets. It's kind of two for the price of one. (For concert information see ad on page 35)

"Is Dyke Sex on the endangered list? Dyke sex seems to be running rampant, doesn't it? Even straight girls are having it, and men are wishing they were women so they could too. But sneak a peak between the sheets and not just between our ears. How much sex are we really having? Is dyke sex the latest trend since parasurfing, or is it on schedule to be the next moa bird or spotted owl? Is not having sex part and parcel with being in a dyke relationship? Is "lesbian bed death" a myth or a reality?"

--Shar Rednour - in the book:
The Femme's Guide To The Universe

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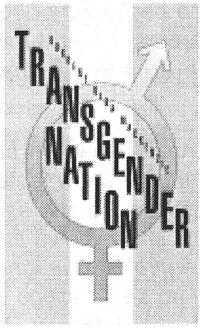
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Transgender Nation

by Gordene Olga MacKenzie
Paperback - 190 pages (May 1994)



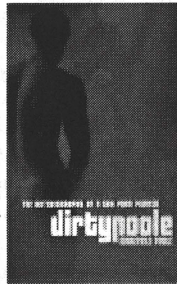
Gender is the mine field we pass through every day. In the United States, gender is all too often determined by one's anatomical sex. From birth we are bombarded with gender propaganda that supports a repressive dual gender system pitting the sexes and the genders against each other. Transgenderists as gender nonconformists challenge us to rethink traditional discourses on sex and gender. Transgender Nation dares to look at the male-to-woman transgenderist and transsexual from a sociocultural and sociopolitical perspective and maintains that it is not the individual transgenderist who is sick and in need of treatment but rather the culture that must be treated.

Transgender Nation explores historical sexological categories. Popular culture representations of transgenderists as homicidal maniacs dressed to kill are contrasted with the grim reality that in a transgenderphobic, homophobic, and misogynistic culture they are more likely to be killed because they dress. The book concludes that transgenderism is moving away from being considered a mental disorder, treatable with surgery, to a grass roots civil rights movement that has the potential to ignite the much needed Gender Revolution.

Dirty Poole : The Autobiography of a Gay Porn Pioneer

by Wakefield Poole

Paperback
304 pages
1 Ed edition
(August 2000)

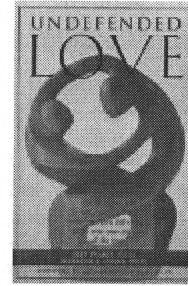


From child prodigy to the most notorious director of gay adult films, Wakefield Poole wrote the rules for a living on the edge with no safety line and no apologies. How a former singer and ballet dancer went from the Broadway stage to behind the camera as the world's most beautiful men bared all for him is just part of a fascinating story that takes us on a whirlwind tour of the early days of the sexual revolution when "anything goes" was more than a phrase, it was a religion. While rubbing shoulders with the elite of the day, including Andy Warhol, Bob Fosse, and Stephen Sondheim, Poole created Boys in the Sand, the gay porn film that would revolutionize the industry and serve as the ruler by which adult entertainment is measured to this day. Poole's memoir serves as a fascinating trip to an era when anything was possible and everything was celebrated as long as it had style.

"At last official count nearly 500 gay and lesbian couples had been united in civil unions this summer in Vermont. There were flowers, champagne, brides and brides, grooms and grooms. The sky did not fall. The earth did not split in two. Happy families and happy friends watched happy people pledge their love. Big deal. Ho-hum. Yawn."

-- Newsweek Columnist Anna Quindlen

Undefended Love: The way that you felt about yourself when you first fell in love is the way that you can feel all the time.



by Jett Psaris Ph.D.,
Marlena S. Lyons
Ph.D., Gay Hendricks
Kathlyn Hendricks

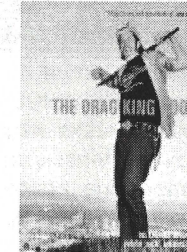
Paperback - 196 pages (October 1, 2000)

The path to true intimacy is a difficult one. In this book, two psychotherapists teach that everyone has the capacity to love without defenses or qualifications and to know themselves so deeply that real intimacy becomes a lifelong expression of their deepest nature. Problems and conflicts that inevitably arise in relationships can become opportunities for a deeper connection. Through illuminating case studies, guided self-inquiries, and challenging exercises, readers learn to engage in a deeper dialogue with their partners, express profound aspects of their nature, and discover that undefended loving can bolster inner strengths they never knew they had. "This beautifully written work is a stunning breakthrough in the field of books on relationships." - Pat Holt, former book review editor, San Francisco Chronicle.

Would you like to share a review of a book that you've read recently? Call us at 743- or email us at:

The Drag King Book

by Del LaGrace Volcano (Photographer),
Judith Jack Halberstam



Paperback
160 pages
(August 15, 1999)

Run don't walk to the nearest webpage/bookstore and get your hands on this book!

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Spiritual Life: The Quest for Freedom At Home but Not Alone

By Noel Springwood

A letter to the Editor of THE VOICE, published last month, asks why there is such a strong emphasis on spirituality in the magazine. I hope that this column will help clear up that concern.

Spirituality is what drives each of us to be who we are and to do what we need to do in order to live full, happy and meaningful lives. It isn't always something conscious; but, it is always something present. At the heart of a person's spirituality is a perception of life and a concept of God. In many ways, these are deeply personal dimensions. In other ways, they often have a common base in a common understanding.

The articles on Meditation were an attempt to help an individual find a way of exploring the essence of life and of getting in touch with aspects of self that are often hidden or buried.

In this column, I want to talk a bit about the concept of God. I hesitate to use the expression, A God, because that, in my mind, would limit the very concept I want to talk about. *Dizzy yet?* I'll try not to go in too many circles.

Rather than the concept of God, it would, perhaps, be better to refer to Godness, the Transcendent, the Life Force, the All Pervading Spirit, the Unifier, the Imminent.

From the dawn of time, humanity has tried to access this phenomenon, in an attempt to define and

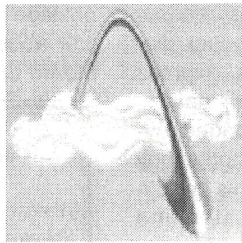
understand it. Unfortunately, any such attempts have, invariably, led to distortions, half-truths, limitations and false conclusions. At the same time, a person's understanding of what it is that sustains and pervades life is what will determine the quality of life enjoyed by that individual.

Initially, most attempts at imaging or defining God were drawn from the feminine side of nature. Mother Earth, or Earth Mother, was one of the first. In the Judaeo-Christian Tradition, early references to God include images of She-Bears, Mother Hens and, one of the first, "Ruah": Breast. God as creator and nurturer and sustainer was, in the beginning, very much a female figure, if anything.

Of course, to try to define God in any sexual terms is to limit the reality greatly. In time, God as Judge, Arbiter, Punisher, Healer, Guide, Wise Old Man,

Demanding Despot, Loving Father, Teacher of Morality and more, captured popular understanding. Some traditions, in tackling the problem, created a separate Deity for each manifestation of Spirit, Power or Transcendence. Thus, we find whole Pantheons of Gods, sometimes contradicting or at war with one another. Sometimes, encouraging contradictory conduct or war-like action in those who serve them.

I grew up with an image of God that was, to say the least, gro-



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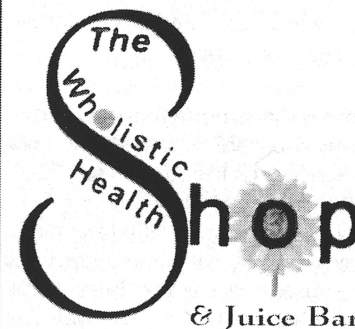
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tesque. Picture if you will an equilateral triangle, rays of light emanating from its sides, a huge and staring eye in the middle, floating on clouds and surmounted by a white dove. This attempt to explain a triune or trinitarian God should have failed miserably. Instead, those of us who were exposed to it as children accepted it without question. I guess, in the long run, we knew that it was just a poor attempt at getting at a fundamentally inaccessible truth or reality.

Recently, I learned of a wonderful concept of God that has come to sustain and comfort me. It is God as "Home". To my understanding, this notion means that God is found best where I am most at home. It further means that if I can be at home with myself, I can be at home with others and others with me. This concept invites me to explore the great gift of hospitality in all my dealings and of welcoming others into my life.

I particularly like this concept because it is very personal, very positive and very accessible.

I hope that you, too, will explore it's possibilities in your own life. I hope, too, that you will come to discover the source of life and love, we call God, close to your own heart and be at home with it.

NOEL SPRINGWOOD (a pen-name - "Out of respect for his former associates") served most of his life as a Roman Catholic Priest. He now lives in voluntary exile from that ministry in order to live and work openly within the LGBT community as a Gay Man. You can contact him through THE VOICE or email him at

A Voice exclusive.

Stockwell Day gets doused

By Keven Smith (IMC)

Sugar-coated Bigotry; Chocolate-Covered Leader

Canadian Alliance leader Stockwell Day and his well-oiled PR machine arrived in Kitchener last month, hoping to unveil the Alliance platform to cheering throngs of supporters at Conestoga College Rec Centre. Instead, he found himself having to change his clothes after being doused with two cartons of chocolate milk.

Julian Ichim, known for his activism work in Kitchener, especially around youth and poverty issues, got into the rally, was given an Alliance shirt, and was placed in the front row, with the youth supporters, for PR purposes. As Day came into the auditorium, Julian stepped forward, and doused him with chocolate milk.



After being assaulted by a security guard, and fleeing from the auditorium, he was surrounded by journalists, who had time to interview him before the police got to him, and he was taken into custody. He pointed out that he was drawing attention to a right-wing party that plans to repress the rights of vulnerable minorities.

Julian was one of 16 protesters who attended the rally, concerned about a variety of issues: LGBT, abortion, poverty, youth, racism, and peace, among others. Most stayed outside with signs, but three others were inside. There were a number of members from the LGBT community outside, including Ken Peters, who wanted to be more active politically, and thought this was a good way to start.

"What disturbs me most about the Alliance is that it is the most vulnerable in society who will suffer the most under their platform. I have nothing against people who have money, but I do have something against a party so narrow

it excludes major portions of the population who are thought to be different," says Peters.

One of the insiders, Davin, had a KKK robe on under his clothing, and a sign, "KKK Votes for Day". Although he was kicked out without revealing himself, he remained outside in full costume afterward, provoking many heated discussions with Alliance supporters.

According to local activist Sue Forrest, the chocolate milk was an appropriate symbol. "Chocolate milk is milk that is too sour for public consumption, that is blended with sugar and chocolate, and reconstituted into something new." In the same way, she says, the Canadian Alliance takes the unpalatable Reform Party platform, and combines it with former Tory supporters, a new dynamic leader, and a slick PR machine, to make itself electable.

"Stockwell Day scares me, because he's a charismatic professional politician who knows how to whitewash his true agenda," says Peters. "He hasn't told the public he thinks homosexuality is a choice, or his views on health care or abortion. He hopes he will get elected based on image and vague rhetoric." Indeed, the Canadian Alliance talks a lot about equality, but what they mean is an end to what they call "special treatment", abolishing affirmative action, and erasing the treaty rights of aboriginals.

Stockwell Day himself has a track record of trying to get his religious beliefs put into law in Alberta. He tried to convince his cabinet to invoke the "notwithstanding" clause to deny benefits for same-sex couples. He was also successful in getting Alberta to remove abortions from the public health care system.

After arrest, Julian was charged with common assault, processed at the Frederick Street police station, and released later that evening. Bail conditions include not contacting or coming within 1 km of Stockwell Day. Contrary to rumour, the order to stay away from dairy products was not imposed.

This event occurred on the fifth anniversary of an Oktoberfest protest, which saw eggs thrown at Ontario premier Mike Harris. Kitchener is once again in national headlines for their warm welcome of right-wing leaders with dairy and poultry products.

Kevin Smith, of Kitchener-Waterloo, has been involved in activism around poverty and social justice issues in Waterloo Region for the past five years (since the election of Mike Harris). He is currently organizing an Independent Media Centre (IMC -see below) in Waterloo Region, to highlight other perspectives that are generally ignored by the corporate media. This article was submitted to The Voice by Kevin Smith.

About the Waterloo IMC

First seen at the protests in Seattle last November, an Independent Media Centre is a place that experienced journalists and keen enthusiasts could come together to share expertise and equipment, and organize assignments based on what was happening with the actions. They would post the articles (print, pictures, audio, video) to the web, where independent outlets would download and use them.

We're trying to do something similar here. We don't have a single physical space, or single issue or event. Instead we are drawing on available resources in the community, to record events and issues of concern to the community, for distribution in the community (and to anyone else who is interested).

You can visit us on the web! We are currently at

<http://ontario.indymedia.org>



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Why is This Happening to Me Again?
By Becky and Angela

This one was going to be different; this was true love. Thank-God I finally found the 'right' person. Sound Familiar?

This was my mantra every time I started yet another relationship that somehow ended up pretty much the same as the rest. What is really happening here?

Well, I can not expect a relationship to be any different if I do not operate differently. If I am still the same and reacting the same way, I attract the same. Relationships come into our lives as an opportunity to heal beliefs about self. This is not a good or bad thing, it just is. It is a universal law whether we choose to believe it or not. We attract the person who is best suited for the lessons we need to learn in life. You can do the work and heal negative beliefs about self within your current relationship or else move on to the next person where it will be the same lesson wearing a different pair of pants. After the honeymoon is over it will be in your face again.

The only way we can heal beliefs about self is to make them about self. If you want to create your life differently, you must approach life from a place of knowing that you are the root cause of all that you experience. This can be a hard thing to hear for the first time, but the reason

you don't escape your pain when you leave town or leave a relationship is because the pain is internal. You take it with you when you go. The fact that you can hide your pain successfully does not mean it is gone. Anyone who says just the right words, can trigger that pain that you are trying to hide from yourself. Your pain is caused by the negative energy you are holding, not by 'them' (It's him/her; it's not me; if he/she wouldn't do that I'd be okay; they are the ones that need to change and then everything would be fine). It is important to remember that no one can simultaneously take responsibility for his/her life while blaming someone else.

You must choose to take responsibility for your feelings and what goes on inside of you if you are ever going to change the unwanted patterns in your life. This means looking at how these feelings are familiar now by examining past times when you've felt this way. Ask yourself what these familiar feelings remind you of in your family of origin?

If you are not at this stage yet, it's okay, honor yourself where you are. When you are ready to move forward the universe will bring you exactly what you need.

We are all innocent beings on this path that is the journey of life. We are all doing the best we can and all any of us really want is to love and be loved.

Becky and Angela, of Kitchener, are a mother and daughter team. They have both completed counselor training focusing on the principles of A Course in Miracles. They run a weekly processing group and offer individual sessions. A Voice Exclusive.

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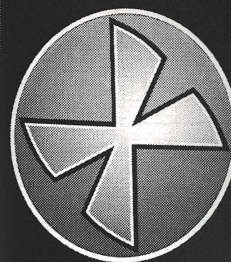
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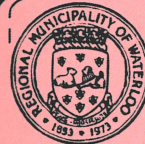
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