

The Voice

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The Voice

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Volume Four

March 2002

Issue Six



Bahuchara, Goddess of Transgender & other Queers in India. More on ancient Queer stories and modern Queer life in India starting on Page 18.



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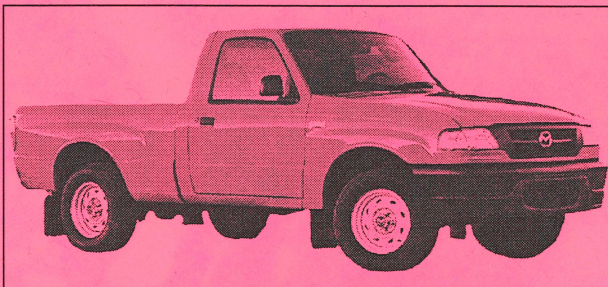
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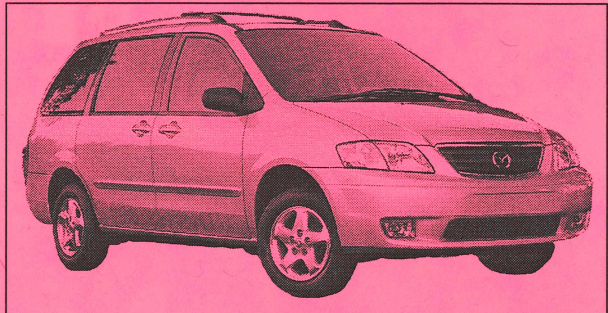
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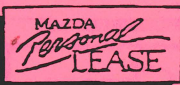
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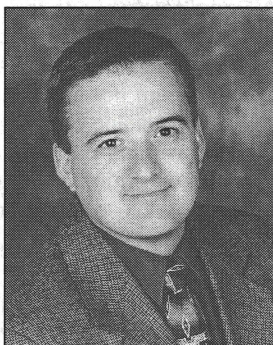
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FIRST WORDS

"Community Building?"

By Lyn McGinnis



Recently, editor, AJ Mahari, and I have had conversations, phone calls, and two letters to the editor appearing in this issue, saying the same thing. They all express concerns about a letter sent out to potential advertisers from Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride. We have been provided with copies of this letter. In it, advertisers are told the Pride Committee is "working to build community and awareness within the area by publishing it's own newsletter." The universal question being asked us is why?

No one is questioning WWRP's role in building community. Our local Pride Committee has always done this. The difference this time is their decision not to advertise or write regular articles for The Voice Magazine, recognized as our community's LGBT publication, but start another. Initially this was seen by nearly all as simply one more item of interest to pick up and read. Being focused only on Pride events, it had a very specific appeal. At the same time some immediately noticed there was nothing about local Pride in The Voice Magazine and began to ask questions. The Voice has always had extensive coverage of WWRP activity and generously provided space to promote fundraising and detail events of Pride weekends.

For the January and February 2002 editions, WWRP was invited to submit an article to The Voice but did not respond. Instead we saw the arrival of the Pride Pages. In their letter to advertisers, WWRP goes beyond saying they need funds to produce a publication promoting Pride events. They say their publication "is produced free of charge and serves as a much needed resource for anyone looking for local LGBT information and/or wanting to purchase goods and services from LGBT friendly services." Given The Voice Magazine has been doing this for four years, we are forced to ask how

this is *much needed*? It has become apparent to an increasing number in our community WWRP has gone beyond previous committee mandates and anything mentioned at its own AGM and set up a rival publication. Is the Voice up to a little competition? Certainly! We have a proven track record and have many exciting plans for the future. We have every intention of being here for you four, eight and twelve years from now. The issue here has to do with divisive behaviour within our already divided community. By going after advertisers who are, or have been in the past, or who may in future be Voice advertisers, WWRP is potentially splitting the very small revenues available within this community to support LGBT publications. As we are discovering, some of these advertisers are unhappy enough to tell us about it! As one of our letter writers asks, how is this building community?

We wish WWRP every success in the upcoming Pride celebrations in June and congratulate them on recent successes in fundraising. At the same time we caution them not to undercut the good they do. "Building community" involves working with all partners and The Voice is clearly an important part of this community. We often receive many thanks for what we do.

Personal agendas are perpetuating attempts to duplicate already existing groups and services in community. What marginalized populations need more of is co-operation, not competition. (For more see Opinion on page 32)

Have an opinion on this column or anything else you read in The Voice? Why not share it with us in our Have Your Say section or on our new Opinion Page?

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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.

Donna S. of Waterloo makes me ashamed I am a woman and a lesbian! Her letter complaining about Voice articles about the murder of a gay man in B.C. made me sick! Thank you to the man in London for writing your letter about this! I can only hope many more feel this way! How could any woman possibly use this offensive "blame the victim" argument? Don't you know about all the times it has been used against us? I expect such mean spirited and small minded contempt from the Christian Right. How can we ever claim that "We are Family" when such people are among us?

Name withheld at writers request

Just a thank you to A.J. and all who help her put out such an amazingly informative magazine. I have every copy. Love it! Keep up your excellent work.

William Ivers, Woodstock

Thanks to Lyn McGinnis for debunking the paranoid conspiracy theories around 9/11. (February 2002, "September 11 is not an X-Files Episode!") Other alternative and university papers print this kind of crap without any counter argument. Maybe they think they won't look so cool. The Voice has the courage to apply critical thinking to non-mainstream ideas. Thanks for showing LGBT and our straight friends we aren't all that gullible. Just because we are alienated from society doesn't mean we'll believe every idea attacking it.

Linda Robson, London

Am I missing something? Local Pride news was always in The Voice Magazine. Then suddenly, the Voice isn't given any information! It says in the Pride Pages that the Pride committee is doing this to "build community." I am part of an organization which recently received a letter from WWRP asking us to advertise in the Pride Pages. How does starting another publication and looking for advertisers, when the Voice is already here, help community? The Voice Magazine already raises "visibility and awareness of the LGBT communities in our area." In the past the Voice gave lots of space to the WWRP to promote Pride events. What's going on?

Sharon Kirby, Kitchener

I am an advertiser of The Voice Magazine. As such I find the WWRP's "new" publication, The Pride Pages, a rather obvious attempt to tamper with The Voice's current advertisers. I was not pleased to get the letter I recently received from the WWRP soliciting my business to advertise with their publication. I am not impressed. Interesting that this "Pride Publication" started out saying it was going to just focus on pride and pride-related information. Quickly I have seen it developing into something that WWRP has no business in doing. Save the money you are putting into this for Pride. You don't build community by trying to undermine those who've given so much to the service of it. Shame on the WWRP.

Name withheld at writers request

Transgendered Stonewall Legend Passes On

'queens' from inside the Stonewall Bar. In actuality, Stonewall was strictly for gay men — the trans-sexuals, queens and butches were relegated to the streets outside. When police began hauling the arrested patrons outside, the collected group began verbally challenging the arresting officers — some throwing coins (not rocks).

In 1970, less than a year after the infamous Stonewall Riots, Sylvia Rivera joined forces with another Stonewall veteran, the late Marsha P. Johnson, to form the group Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR). Later renamed Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries, STAR and Sylvia Rivera worked tirelessly for the civil rights of transgendered and other queer people.

Across the country and around the globe, she was frequently called on to address audiences of rising activists and advocates. Sylvia's firebrand demeanor was world-renowned and instrumental in galvanizing the transgender community to fight to further the cause of justice for all.

Rivera was involved in the struggle for human rights until the moment of her death.

Last year, Rivera resurrected STAR in response to the high-profile murder of transsexual prostitute, Amanda Milan. Ms Rivera herself was the spearhead of both the vigil immediately following Milan's death, and another awareness vigil before the beginning of the murder trial of Milan's killers.

Sylvia Rivera, popularly credited as being the instigator of the Stonewall Riots, passed away at approximately 5:00 AM, February 19, 2002, in the intensive care unit of St. Vincent's Hospital in New York's Greenwich Village. She had been in and out of the hospital recently due to cancer of the liver. Both her lover, Julia Murray, and Reverend Pat Bumgardner of the MCC-NY (Metropolitan Community Church-New York), were at her side as she passed on. She was 53.



An internationally recognized pioneer in what became known as the "Gay Rights Movement", Ms. Rivera was one of the collection of drag queens, transsexuals and stone butch lesbians on the scene, June 27, 1969 — the fateful moment of the Stonewall Riots. Though the uprising is the subject of legend, Sylvia Rivera's name was always synonymous with the catalytic moment that became history. On an annual basis, she was requested across the country, and across the globe, to recount the historic incident in first-person detail.

One misconception that persisted throughout was that Ms. Rivera was the first to throw a 'stone' or 'brick' at Stonewall. In actuality, it was Molotov cocktails that were thrown which began the ebb and flow of protester vs. police conflicts. Another misconception that Sylvia was quick to point out was that she did not throw the first Molotov cocktail, but the second one instead. An unidentified "queen" threw the first.

Yet another popular misconception is that police frisked and arrested the

Recently, just out of the hospital, Sylvia participated in the lobbying effort to include gender identity in New York State's pending SONDA (Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act) legislation. She challenged the lead organization, ESPA (Empire State Pride Agenda) to push for revised wording to expand the coverage to transgendered.

Rivera met with the leadership of the Empire State Pride Agenda in her hospital room just hours before her death, presenting issues of concern to the Transgender Community and negotiating for greater support from ESPA. She left the national GLBT community as she had begun: a true and outspoken activist who was totally committed, and who never knew the word "quit."

"I am truly saddened by Sylvia's death," said Yosefio Lewis, Board Chair of NTAC (the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition). Lewis, on business in Washington DC, described Ms. Rivera as one who "provided unending inspiration and motivation to countless people through her passion and unwillingness to settle for anything less than total equality for everyone."

"I know I am a better person ... for having been challenged by her and for having taken on some of her fighting spirit."

"Sylvia was beloved by many people" added local New York activist, Rusty Moore. "We shall not see her like again."

The press release was put out by the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC) The NTAC, is a 501(c)4 political advocacy coalition working to establish and maintain the right of all transgendered, intersexed, and gender-variant people to live and work without fear of violence or discrimination.

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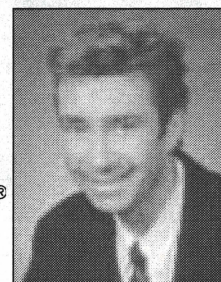
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From Stonewall To Stereotypes

By Geoffrey Young

in Ontario
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Sylvia Riviera died in the early morning of Feb 19, 2002. She was a transgendered person who was popularly believed to be one of the principle instigators of the Stonewall riots and one of the pioneers of the gay rights movement.

Once upon a time, a cabal of hardcore, militaristic FAGS took to the streets in NYC after a raid on a gay bar, and, Molotov cocktails in hand, made it very clear that the violent repression of non-straight was not going to stand. They got beaten up and became targets of law enforcement, intelligence agencies and rednecks everywhere.

These people put their lives and freedom on the line in order to help create a livable world for gays, lesbians and transgendered folks. They never could have imagined exactly what their fight would turn into years down the road. These days, instead of being regular victims of police brutality, said community has once again fallen victim to the same old straight men; only now they couldn't care less.

Gay pride in Toronto has become the advertising festival of the year and really more of a celebration of labatts, molson and 102.1 than of the struggle that made it possible for things like pride week to happen.

And what of the militant community that fought the good fight? It's hard to tell really. They have been drowned out in a sea of cookie cutter fags living their life to look as much as possible like the television show *Queer as Folk*. **This has created separate classes of homosexuals.**

The first is comprised of gym bunnies, limp wrists and 9 to 5 jobs. We're talking girlie flaps and fake lisps, valley girl inflections, the whole nine yards. The theory on this group is that they are not really homosexuals at all. In fact, they are ultra-heterosexuals who

have put the female gender so high on a pedestal that they see fit to emulate said deity. They are obsessed with females far beyond the average heterosexual. Their obsession has gotten to the point where they try to eliminate any common male traits while at the same time assuming the practices, mannerisms, and often personas of their female image/deity. They are so enthralled with the female gender that they seek to *become* female. These folks aren't into guys in the least and are about as gay as Clint Eastwood.

The second class are the ones that would be rep-resentative of Ms Riviera. They run radical bookshops. These are the people of the Body Politik and Glad Day books. They understand that the battle fought at Stonewall was fought in order to gain the freedom to be whatever they want to be. These folks are not going to let their individuality suffer,



they aren't going to quietly become the fags they see on television. These are the people that value and are active in community building and activism. Often their refusal to present the media image of a fag leaves them single and without dates, ostracized from the majority of the gay community. These are the ones that want to retain the freedom so hard fought for by the folks of the gay rights movement.

The typical Toronto ghetto gay seems happy, even eager, to undo all the freedoms that the Sylvia Rivas fought for. Through rioting, direct confrontation, action and militancy, the people who initiated the Stonewall riots and resultant rights movement forced the larger culture to accept them. This freedom is quickly disappearing in the cathode rays of mainstream media/TV fags. No longer does the freedom to be whatever sort of fag you wanna be exist. If you don't wanna be the television homosexual, then you aren't accepted into the

mainstream gay community.

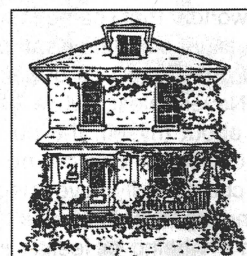
The activists of Stonewall were not fighting for the right to be what the media tells them to be. They were fighting for the right to be whatever they want. A freedom won through great effort, and now, a freedom surrendered in exchange for a Honda, some designer pants, and perfectly groomed dogs. The problem in the beginning was that the straight powers that be were telling the homosexual community what they should and should not be.

Stonewall happened and eventually that changed. Now, once again, the media is telling the gay community what they can and cannot be. Most smile and go along.

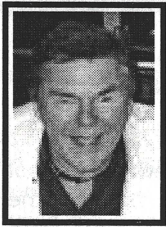
I guess Stonewall was a long time ago, but hopefully, the passing of Ms. Riviera will spur many to consider the battles fought on their behalf and hopefully remind them just how important the freedoms gained in NYC decades ago really are.

Geoffrey Young is a journalist and activist who now resides in Winnipeg Manitoba. A Voice exclusive.

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When the Bloom Begins to Fade

By Charles W. Westfall



I couldn't resist toying with the title of Randy Siegel's excellent column, *Confessions of a Late Bloomer*. However, whether you're an early or late bloomer, when the bloom begins to fade, life changes. Often, it seems to end. Often, it ends sadly.

Dylan Thomas reminds us not to go gently into that good night. St. Paul tells his readers that it is not an easy thing even for a good person to die. All of us, without exception, will one day have to cope with those two factors.

Recently, I was invited to speak to a class of student health care professionals. The general topic for the seminar was Adulthood and Disability. My task was to fit being Gay and Grey into that framework. What follows is, with a few amendments, what I told them that day.

I grew up at a time when the word "sex" was only whispered and homosexuality was never mentioned, barely acknowledged. Through nine years of courses in Philosophy and Theology, the topic received only the most cursory treatment, in Latin, and that focused solely on sexual behaviour and moral condemnation.

It is little wonder that I came to accept my homosexual orientation rather late in life and only after a lot of pain and struggle. Nevertheless, while I feel a lot better about myself, the pain and struggle continue, originating from sources I could hardly have imagined.

Oddly enough, the difficulties do not arise from my being or feeling in any way different from anyone else. At least, not different in the generally accepted sense of the word. Although I have been regarded and categorised as different, I have never felt particularly different. Unique, yes. Different, no. I was and am a maverick with a lot of creative energy. I certainly have not felt that my sexual orientation was what made me different from anyone else.

I haven't felt that; but, obviously, others have. We still live in a world where, in spite of new insights into and understanding of human nature, homophobia remains one of the few tolerated examples of intolerance. In spite of movie and television proliferation of Gay and Lesbian characters, in spite of prominent political, social and artistic figures coming out to the world, in spite of educational programs designed to combat it, homophobia lingers and lurks in many hearts and minds. Often in minds and hearts that don't even recognise it.

One of the problems here is that homosexuals are seen as an absolute and definable minority, generally estimated as making up 10% of humanity. Well, even if that were true, there would be thousands of Gays and Lesbians crowding a particular urban or suburban area. That may be true in a place like Toronto, New York City or San Francisco. Closer to home, I just haven't seen them. I dare say no one else has either. The closets are still quite crowded in most places.

Now, if we take the Kinsey scale of measurement into account, that number increases at least 5 fold, including anyone and everyone with any tendencies, however proportioned, away from a rigid and absolute Gay or Straight definition.

So, when we begin to talk about being Gay and Grey and how to go, not gently, but gracefully into that good night, some things have to be set aside. Religious, social and cultural differences and conditioning and, even, some unhappy memories can't be allowed to colour the issue. It will be necessary not to regard any particular quality stemming from heritage or orientation as something that differentiates. It will be necessary to look at commonality and the fact that radical personal differences do exist

and do not, necessarily, prevent the nurturing of that commonality.

Walt Whitman wrote eloquently from this perspective, "I sing of myself/ Of myself I sing/ And all that I assume/ You also shall assume/ For every atom that belongs to me/ As like belongs to you ..."

At the same time differences do exist. In fact they abound within the LGBT Communities. Just for the record, here are a few of the current acknowledged differences: gays, gay positives, gay men, gay women, lesbians, transsexuals, transgendered, intersexuals, hermaphrodites, queers, queer positives, bi's, bi-curious, curious, femmes, butches, machos, drag queens, leather men and women, sadomasochists, hedonists, narcissists, HIV Negatives and HIV Positives, those living with AIDS, those living with those living with AIDS, Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays, twinks, matures, closeteds, outs, tops, bottoms, those taken, those available, x's, former x's, the casually promiscuous, ho's, experienced, inexperienced and, a designation that broke me when I read it, serial monogamists. The list goes on and on and on.

Sadly, within this quagmire of differences, are a disproportionately high number of individuals who just give up on trying to belong or gain acceptance. In particular, younger and older men tend to get lost in all the sound and fury. They end up taking their own lives or simply throwing away lives that may still be filled with promise.

These observations do not seem to apply in the same way to women. Women, it appears, have better coping and bonding skills and are just always as openly involved in the mainstream of Gay and Lesbian life. Moreover, their struggle seems more aligned, and rightly so, to the ongoing struggle for

dignity in which women everywhere are engaged. To their great credit, many men have also become involved in this struggle; but, that's another story.

For gay men, especially older gay men, there is a disparate need for affection. If a man is also disabled or impoverished, he is cut off from the normal channels of communication available to those more active and affluent. There is, consequently, little chance of being very involved, very noticed or very accepted. This leads, in many cases, either to a complete rejection of and disassociation from the gay scene or to a desperate round of drinking binges in a futile effort to stay connected.

As health care professionals, concerned with how to deal with people like that in retirement and chronic care facilities, you do not have an easy chore ahead of you. You will be dealing with a vast inner pool of loneliness, depression, anger, resentment and helplessness. There will be a craving for any kind of acceptance and affection. There will be a desire to be treated, not as someone different. There's enough of that within the LGBT Communities themselves. There will be a great need, as there is for everyone, to be treated as someone of dignity and worth in him or her self.

My generation spent most of the time closeted and so have managed and will manage to deal with the problems of ageing and geriatric care more easily. The baby boomers, however, who have spent much more of their lives out of the closet and involved in what is rapidly becoming a widespread and visible subculture, will be more challenged.

In this light, the possibility of establishing Gay and Lesbian retirement homes and communities is becoming a hot topic. Existing facilities for seniors have few if any special programs or arrangements for gay or lesbian residents. For many retirees, this means, in effect, going back into the closet. Whether or not, given the divide between young and old within many LGBT Communities, a segregated facility is the answer seems to be problematic.

At the same time, projected figures for suicide rates, among older gay men, indicate that a major disaster of epidemic proportions is waiting just over the horizon.

It might not be possible to offset these predictions. It may, however, be possible to correct mindsets that could contribute to them. Death does come as the end. Too often, however, it is too long in coming. Those waning years, the years when the bloom begins to fail and fall, should be years rich in humanity and fulfilment. It falls to others to help supply something of that richness, that humanity and that sense of fulfilment.

I don't have any specific recipes for doing this. I just know that no human life deserves to be ignored, much less arbitrarily discarded. The bloom can and will fade. It's essential meaning and worth, however, will remain, well into and beyond the twilight years; into that good night, itself.

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



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Gay Travel Marketing On the Internet

By Matthew Skallerud

How Companies Can Advertise and Promote themselves Online to the Gay Market

If you're a part of a travel company wanting to target the online gay & lesbian community, then you have no doubt come across the problem of where to begin. You've probably built a wonderful web site for marketing to the online gay & lesbian traveler, developing a site ranging from a simple online brochure describing your services to a complete website offering fully interactive features about your destination or company. You may be a gay & lesbian travel tour operator, travel agency, hotel, airline, or Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - the direction on where to start remains the same.

Your first step should be listing your site with the most popular search engines, as everyone uses these at one time or another when beginning their quest online. Of course Yahoo.com and Google.com are two of the most popular search engines out there, but don't forget Excite, Lycos and AltaVista.

Be careful when approached by some of the numerous services offering to guarantee your site top placement in search engines - some of the services are for real while others are not. Always keep in mind one thing... you're far from the only one wishing to appear first in those search engines... you have lots of competition all trying to manipulate their site's key words and utilizing various other tricks in order to appear first.

At the same time, it's the role of those search engines to provide the user with the best search results possible, regardless of key words used in the site itself. Our advice - go ahead and purchase a product such as AddWeb (www.cyberspacehq.com - cost, about \$40) to help you submit your site to search engines. Using AddWeb's tutorials and various tools built into their program will allow you to go a long way in terms of improving your site's position in the search engines.



The upside is that when someone using the Microsoft Explorer browser or Yahoo.com types in a search phrase such as "gay travel", you can purchase the right to appear first as a sponsored link in those search results.

While discussing search engines and directories, there are several excellent and free gay & lesbian search sites on the Internet. Some examples of these are GayScape (www.gayscape.com), PrideLinks (www.pridelinks.com), GayCrawler (www.gaycrawler.com), GayZoo (www.gayzoo.com), Cybersocket (www.cybersocket.com) and RainbowQueery.com - all of these sites and others offer the gay & lesbian viewer the ability to search for key words, such as "gay hotel Miami" and display only gay- & lesbian-specific sites in the search results. Of course, there's no way to submit to these sites automatically, so you'll have to seek them out and let them know you're online.

Concluding the topic of search engines, keep in mind that a variety of market research reports indicate that, on average, 7% of your web site's traffic should come from search engines. So make that your target and then consider where the other 93% of your site's traffic should come from!

Then it comes to actually considering advertising your site online. There is a mistaken belief that there are "thousands of gay & lesbian websites online - how does one know which one to choose?" In reality, there are only a small handful of web sites that actually have the key demographic you are looking for. Today, there are several strong, global gay & lesbian "general web sites", often known as Virtual Communities. These are gaywired.com, planetout.com, rainbownetwork.com, (UK Gay Market), fridae.com (www.fridae.com) LesbiaNation.com (Women's market) and Gay.com (www.gay.com). These sites are considered the largest gay & lesbian sites worldwide, and attract

An advertisement for Blue Star Web Design. It features a decorative border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns. Inside the border, at the top, is the text "For an Affordable, Colourful and PROUD web presence,". In the center is a graphic of a spider on a web, with the text "Blue Star Web Design" overlaid on it. Below the spider graphic, it says "Graphic design for print media also available." At the bottom of the advertisement, the website address "www.bluestarweb.on.ca/" is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font.

online visitors for a variety of reasons, from news to chat rooms, from shopping to travel. By ensuring you are listed with these sites - even with a free listing - you are ensuring your site a better chance of being found when someone online is thinking "gay travel", but is not exactly sure where to start looking. All of the sites mentioned above have strong travel sections, promoting tour operators, hoteliers, restaurants, nightclubs, travel agents and more. They also have editorial content geared towards the gay traveler, as well as gay travel calendars and other resources one might seek when thinking about gay travel. Most importantly, all of these sites offer advertising opportunities, where a gay travel company can better promote themselves through banner advertising and other methods of standing out prominently to the web surfer when he/she is thinking "gay travel."

Equally important in your online advertising campaign is to focus on sites that are specifically for Gay Travel. These sites range from QTMagazine.com, OutandAbout.com, PurpleRoofs.com, LambdaResorts.com, Damron.com, Gayjet.com, BluWay.com and others. These sites differ from the more general sites mentioned above, in that folks online are coming to these sites specifically with the thought of travel in mind. If you are a hotelier, you want to focus on more specific gay & lesbian travel-related sites that folks would come to when looking for a gay hotel in your area. If you are a tour operator, you want to focus on sites that folks go to when searching for general gay & lesbian tours around the world, such as Out & About and Our World Magazine Online.

Lastly, there are a variety of new revenue-generating opportunities being developed online for the travel industry. As of today, there seems to be four to five different companies offering online gay & lesbian travel product for sale from other sites. One of the first in this market was GayLinkTravel.com.

The site includes a travel agency and offers travel product for sale on the Internet. Packages ranging from an Atlantis cruise to special Gay Games travel are offered. Participating web sites can then pick and choose the travel product they wish to merchandise to their own unique membership,

and the travel product is then displayed directly from within their own individual sites. The web site owners are focused on their own content and membership, and by enabling travel package sales from their site, receive additional revenue and travel content.

If you are with a travel agency, you need to let folks know about the services you offer, and allow them easy access to contacting you directly for more information. If you're a tour operator, you need to let folks online know about the variety of travel packages and tours you are offering over the next year. This includes getting your travel over to Out & About, The Specialist, Passport Magazine and Our World Magazine, so that they can get your information published in their magazine as well as on their online Internet sites. If you're with a hotel, experience has shown that hotels are some of the best performers on the Internet. When someone is ready to travel to another part of the country on their first vacation to that destination, they want things to go just right. With a hotel's website providing a complete tour of the rooms and the grounds, that traveler can feel more confident that they have selected the right hotel for their trip.

Hotels such as The Blue Dolphin in Ft. Lauderdale were some of the first to go online, and have attested to the fact that the Internet is now their #1 source of income compared to all other forms of advertising.

Many folks believe that the online community uses the Internet primarily to gather information, and would choose to make a purchase only over the phone or by fax. While this can be the case when purchasing a complex and expensive travel package, this is not the case regarding simple travel purchases online. Folks online are not shy about using their credit cards to make a purchase over the Internet, and the easier you make it to take them to that point of sale (credit card purchase securely online), the more successful your online business will be.

In conclusion, it is the combination of search engines, advertising in a few large but general gay & lesbian sites, advertising in a few targeted gay travel sites, and working with an online affiliate program such as GayLinkTravel.com that should provide you with a truly successful "gay online marketing mix". The Internet is still new

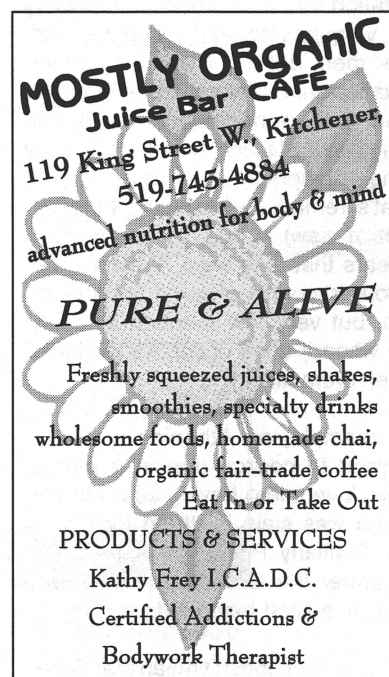
to many folks (though their comfort factor improves rapidly), and is understandably best explored slowly, to identify what works. But the fact of the matter is that a high percentage of gays and lesbians worldwide are on the Internet, and are using the Internet as their primary resource for finding travel information, shopping and news that is pertinent to them, and this trend is only getting stronger. With your own gay online marketing mix, success in tapping into this market can become a reality for you, too!

About the Author:

Matthew Skallerud, founder of **Hyperion Interactive Media (H.I.M.)**, began his career in the gay & lesbian marketplace when he founded **Gay Wired, Inc.** (www.gaywired.com) in May of 1995. He successfully led **Gay Wired** into one of the premiere and dominant gay websites worldwide, translating that success to **LesbianaNation.com** and **QTMagazine.com** (gay travel site) and setting the foundation for what **GSociety, Inc.** is today. In 2001, he launched **H.I.M.**

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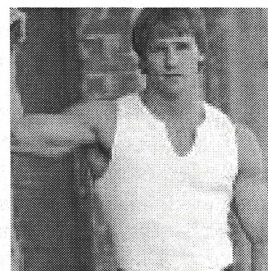
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Do Gay Men Have To Be Promiscuous?

By Bill Weintraub



In a recent 365Gay.com column, safer-sex educator James Murray related how angry a reader became when James wrote about the potential dangers from oral sex. James, the reader declared, was guilty of “fear-mongering and shaming of gay sex.”

I’ve heard such accusations before from gay men anxious to protect a source of pleasure, and they reminded me of the extent to which so many gay men believe that not merely sex with another man, but sex with lots of other men, is key to their identity. Try to take away my promiscuity, they say, and you’re being homophobic.

Yet like so many of our ideas about sex, the notion that all gay men are promiscuous is cultural, political, and relative. We can see that cultural element quite clearly when we look at the ancient Greeks in their heyday, the period between the defeat of the Persians in 480 BCE and the death of Alexander the Great in 323.

Among the Greeks there was an expectation that men would be erotically and very passionately involved with other men. But there was also an expectation that they would be what we would call “monogamous” — that is, both physically and emotionally loyal to the one person they loved. What’s remarkable (at least from our point of view) is that, by and large, it appears that they were. We have numerous accounts of same-sex love affairs, but very few mention infidelity. And when it does occur, it’s punished rather dramatically.

For example, an Athenian tyrant attempted to coerce one of a pair of young lovers into having sex with him — and was slain by them for his efforts. Similarly, Philip II of Macedon — Alexander the Great’s father — was killed by a jilted boyfriend.

Of course that doesn’t mean that Greek

men weren’t promiscuous in other ways. There were slaves and female prostitutes and even courtesans. But in their same-sex love affairs, it seems, they were scrupulously faithful.

And there are numerous cross-cultural and historical examples like this one, which tell us that just as sexual practices vary among cultures, so do expectations of loyalty and promiscuity. Why then do present-day gay men believe that promiscuity is so central to who they are?

As is true of the emphasis on anal sex in contemporary gay culture, the answer is historical and ideological.

The gay movement and the community it created emerged from what was arguably the worst period of repression and persecution of the “sexually deviant” the world has ever known.

Of course “sodomites,” “passing women” and others had been ill-treated for at least a thousand years prior to our own era, but in the 20th century, the new science of psychiatry, whose teachings permeated cultures worldwide, combined with totalitarianism, restrictions on freedom in the few liberal democracies, colonialism, and religious hatred of homosexuals to produce a global orgy of censorship, beatings, incarcerations, forced medical treatments, and murders both individual and mass of LGBT people.

That persecution, so widespread in its extent, and reaching into almost country and every social class, had an exceptionally destructive effect on those gay people and communities that managed to survive.

But, starting in 1945, a series of revolts shook the established order: anti-colonialism; the civil rights, women’s, and anti-war movements; the student uprising; and the counter-culture. These movements questioned every

aspect of the repressive past, and provided both the ideological underpinnings for, and, in some cases, the actual leaders of, the modern LGBT community.

And so Gay Lib and the gay rights movement which emerged in the 1970s were deeply distrustful of authority. In particular, gay men and lesbians had come to hate, with good reason, those who argued for any restrictions on sexual freedom.

And because medicine itself had been used against us, gays were suspicious of establishment doctors as well.

So instead of following the traditional, hetero, monogamous model, gay men invented a new one, it which it was both our right and our duty to have sex with as many of our fellows as possible.

An idea that was heartily endorsed by businesspeople who saw in Gay Liberation the chance to make money by opening bath-houses and backroom bars, and by gay male doctors who believed there was no such thing as an untreatable STD.

And when AIDS appeared, most gay men felt and feared that to surrender our promiscuity would be to surrender to the same forces that had attempted to destroy us for literally hundreds of years.

And so, defiantly, promiscuity became even more firmly entrenched in gay male culture.

That doesn’t mean that my generation of gay men invented promiscuity. But it does mean that we formulated an ideology of promiscuity and made it core to our culture.

As an openly gay and sexually active man, I witnessed that promiscuity for 30 years, the first ten of which hap-

pened to coincide with what gay writer Brad Gooch later termed "The Golden Age of Promiscuity."

But the truth is that it wasn't golden. Even if you were young and relatively pretty, what began in fun soon came to feel compulsive and filled with rejection. And in those ten years epidemics engulfed the community one after the other, starting with crabs, then scabies, then syphilis and gonorrhoea, then herpes, then intestinal parasites and hepatitis, and finally HIV.

So the list of ills went from amusing to annoying to scary to dangerous to deadly — in less than a decade.

Some of us were less affected by these diseases than others — because we weren't as promiscuous, or because the ways we liked to have sex didn't expose us to the diseases, or both.

For that reason we were sometimes called prudes. But I think it's fair to say, in retrospect, that we were simply prudent.

What was remarkable was the degree to which other gay men weren't. They'd get sick, they'd get treated (hopefully), and they'd go back out and hurl themselves into the whirl of backroom bars and bath-houses and frenetic, anonymous sex, much of it violating the most basic rules of hygiene, lessons learned early in childhood.

It's not simply that it felt good. Don't let people tell you that. It's that too many gay men thought they had to do it in order to be gay - because that's what their culture was telling them. And that the rest of us, for the most part, simply didn't understand the danger.

When, for example, I saw men troop

past our little Fire Island apartment on moonless nights to go have sex in the darkness, I thought it was unwise. But I didn't see what was coming.

Larry Kramer did. In 1979 he wrote a book called *Faggots*, which attacked among other things gay men's disregard for each other's health. And that same year Gay Lib pioneer and philosopher Arthur Evans warned that "a great wave of death is about to break over the community."

Both were labelled erotophobes and traitors to gay culture.

But both were right.

And the gay male community was soon engulfed by one of the worst epidemics the world has ever known.

Years later, after the deaths of my lover and all of our friends, I joined an HIV-negative support group. Not that I needed support to stay negative — I just needed some company.

One night the discussion turned to oral sex. The day before there'd been a tumultuous public meeting in our town to discuss a recent study that said that there was some risk from oral. The community was frightened, appalled and infuriated — now they want to take oral away from us too, men said.

An acquaintance of mine spoke at that meeting. He'd sero-converted through oral sex alone, and he wanted others to learn from his experience.

When I brought up his name in my HIV-negative support group, there were cries of outrage. "He's lying," they said to me. "But I know him," I responded. "He has no reason to lie."

No one would believe me. "You don't know him that well," they said. "You don't know everything he's done."

There was no way I could answer them, so I left the group. They were nice guys, but they were in such strident denial about sex and disease that I no longer felt we shared a common ground.

I love sex, and I know that I'm lucky that the way I like to have sex is a lot less risky than others. But I also understand there are limits to medicine that have nothing to do with homophobia.

And that there are demands we make upon ourselves as gay men that have too little to do with pleasure, and too much to do with culture and ideology. So I salute James Murray for continuing to fight to save gay men's lives. But I suggest to him, as I have to other safer-sex educators, that it's not enough to look at individual risk factors.

One has to look at the entire culture. For so long as gay men believe that they are defined by promiscuity and anal sex, they will continue to put themselves in mortal danger.

Bill Weintraub is an activist and freelance writer. You can read more of his work at:

www.HeroicHomosex.com

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Good Grief: Life in the Wake of Tragedy (Part 1)

By Noel Springwood

A recent letter from a friend in New York City reminded me of the importance of grief. It reminded me of the prevalence of grief. It reminded me of how much our lives are affected by grief.

In the wake of tragedy or death, grieving is the normal human reaction. Because of the pain involved and the sense of helplessness accompanying it, grief is not always understood. More than that, it is not always done well.

Here's the letter. See for yourself.

"Well, it's like this.

Life is just so black. I'm afraid all the time. I hate the subway and I hate the thought that we can be attacked again. The running over of people seems to be the new way of killing New Yorkers and I'm always edgy. I hear helicopters night and day for days on end and every time I see a plane in the sky, I want to cry and I shake like crazy inside. I dream of low flying planes and in the dreams my body feels so heavy that it cannot move. At night, I hear things like garbage trucks and I wonder if they're explosions in the distance. On the subway, everyone stares at everyone else and everyone is deadly silent, especially this week. Cops rush us in and out of the cars and are in all the stations. Sometimes there are so many cops in the stations and they look us over like we're all guilty. I am so afraid so often and now that we didn't get the money that asshole president promised us, the city is cutting everything back.

Our taxes are going up too. Great, the Federal Government gi! ves us tax breaks so the local government raises them to make ends meet. It's not the new mayor's fault. He is doing what's right. Everyone is doing what's right but it is all very scary and I feel like the bottom is falling out. I'm having a hard time getting a grip on life. I can't stand it much longer. I want to leave the city

so bad and yet, I can't. How can I? Keith never would and besides, they'd win and I'd lose the place I love the most. Yet, the place that I love is so terrifyingly different these days. nothing is the same. Guards, scanners, cameras, police, soldiers, barricades and warnings are all too common now. One can't walk into a museum without being accosted in some way. Bags are searched, people are under constant surveillance and it's all closing in on me. I want to breathe and yet I'm choking back tears and fears all the time.

People walk down the streets and look up all the time, or they stare at the sidewalk. it's horrible working by ground zero. I see it every day. I see too much every day and I have to put it aside and walk on to my office. The streets are all blocked off and police can be up to 50 or more on each block on certain days and one wonders what's going on, on those days. Trucks filled with sand appear some days and block streets, mostly just vans block the streets. Wires run up streets delivering electric to ground zero. The whole world has gone mad and all I want to do is go away and I have no place to go. I won't be safe anywhere. I can't seem to find a comfort zone and I know that no matter where I run away to, it will always be with me. I will never feel safe and I'll never find peace anywhere. I'm so sad; but I do what I have to do in order to get through from one day to the next. I go out. I try to live my life as normally as I used to; but, inside of me, something has been blown to bits".

There's more but you get the idea. In spite of all the bravado and hoopla portrayed in the media, the pain remains. Just surviving becomes a major effort in a world that has lost its meaning.

As the reality of loss becomes more inescapable, we try to make sense of it. There is no sense, of course. That



just makes things worse.

Time, ultimately, will help us adjust to our loss, to the changes in our lives and to the fact that our lives do change, constantly and, often, unpleasantly.

The energy we put into trying to deal with tragedy and death can drain valuable energies from our own process of living. The rituals with which we mark the passing of others can help with the healing. At the same time, it can take years to heal adequately.

Healing is often attended by a feeling of guilt: a kind of why them and not me and not me attitude. There is also a feeling of helplessness that can really frighten and hurt a person living in a world that places high value on self-sufficiency. Talking with others about one's feelings and sharing perspectives can help with the healing.

That's what my friend in New York did with his letter to me. He knows that I have no real answers. No one has. However, my readiness to listen and to assure him that his feelings are normal will go a long way to support him as he gets on with his life.

And that's the bottom line: getting on with life.

And we learn to live with the fact that we never really get over grief. We just learn to live with it.

In Part 2 of "Good Grief," I'll try to show how we can help ourselves and others grieve well and come to grips with loss.

NOEL SPRINGWOOD served most of his life as a Roman Catholic Priest. A Voice exclusive.

Survey: Unprotected Oral Sex the Norm Among MSM

The yearlong GayHealth.com oral sex survey results have been tabulated — and what have we found? You love oral sex — love it, love it, love it. All oral sex — all the time.

More than 1,600 people completed the survey conducted between January of 2001 and January 2002. Compared to other types of sex, 42.2 percent of respondents said oral sex is their favorite type of sex, and 20 percent said it is tied with anal sex.

It's probably no surprise that oral sex is one of your favorite types of sex, but most people forgo condoms and dental dams while giving — and getting — head, even with casual sexual partners.

Using a condom during oral sex was rare, and all participants reported unprotected oral sex during the previous year. It's important to note, however, that a total of 25 percent of participants reported having only unprotected oral sex with their primary partner.

Almost 60 percent of respondents said it is not worth it to use condoms or dental dams during oral sex and 18.1 percent said it is too gross, but something they'd do anyway. More than 19 percent said it is not bad and it is better than transmitting diseases.

When asked how often respondents use a condom or dental dam when receiving oral from a partner whose HIV status is unknown to them, 55 percent said they never use condoms, 14 percent said they rarely do. However, 20.4 percent said they always do and 6.9 percent said they do most of the time.

Respondents were also asked what they perceived their risk of HIV was from giving oral sex to an HIV infected partner without a condom and without swallowing or taking the load in your mouth. More than 35 percent said the risk was small and 22.7 percent said it was miniscule.

If a new partner insisted on using condom or dental dam during oral sex, most of the respondents said they would "gladly comply," with more than 62.9 percent saying so. However, 24.4 percent of respondents would grudgingly comply and 12.7 percent would decline to have protected oral sex.

A total of 92.2 percent of participants were male, 77.1 percent were gay and 15.5 percent bisexual.

www.gayhealth.com/templates/0/common/feature.html?record=724

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Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

150 Main Street - Second Floor, Cambridge

Mondays 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

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Monday and Thursday 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. drop in

99 Regina Street South - Second Floor, Waterloo

Tuesdays 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. drop in

150 Main Street - Second Floor, Cambridge

519-883-2251



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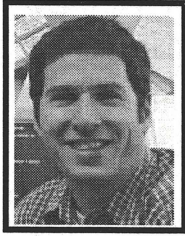
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BELLEEK china was made in Ireland, other European countries, and the United States. The glaze is creamy yellow and appears wet. The first Belleek was made in 1857. The mark changed through the years. The first mark, black, dates from 1863 to 1890. The second mark, black dates from 1891 to 1926 and includes the words Co. Fermanagh, Ireland. The third mark, black, dates from 1926 to 1946 and has the words Deanta in Eirinn. The fourth mark, same as the third mark but green, dates from 1946 to 1955. The fifth mark, green dates from 1955 to 1965 and has an R in a circle added in the upper right. The sixth mark green dates after 1965 and the words Co. Fermanagh, Ireland have been omitted. The seventh mark, gold was used after 1980 and omits the words Deanta in Eirinn. The word Belleek is now used only on the pieces made in Ireland.



How Gender Role Socialization Plays out in Same-sex Relationships

By Dr. Jeffrey Chernin



As children, we were taught what it means to be a “boy” or a “girl.” Some of the messages were overt, as when parents, for example, admonish their sons that boys don’t cry, or girls should not climb trees, while other messages were subliminal.

With literally hundreds of messages on how to behave as male and female, our parents instructed us on how to be “masculine” and “feminine.” A name for this phenomenon is gender role socialization. While these teachings are intended for heterosexuals in their relationships to one another, LGB individuals do not escape from their effects.

Furthermore, the teaching of gender roles isn’t limited to our parents. From the time we could understand words, parents, teachers, the government, and clergy were teaching us how to be male and how to be female. Men outnumber women three or four to one, if not more, in the top management of nearly every large corporation and governmental entity. Instances of gender role socialization abound in religious teachings, from women and children being forced to sit separately from men in places of worship (in the back), to telling women that they should be subservient to their husbands.

As we grew up, even though we have had to question society’s views because of our variation in sexual orientation, gender role socialization can be so pervasive that we can act out our gender expectations without knowing it.

In my experience, gender role socialization plays itself out most visibly in couples. Knowing when these messages play out in your relationships and how to deal with them is important to the health of each relationship.

Some of the major messages that society teaches men is that to be a man, you should be able to do things on your own, and you should be aggressive and competitive in all of your endeavors. Men are also taught

that when there is a problem, you should fix it, and you should never expose vulnerability.

One result is male couples fighting for who’s going to be on top. And when you have two tops, there’s not much room for negotiation. And that, unfortunately, leads to impasses and to circular, sometimes ceaseless, conflict. When you have two aggressive, competitive men, who’s going to be the one to say he’s sorry first when he’s done something to hurt his partner? When a man wants to share his feelings, will he risk putting them on the line if his lover might scoff at them?

Turning to female role socialization, girls are taught to be submissive, to sacrifice their feelings for men, to be “pretty” to attract the opposite sex.

Females are taught that when there’s a problem, they should share their feelings. Lesbians, as gay men, often accept these messages unconsciously, and women also play out these notions out in their relationships. For example, lesbians may not speak up or confront for fear of creating discord, and with conflict avoided, frustrations and problems can build up for the sake of the relationship.

Furthermore, solutions to problems may take longer because of the gender role message that women should sacrifice their needs for the sake of their relationships. If neither partner will speak up about what she wants or needs, or about problems in the relationship, they preserve the status quo.

For both male and female couples, even they may approach relationship challenges with their respective gender roles intact, it may lead to a similar outcome: two frustrated individuals with little means or hope for settling conflicts.

Lesbians and gay men can benefit from learning how the relationship is affected by the amount of buy-in to traditional gender roles, and that part of the solution is to have an awareness of when and how

this outside force has entered their relationships.

For lesbians, learning to embrace conflict as a part of relationships, partners can come to understand that the ebb and flow of relationship development, which is often intertwined with individual development, can be smoother when conflicts are brought up and handled as they arise. They can also welcome otherness, viewing differences as a source of relationship strength rather than a relationship threat.

For gay men, learning that cooperation and compromise work better than fighting about who’s right, partners can work through stalemates and make progress toward solutions. They can also come to understand that a person who is willing to show vulnerability is stronger than in a (fearful) person who is not. Both gay men and lesbians can benefit from knowing that power struggles result from the gender roles of aggression and submission, and there are no winners in these struggles. In fact, couples can come to grips with the fact

that both individuals lose as the bonds of trust and respect unravel, and they will each lose if they are engaged in a mutual struggle to change each other.

Lesbians and gay men can learn that relationship victory occurs when each person is willing to let the person to be himself or herself, to give in now and then, and to risk vulnerability. By being more flexible in their gender roles, each person learns that winning happens when s/he cooperates with the other person, and that being the bottom can be as gratifying as being on top.

Jeffrey Chernin, Ph.D., is a Marriage and Family Therapist in Los Angeles. He can be reached at [redacted]. This article was submitted to The Voice by Jeffrey Chernin.

Rosie Comes Out Fighting

Secretly Worked For Months To Battle Gay Adoption Ban

By Beth Shapiro

(February 16, New York) **It's official. Rosie is OUT!** And, she's fighting mad. The talk show host and actress has been the subject of rumours about her sexuality for years, with it escalating to a frenzied pitch as the publication date for her autobiography approaches.

365Gay.com was the first GLBT publication with the news the popular star would come out in her book. Now we can tell you she has been working with the ACLU for months to battle Florida's ban on gay and lesbian adoption.

O'Donnell has a home in Florida, and an adopted son. The ACLU's Lesbian & Gay Rights Project has been battling the Florida law in the courts for three years. This week it filed a 43-page brief filed Thursday at

the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Atlanta and oral arguments are expected later this year.

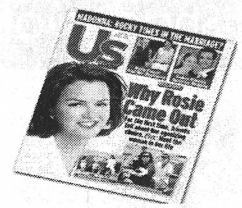
On March 14, O'Donnell will appear with one of the gay families the ACLU is representing for an interview with ABC's Diane Sawyer. The interview was taped this week in New York.

In it, O'Donnell and the Florida family talk about their lives, their families and how they are affected by Florida's law.

A spokesperson for Rosie O'Donnell confirmed the interview had taken place. Matt Coles, the ACLU Director of the Lesbian & Gay Rights Project said: "We are eager for America to see and hear why Florida's law prohibiting adoption by all gay people is discriminatory - and how that bigotry

hurts families and children." Coles said, "We have been working with Rosie O'Donnell since last year on the fight against Florida's gay adoption ban.

Source: 365Gay.com Newscenter, in New York



Editor's Note:

To read an exclusive interview with Rosie O'Donnell check out the March 11, 2002 issue of US Magazine. Rosie is on the cover and the interview has a picture and a bit about her partner, Kelli. It also includes quotes from Rosie's friend, lesbian comic, Kate Clinton.

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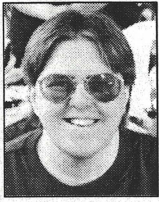
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Conservative Assault On The Homeless Continues

By Ms. A.J. Mahari



On Wednesday February 27, 2002, the candidates running for the leadership of the Ontario Conservative Party and subsequent job of Premier of Ontario participated in a debate televised on the CTV network.

All of the candidates, to varying degrees, hold to most of the party line of the so called "Common Sense Revolution." 'Common sense' we could well do without in this province.

Harris and those vying to replace him as Premier, continue to assault the homeless, among others in the name of tax breaks for major corporations. Taking from the poor to give to the rich, oh, there's common sense for you right? Let's just jail the homeless, that'll teach them. So the "Common Sense" approach, it seems, echoes the very inept and child-like 'out of sight, out of mind' philosophy when it comes to the 'tough sleepers', those who actually end up sleeping on the streets. Of course the entire argument in the debate did not address the other forms of homelessness other than those who are more visibly homeless and sleeping on the street. Wonder what Jim Flaherty and Ernie Eaves will dream up to address those types of homelessness?

Elizabeth Witmer did take a different stand on this, as did Chris Stockwell. Witmer totally disagrees, and strongly, with jailing the homeless. Chris Stockwell passionately asked a very pointed question. He wanted to know from both Jim Flaherty and Ernie Eaves, where they would put these people when they were released from custody. There was no answer forthcoming.

I shutter at the thought of the abuses that will be inherent in arresting those who are homeless, and on the street if either Eaves or Flaherty wins and has his way.

Homelessness has many faces. It has many root causes. Not all people who are homeless are sleeping on the street. Not all people who are homeless are mentally ill. But, many who are chronically homeless do have severe mental health issues.

It is quite a slippery slope to begin with arresting them to "help" them and then end up invoking other laws under the mental health act to "control" them.

While Witmer and Stockwell expressed a distaste and absolute disagreement for arresting the homeless they failed to really explain how they would deal

with this problem. This along with the Conservative penchant for not putting the disadvantaged, let alone the homeless, in the budget or on the agenda did nothing to satisfy those who are very concerned about this issue.

There are no easy answers to the problem of homelessness. It is a multifaceted problem with many root causes. It needs to be approached from many different angles and in-depth. It is not something that government should be involved in trying to improve save for the giving of funds to those who know how to actually address homelessness in humane and caring ways that honour the dignity of each individual.

The Conservative Government of Ontario has assaulted the homeless, the disadvantaged, the physically/mentally disabled, women and children, in this province since it was voted into power. Through the pulling of funding for much-needed social services and programs they have continued to try to provide for the 'have's' off the backs of the 'have-not's'. Isn't there something wrong with this equation? How are we served as a society when those who are already suffering are discarded by a government intent upon serving its own interests and the interests of the 'haves' who must have voted for them.

Unfortunately not enough of the disadvantaged, the poverty-stricken, the physically/mentally disabled, the homeless vote. When people are discarded, alienated, not valued, disenfranchised it is very difficult to care what is going on in government which seems like another world from the one in which the homeless try to exist. Part of the solution in future might be for these people to get out and vote against the Conservative Government

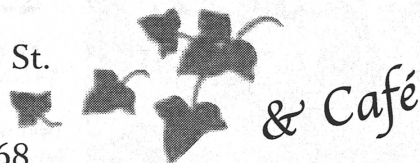
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enmasse. It could make a difference.

Many people in this Province are only a pay cheque or two away from homelessness should they lose their job or should their relationship break up. Homelessness is not something that is reserved for some group of people that are disposable, that don't matter, that can be tossed aside, that aren't deserving of the support and funding. The homeless are real people with inherent worth just because they are. If we start judging and/or making how we value or devalue people conditional upon their life-circumstance then we are in dire trouble. No one deserves to be homeless.

Homelessness involves those who are called 'tough sleepers', those who live and sleep on the street, to those who are staying in emergency shelters, scraping by sometimes renting rooms, motel rooms, sleeping on friend's couches, and live in many other kinds of what is referred to as "risky-housing".

According to an outreach worker who works directly with the homeless: *"Homeless people need support, they need to rebuild their lives, they need to get back their self-esteem. They need to get back their confidence, they need to get back their sense of community, and they need help to get that done. They need all of the things that we may have, that we take for granted."*

Have you thought about the plight and experience of those who are homeless lately? Do you care? How much do you take for granted in your life? Do you think that the only homeless people that exist are the ones that you see on the street? Have you thought about how many more homeless people there are that for all intents and purposes remain invisible? Ever stop to wonder why some of the homeless who live on the streets run from "help"?

The homeless population has no fixed address. It is mobile. In more cases than not it remains hidden. The face of homelessness changes from community to community. Often those who end up being homeless do have a disconnection from family and community in common. Homelessness can affect people of any age, gender, sexual ori-

entation or ethnic background. It does not discriminate.

What do the homeless need? They need understanding firstly. Secondly, they need long-term support and assistance that helps them to find stable housing. In some cases, long term housing with on-going support is needed. This progression could require continual support as every individual has different needs as they move from their vulnerable circumstances to more stable living conditions. They need to be able to get the mental health care many need. They need to be able to find jobs, make decent wages, and then equally as important as anything else they need to be able to find suitable affordable housing. *Affordable-housing* has become an oxymoron, just another casualty in Harris' Common Sense Revolution. Enough of the supposed *common sense!* What the homeless need is practical, caring and humane help. They certainly do not need or deserve to be arrested for their plight. They need a government that seeks to do more than give lip-service to complex issue that homelessness often is.

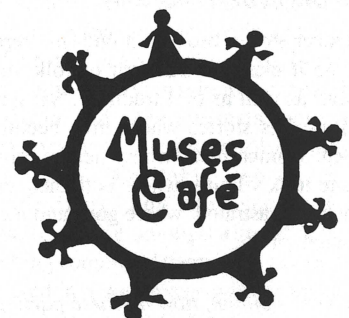
Whether we want to acknowledge it or not, homelessness effects us all. It effects each community at its heart. It defines who we collectively are. We need to care enough to invest the money and build the necessary service-infrastructure into caring for our fellow citizens, who for whatever reason, find themselves in a life-circumstance where they are unable to meet their own housing needs. One can only hope that the plight of those who are homeless will be addressed by those in the human-service/social service/mental health systems that have, at base, the understanding of what is involved and directly by those in government who just don't seem to get it.

Those who seek to be the next Premier of Ontario would do well to educate themselves about this revolving-door dilemma rather than proclaim broad-based impractical and inhumane solutions that will only add to the ills of society and serve to further alienate those who are already disenfranchised.

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.

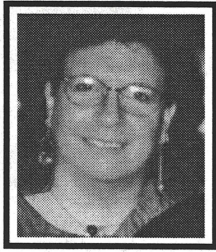


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Manifestations of the Divine: Ancient Indian Stories Reveal Acceptance/ambivalence to queer life



An Exclusive Interview With Author Devdutt Pattanaik

By Lyn McGinnis

Man Who was a Woman and other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore, by Dr. Devdutt Pattanaik and published by Haworth Press, N.Y., relates the many stories about same-sex attraction and crossing traditional gender boundaries in ancient sacred texts, literature and fine arts in India.

In the last five years Dr. Pattanaik has written six books illustrating his evolution as a mythologist. In one of his previous books Goddess in India, he details how Hindus view womanhood. In that volume he also discussed queer ideology in the Hindu construct and sees this book on queer tales as a logical extension of that work.

What follows is an *Exclusive Voice interview* with Dr. Pattanaik along with excerpts from his essay "Homosexuality in Ancient India." The questions are in part based on reviewing material on the author's web site.

Q: *Could you begin by giving us some examples of the kinds of queer stories one could find in Hindu literature?*

A: "Queer stories are found both in literature, be it classical Sanskrit or folk vernacular, as well as oral tradition. Sanskrit literature has stories where men become women, women men, where heroes cross dress to trick villains, where both men and women are castrated, where gods and men get pregnant etc."

Q: *In your opinion, how do these particular stories fit into the larger religious/social context of traditional Hindu culture?*

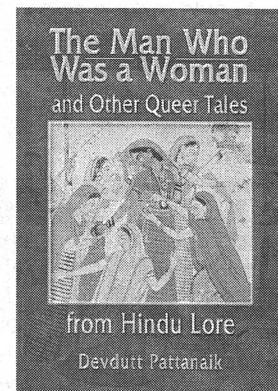
A: In traditional Hindu culture, everything is viewed as a manifestation of the divine. All things happen because of karma, past actions either in this lifetime or the previous ones. Thus there is nothing

'unnatural' or 'evil' as in the Judeo-Christian-Islamic constructs. Man has to deal with all that he is confronted with. Some of things in the world are deemed appropriate and other inappropriate depending on the times one lives in. The demarcation between right and wrong is not rigid. Queer narratives stand at the threshold of what is acceptable by mainstream society and what is not. The urges are normal, their expression are however not always acceptable. The resulting repression, suppression and expression give rise to queer narratives. The ultimate aim of all experiences in life is to help us realize the divine. This includes queer sexuality in us or around us. These stories, force us to accept, that not everything in life can be organized, classified, defined, understood or rationalized.

Q: *Westerners studying this tradition are often surprised at some very frank and explicit sexual material within sacred texts and art. Given the fact sexuality is seen as an essential element within some branches of Hinduism how welcome are queer expressions of sexuality and gender identity within those branches?*

A: "Construction of Hindu temples in stone began around the sixth century of the Common Era. On the walls and gateways of these magnificent structures we find a variety of images: gods, goddesses, demons, nymphs, sages, warriors, lovers, priests, monsters, dragons, plants and animals. Amongst scenes from epics and legends, one invariably finds erotic images including those that modern law deems unnatural and society considers obscene. Curiously enough, similar images also embellish prayer halls and cave temples of monastic orders such as Buddhism and Jainism built around the same time.

One finds images of either women



erotically embracing other women or men displaying their genitals to each other, the former being more common (suggesting a tilt in favor of the male voyeur). According to ancient treatises on architecture, a religious structure is incomplete unless its walls depicts something erotic, for sensual pleasures are as much an expression of life as are righteous conduct, economic endeavors and spiritual pursuits.

My mother once said, "The see the naked images outside and fail to see God inside. How sad!" I believe in the West, there is a tendency to see things as "either/or." In the East, it more "this and that." You cannot appreciate Indian erotic art truly without understanding Indian spirituality. Next to the naked men and women on temple walls are images of sages and gods and ascetics. Who sees them?

Sexuality is seen as an essential component of nature, which is the Goddess, hence sacred. However, within society, not everything that is in nature is acceptable. The Goddess may dance naked and copulate with her consort below her expressing that unrestrained life-giving processes in nature. But in society, women cannot do that. Likewise, queer stories are accepted as part of cosmos but not quite within society. There is tension between nature and culture, between acceptable and unacceptable. Fundamentally, there is no rejection of queer sexuality and non-conventional gender identities. They may be natural but not always socially acceptable.

Q: *You mention there is no fixed attitude towards sexual and gender identity diversity but it changes with time and circumstance. Can you, very generally, summarize how these changes in attitude have occurred in India and why? How do these changing attitudes affect the general popu-*

lation's readings of queer stories within sacred literature?

A: "Hindu mythology states that change is a function of time. Just as we age and die, so does society and so does nature. Even death is temporary, for after that both the microcosm (the individual) and the macrocosm (the universe) will be reborn. Just as human life has four parts – childhood, youth, maturity and old age – the world's lifespan has four eras. In each era there are different rules. The perfect age exists only in the childhood of the cosmos known as Krita Yuga. We are in the fourth and final era, the Kali Yuga, when the world is jaded and senile. I have observed that feminist organizations view suppression of women as a sign of the dark ages while misogynist organizations view liberation of women as a sign of the dark ages. Likewise, queer-friendly organizations see queer-rejection as a sign of the dark ages while queer-unfriendly organizations see queer-expression as a sign of dark ages. We see what we want to see. Or as the scriptures say: all observations are creations of the observer."

Q: *Can you outline how the colonial British influence, both Christian missionaries and Imperial bureaucrats, impacted on this tradition? How does the legacy of these attitudes and laws impact on these questions today?*

A: "Christian missionaries and imperial bureaucrats did bring a lot of wonderful things to India: education, railways, postal system, administrative networks, codified law. However, with it came biblical attitudes: sex is sin, homosexuality is unnatural. This took the shape of anti-sodomy laws and the projection of queer communities as 'criminal tribes'. Most Indians today are view India through the colonial discourse. So (gay) sex is unnatural for them even though nothing in Hindu narratives suggests so. In fact, in Hinduism all that is experienced is a manifestation of the divine and the result of karma.

Until early 20th century, 'heterosexuality' was used to refer to 'morbid sexual practices' between men and women such as oral and anal intercourse, as opposed to 'normal' procreative sex. The term homosexuality - that is so casually used today and is almost an everyday vocabulary - came into being only in the late 19th century Europe when discussions on the

varied expressions of sex and sexuality became acceptable in academic circles. The term was used to describe "morbid sexual passion between members of the same sex." It was declared 'unnatural' by colonial laws, as unnatural as casual sex between men and women that was not aimed at conception.

The term homosexuality and the laws prohibiting 'unnatural' sex were imposed across the world through imperial might. Though they exerted a powerful influence on subsequent attitudes, they were neither universal nor timeless. They were - it must be kept in mind - products of minds that



were deeply influenced by the 'sex is sin' stance of the Christian Bible. With typical colonial condescension, European definitions, laws, theories and attitudes totally disregarded how similar sexual activity was perceived in other cultures. There never has been across geography or history a standard expression of, or a common attitude towards sexual acts between members of the same sex. Love of a man for a boy was institutionalized in ancient Greece, amongst Samurais in Japan, in certain African as well as Polynesian tribes. Amongst some Native and South American tribes, erotic relationships between men was acceptable so long as one of the partners was 'feminine'. For Arabs, so medieval travelers claim, 'women were for home and hearth, while boys were for pleasure'. These cultures offer no synonym for same-sex intercourse. It was perhaps a practice that did not merit definition, categorization or even condemnation. So long as it did not threaten the dominant heterosexual social construct.

In ancient India, men who were 'unlike men', unwilling or incapable to have intercourse with women, were deprived of their manhood and expected to live as women in the fringes of mainstream society. Perhaps this explains the existence

of the hijra community in India. They have served in the female quarters of royal households for centuries.

Hijras are organized communities comprises of males who express themselves socially as women. They are a mix of transsexuals, transvestites, homosexuals, hermaphrodites and eunuchs. In one of the many folk stories associated with Bahucharaji (patron goddess of hijras worshipped in Gujarat), the goddess was once a princess who castrated her husband because he preferred going to forest and 'behaving as a woman' instead of coming to her bridal bed. In another story, the man who attempted to molest Bahucharaji was cursed with impotency. He was forgiven only after he gave up his masculinity, dressed as a woman and worshipped the goddess."

Q: *Given Christians in particular make up such a tiny minority in India today, why do you think these specifically Christian prejudices have had such an influence on traditional attitudes?*

A: "The British ruled India for 150 years and they have played a major role in 'modernizing' India. Although they kept a self-conscious distance from proselytizing, their practices were influenced by the biblical thought. Most educated Indians have been to missionary schools. The modern education system itself has roots in missionary schools. So it is but natural that Christian prejudices percolated into the discourse that dominates Indian, including Hindu, thought. You must keep in mind, however, that Christians in India are a heterogeneous group and by far viewed as a gentle and charitable community. Syrian Christianity existed here even before Christianity became the dominant religion of Europe. The Portuguese brought Christianity here with missionary zeal. The Anglican and Jesuit priests were less vociferous in their criticism of Hinduism, separating charitable works from proselytizing, and they successfully managed to live amongst Hindus without upsetting communal harmony. I myself was educated in a missionary school, and at no point of my education was any attempt made to 'brainwash' me. The teachers, with typical Indian acceptance of all things, celebrated Hindu and Muslim festivals with as much zeal as Christian festivals. While Christian students attended religious

Continued on page 20

Manifestations of the Divine: Interview continued from page 19

classes, we went to ethics and moral science classes. My worldview is Hindu, but I write and think in English because of my education in a very Christian school. The 'Bible-Bashing' variety of American evangelism is relatively new and of late has caused much disharmony in many parts of India with their irreverence for traditional practices."

Q: *Apart from this Muslim and Christian legacy, you mention the Hindu bourgeoisie, who while accepting this traditional material, do not accept people displaying divergent sexual and gender identities in everyday life -except under very narrow circumstances. Can you outline why this is the case?*

A: "First of all, traditional Hindu society represses non-conventional sexual behaviors and practices especially if it threatens the dominant construct; toleration of some queer practices is only in the fringes, not the mainstream. We must remind ourselves that the ancient sources that censure homosexual conduct, also institutionalized the caste system and approved the subservience of women. Add to this, Islamic and Christian attitudes that label such activities as 'sin' and 'evil'. One cannot expect Hindu-bourgeoisie to be naturally sympathetic to things queer. Also, Indians are obsessed with marriage. Please watch the recent film "Monsoon Wedding" by Mira Nair that captures this obsession with marriage. Indian parents will even accept a child's homosexuality so long as he or she is willing to marry a person of the opposite sex and maintain the social façade to uphold the dignity of the family. The issue amongst most

educated queer people is not coming to terms with their sexuality but living their lives without having to deal with the family obsession with marriage. Unlike Western homophobia that is based on "attack," I feel Indian homophobia is based on "denial." Don't talk. Don't acknowledge. Don't support. It will eventually disappear. Further more, the queer movement is relatively new and recent. People are openly talking about same-sex attraction in the media and academic circles. We live in times where there is this angst emerging from the conflict between things traditional and things Western."

Q: *You mention how within the Hindu tradition social law can change and "Dharma in the age of Rama need not be Dharma in the age of Krishna." Given such creative and liberating flexibility is built into the Hindu tradition, how do you think modern queer Indians are meeting the challenge of overcoming the Muslim and Christian legacy?*

A: "Every religion has certain principles that are not always reflected on the ground. Like Muslims and Christians, Hindus are very much uncomfortable with things queer, albeit for other reasons. My book highlights how the (positive and negative) approach to things queer in Hinduism is different from the approach to things queer found in the Judeo-Christian-Islamic paradigm.

Just as the Christian principle of 'Love your neighbors as yourself' can help the average Christian overcome prejudices against things queer, there are many principles in Hinduism that can help Hindus come to terms with things queer. There are no threats of 'eternal' damnation, unlike the dogmas of Judeo-Christian-Islamic

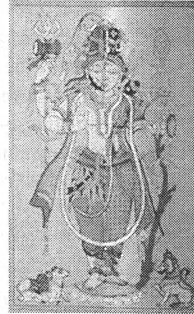
scriptures. There is nothing permanent in the Hindu world. There is always another life, another chance.


I don't think there is any perfect religion or faith or culture out there. Love and hatred is contextual, and depends on the two parties involved, and the "looking glass" each one wears. When I read the Bible I am so enriched and happy. Its powerful lyrical thoughts move the heart. A missionary or evangelist is a human being - thus inherently imperfect. I do not see his prejudice and virulent hatred as a sign of Christianity. I see it as his "misunderstanding" his projection of his hatred into the mouth of God. Likewise, it is foolish to see terrorism as

"Islamic." Terrorism is a human quality. The terrorist uses Islam to express his hatred. The Sufi used Islam to express his love. No religion is inherently bad or good. Just as no system, no culture is bad or good. Hinduism that has produced some truly profound philosophy has also created the caste system. America may be the "land of freedom" in principle, but in practice, its treatment of African and Native Americans leaves much to be desired. But that does not take away the fact that some of what we call "modern and progressive" ideas have their roots in the American culture. Everything in life can be seen as "half full or half empty." On television I have watched both Hindu gurus and American evangelists. They are very similar - confident that their view is the sacred view, God's view, the only view. Very scary.

Give me anything in the world - and I am sure I will find ways to love it or hate it. I choose love because it is liberating. My books are trying to show how different religions have different worldviews. The reasons for accepting/rejecting queerness/feminism are not the same in different cultures. When we appreciate the differences in worldviews, we appreciate that there is no one way of looking at the world. To look at the world one way and to believe that there can only be one way of looking at the world forms the foundation of fundamentalism - be it religious, cultural or sexual."

Q: *How is the emergence of a modern queer movement being received within the traditional Hindu communities in India?*





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A: "Very negatively. Traditional Hindu communities do not want any rupture to the traditional discourse. They don't want people who challenge marriage – whether queer or non-queer. Even gurus who accept queer people suggest they don't express it openly 'for their own good.' It is very much like the 'don't ask, don't tell' policy of the U.S. military establishment."

Q: *What do you think Queer Hindus have to learn and to teach the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender community in the West?*

A: "That ultimately sexuality and gender are nothing but mediums and clues and signposts that lead us to the divine. The aim of life is not to be queer or straight, man or woman, right or wrong. Life is a wonderful opportunity to experience what has been given to us, what happens to us, what we can change and cannot change through the years, and by being sensitive to this experience seek the meaning of life and ultimately discover the divine. With realization of our true identities comes release. We are no longer fettered by biology, nature, culture, or even imagination."

Cover illustration: A twentieth century calendar reprint of a medieval painting (c. 1800 CE) showing the god Krishna letting his female companions adorn him as a woman.

Lyn McGinnis, of Waterloo, is a writer, web and graphic designer. His company is BlueStarWeb Design. He is also the Voice's Assistant Editor and our ad graphics designer. **A Voice Exclusive.**

Words Worth Books

You can purchase your copy of this book, [The Man Who Was A Woman And Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore](#), by Devdutt Pattanaik, at Words Worth Books for \$29.95.

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Please forward this email to anyone who may be interested. Thank you.

Melanie Beres,
BSc
Department of
Family Relations
and Applied
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BUSINESS AND TAXATION

by Darren Kregar



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2. Keep Receipts

Keep track of your total sales by either using a numbered invoice book, deposit book, contracts or a ledger.

Your records should show the date, the amount and name of client. Income is considered to be either cash, property or services. Regarding your expenses, always get receipts or other vouchers when you buy something for your business. Receipts should show the date of purchase, name and address of the supplier, description of items purchased. If there is no description on the receipt, you should write on the receipt what the item is. If a receipt is not provided, still record the name and address of the supplier and the amount paid. Keeping a small receipt book in your day planner for these situations is noy a bad idea as you can have the supplier sign the receipt. You must keep your records for a minimum of six years after the end of the taxation year they relate to. If you file your return late, you must keep your records for six years after the date you file your return.

3. Dates to Remember

If you have employees, file your T4 and T4A returns by February 28. You also are required to give your employees their T4 slips by this date. If you are reading this article and have not done

so, I advise you that you should as soon as possible. On April 30th you must pay any income taxes you owe. You are then required to file your tax return by June 15th. If you do not pay the taxes owing on April 30th, you will incur interest charges. If your taxes owing are over \$1,500.00 you are required to submit quarterly instalments. These instalments are due on March 15th, June 15th, September 15th and December 15th of each year.

5. Form T2124

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a previous year, grants or subsidies received from government, insurance claims or recapture. Recapture is the amount of income you received on a sale of an asset over the cost of the undepreciated cost of the asset.

7. Expenses

Expenses should be sorted by type of expense or by vendor. Expenses are considered to be either current or capital expenses. Renovations and expenses that extend the useful life of your property or improve it beyond its original condition are usually capital expenses. Expenses may include any of the following: advertising, bad debts, business tax, licences, memberships, delivery and freight charges, insurance, interest on loans, maintenance and repairs, management and administration fees, meals and entertainment, motor vehicle expenses, office expenses, supplies, legal fees, accounting charges, property tax, rent, salaries and wages, travel costs, telephone and utilities. Other expenses may include computer leases, private health services plans, depreciation and business-use-of-home expenses if you operate out of your home. If the expense was incurred to earn income, it would be considered to be an allowable expense.

In the next issue of the Voice we will go into detail on the expenses and income your business may have.

Darren Kregar is the owner of Economical Tax Services. ETS has been providing income tax and bookkeeping services for the gay community since 1998. ETS is located at 207 King St. S., Waterloo and Highland Hills Mall, Kitchener.



All-or-nothing on trans rights

By Penny Weaver

In light of the most recent transgender murder in Houston, advocates for trans Texans last week demanded that the state's hate crimes law be amended to include gender identity or gender non-conformity. The law already includes specific protected categories, including sexual orientation. It provides enhanced penalties for those convicted of targeting someone for violence because of their actual or perceived membership in one of those categories.

When it comes to civil rights, gays should practice what they preach: Everyone should be treated equally, without regard to sexual orientation and, yes, gender identity.

But the Texas state legislature isn't the only powerful group that local trans feel a cold shoulder from. The Texas Gender Advocacy & Information Network (TGAIN) plans protests at next week's Human Rights Campaign annual gala in Houston. Trans activists decry the HRC's strategic decision to keep gender identity out of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would protect gays from workplace bias. About a year ago, HRC added the "T" to its mission to advocate for LGBT rights, but the group does not support adding gender identity to ENDA, arguing that such a move likely would kill the legislation, according to HRC spokesman Wayne Besen.

So members of our community line up, once again, on different sides of the same rope, playing tug-of-war to determine how inclusive our civil rights movement should be. It's already a politically correct requirement to list "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender" when referring to anyone who isn't heterosexual. It can't be good enough to say "gay" and let people infer that you are including all "non-straight." Better say LGBT, lest you be chastised for excluding someone.

After all, inclusion is at the core of our demands for equal civil rights for gays. We don't want to be divided from straights and given lesser rights and secondary status. We want to be treated equally. We demand equal freedoms and civil rights, regardless of sexual orientation.

Practical vs. principle:

HRC officials and other gay leaders

contend that including gender identity and gender non-conformity as protected categories in ENDA will prevent the bill from passing. Trans activists contend that inclusion would not endanger the legislation. They say members of Congress tell them that an all-encompassing ENDA could pass. One side says activists should push what they realistically can expect to get made into law. Later, they contend, trans folks can be added to the protections.

The trans side says everyone should be included. Both gender identity and gender non-conformity should be among protected statuses for American workers, they argue. The fight is an ironic one for a movement whose beginning is marked by the Stonewall Riots led largely by drag queens and other gender-benders.

It may be practical to only include in ENDA the categories that are deemed acceptable enough to pass Congressional muster. But advocating for what society can handle right now, instead of what society should do, is shortsighted. Gays cannot in good conscience expect justice for themselves while leaving transgenders out of the formula.

As Coretta Scott King has said: "An injustice to one is an injustice to all."

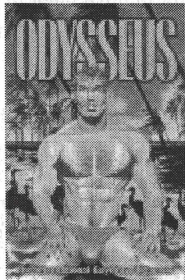
Gay leaders seem to be saying, "We'll take what we can get," rather than, "We'll take what is right." But it is inconsistent for gays to ask for inclusion while simultaneously excluding transgender rights.

No, sexual orientation and gender non-conformity are not the same things, not by far. But when it comes to civil rights, gays demand inclusion and should practice what they preach: Everyone should be treated equally. Whatever label we choose — gay, straight, bisexual, lesbian, transgender — we have much more that unites us than separates us. Most of us have experienced discrimination personally — and most of us have discriminated against someone else. Just as gays expect to be included in legal protections for minorities, let gays include transgenders in that same fight against discrimination. If it takes longer or is a tougher fight for ENDA to become law, so be it. An ENDA that itself discriminates but becomes law would be a hollow and shortsighted victory. Let's hope that no matter which side we are on, we can all see that we are pulling on the same rope, all working for equality.

Penny Weaver is the editor of the Houston Voice.

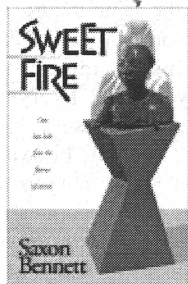
BOOKS

Odysseus: The International Gay Travel Planner
by **Eli Angelo (Editor),**
Joseph H. Bain (Editor),



Odysseus - The International Gay Travel Planner™ (16th edition 2001/2002) is the world's most comprehensive guide of accommodations and travel for gay men and women in the USA, Canada and 120 countries worldwide. Information includes law about homosexuality, airport locators, hotels, resorts, nude beaches, gay clubs, bars and saunas. All the info a gay traveler needs for the ultimate gay vacation.

Sweet Fire
by **Saxon Bennett**

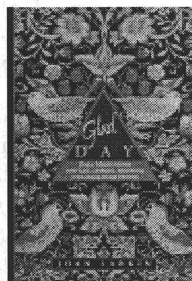


We've all dreamed of a place where lesbians outnumber everyone else, if only to fuel our private fantasies. Saxon Bennett creates Heroy Arizona for us and plops a manipulative ex-girlfriend that anyone can hate in the midst of a happily nesting couple starting a new life with their daughter. At times Sweet Fire is soap operaish, but I hardly



think that's at all a bad thing in a book that is so funny, so sexy and so on target about what happens when a community of lesbians takes over a town. Enjoyable from beginning to end.

Glad Day: Daily Meditations for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender People by **Joan Larkin**

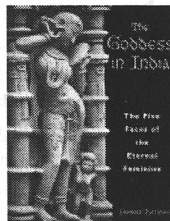


This book is a collection of daily meditations for those who are LGBT. Each day features a very short meditation: about two paragraphs, which gives insight on what it means to be a LGBT in today's world. Very positive!

This book is very helpful and affirming. Make it part of your daily ritual! This book sometimes gives a challenge for the day: i.e. one day gives us the challenge that if we hide our sexual identity from others, we are only making things more difficult for us. Others will let us take a break: i.e. today, maybe we shouldn't think about our sexuality at all. Sometimes, this book asks us to stand up for ourselves, and perhaps confront others who have "pushed us around" in the past because of our sexuality. This book is definitely encouraging.

Other books by Dr. Devdutt Pattanaik (subject of our exclusive interview on page 18)

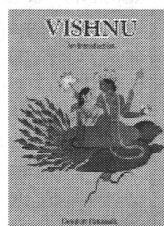
The Goddess of India : The 5 Faces of the Eternal Feminine by **Devdutt Pattanaik**



The first exhaustive collection of goddess mythologies from India.

Explores the evolution of goddess worship in India over 4,000 years. Stunning color photographs illustrate many stories of goddess lore never before available in one collection.

Vishnu - An Introduction
by **Devdutt Pattanaik**



This is an attempt to understand the meaning of Vishnu worship in our time. Written in simple narrative style, it takes us through Vaishnava imagery, philosophy, beliefs, customs, history, folklore and myth.

Highlights include lucid explanations and a pictorial key to numerous associated with Vaishnava customs and rituals, a map showing important Vishnu temples, a bibliography for those interested in learning more and over 200 illustrations of which many are in color.

Out In the Cold?: Examining the Issue of Homelessness by **Rosalind Bayley**



This book outlines and defines homelessness, the problems, the reasons and offers what 'should' be the solutions.

"It's a strange peculiarity of homelessness in this country that many of those who are most obviously and acutely lacking a home are not officially homeless while other people, some of whom actually have their own homes, are.

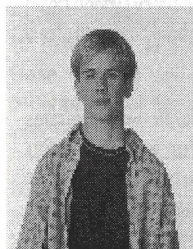
When discussing the homeless, the first image that comes to most people's minds is of someone sleeping on the streets. Street homelessness is the most extreme example of homelessness. It is the most shocking and unacceptable of the many faces of homelessness, and it is the one that most easily draws public sympathy and concern. However, only homeless people who come under the definition 'statutory homeless' have the right to be given accommodation by their local council -- and this does not necessarily include rough sleepers." This book offers a very compelling and comprehensive look at the complex issue of homelessness.

(See Shades of Grey on page 16 for more about homelessness in Ontario.)

Canadian actor portrays Matthew Shepard in Up-coming NBC movie

Three years after the murder of Matthew Shepard the creative tributes keep flowing. One of them is an upcoming NBC movie, Saturday March 16th, 2002, at 9pm, called The Matthew Shepard Story that stars Canadian actor Shane Meier.

Long before he took on the title role of the NBC television movie The Matthew Shepard Story,



Shane Meier was familiar with the true story of the gay college student who was brutally murdered in Laramie, Wyo., three years ago.

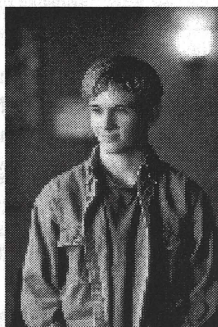
"My mother saw it on the news, and she called me and said, 'This could be you.' Meaning that he looks like me. And he's the nice boy who never did anything wrong. It hit her that this could be her son." And Mom isn't the only one who's noticed that Meier's diminutive 5-foot-5 stature, slight build, and angelic good looks closely mirror Shepard's appearance. "When he first showed up, it was scary," admits Stockard Channing, who plays Matthews mother, Judy Shepard, in the upcoming film. "I'd seen photographs of Matthew, and Shane was so physically akin to him."

But looking like Shepard didn't make filming any easier for the 24-year-old Canadian from Vancouver. "**Mentally and morally, the beating scene was the toughest,**" says the actor, who happens to be straight. "We shot it at midnight and went until 5 or 6 in the morning. The rehearsing of all the hits-all the blows to the face, the blows to the stomach-it was difficult." And that's not even counting the scenes of Matthews brutal rape (which occurred when he was a teenager in Morocco) and his wrenching coming-out. But Meier took it all in stride. "Shane never pulled away from any of the very uncomfortable situations he was asked to be in," says Charming. "Everybody was tremendously taken with him and impressed by him."

Just who is Shane Meier?

Canadian actor Shane Meier (pictured in role, as Matthew Shepard) was thrilled to win the title role in NBC's upcoming Movie Special The Matthew Shepard Story, the searing fact-based portrayal of a 21-year-old University of Wyoming student savagely beaten for being gay.

"I really wanted to help bring Matthew's story to life – and welcomed the huge challenge that faced me. It's always more difficult to play a real person – because it is so vital that you get it right, for their family, their friends and for the truth. I didn't want to just r e s e m b l e

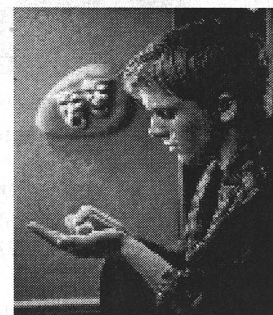


Matthew physically – I wanted to capture his mental and emotional personae – his goofiness, and his warmth, his essential goodness and his vulnerability. I believe that a show like this is so important. Everyone, especially school and college kids, need to understand that there are always going to be divisions between people – sex, colour, religion, politics – you name it," says Meier. "Hate just isn't the way to handle differences and it's time our society deals with it and gets it under control."

A native of Saskatchewan and Vancouver, B.C., Meier has been acting since the age of 12 when he won a local modeling search and promptly signed with an agent. His first major role was playing MacGyver as a child, in the popular series of the same name, but it was his portrayal of Client Eastwood's son in the Academy Award-winning feature film Unforgiven, that marked his breakthrough into feature films.

One of his more challenging roles was

Shane Meier as Matthew Shepard



that of a possessed 13-year-old in the adaptation of Stephen King's novel Needful Things, opposite Ed Harris, Bonnie Bedelia and Amanda Plummer. Meier also appeared in the TV movies Silver Wolf, Outrage (with Rob Lowe and Jennifer Grey); and Gone in a Heartbeat.

Meier, an accomplished actor who relishes the challenge of tackling a wide variety of parts, also enjoys roles that are physically taxing. A lover of the outdoors and extreme sports, he likes to perform as many of his own stunts as possible and most recently appeared as Miles in the adventure series Call of the Wild, inspired by Jack London's classic novel. His other television credits include guest-starring roles in Walker, Texas Ranger, Sons of Thunder, Lonesome Dove, The Outer Limits, Diagnosis: Murder, The Commish, Road to Avonlea and Ray Bradbury Theatre. He also starred in the futuristic miniseries The Odyssey. Meier recently earned a Leo Award nomination for Best Actor in a Dramatic Series for his guest-starring role in the TV movie Dead Man's Gun.

Other feature-film credits for Meier include Andre, Jean Claude Van Damme's The Quest, Man of the House, with Chevy Chase and Farrah Fawcett, Magic in the Water, and Stay Tuned.

Meier currently divides his time between Los Angeles and Vancouver and has recently purchased a home in Vancouver, B.C.

The Matthew Shepard Story airs on NBC (and locally on CTV) on Saturday March 16th at 9pm.

OUT on The Screen: All Is Fair in Love and War Videos — GLBT Men and Women in the Military

By Steve Stewart



"If they took all the gays and lesbians out of the military there wouldn't be enough people left to defend Rhode Island!" — Christopher Bradley, Leather Jacket Love Story (1997)

"America Declares War on Terrorism" has rapidly gone from a headline to a slogan to a merchandising opportunity for many businesses—including video stores. Those dusty, bottom-shelf military-themed videos are now front and center.

Every few years the military shifts its focus to a new target, but since the beginning of time—or so it seems—one enemy has remained in their sights—gay men and lesbians. But, like war itself, gay men and lesbians have been a part of the military for as long as there have been militaries. How do we know? It's all been caught on film, of course.

From lesbian Nazis, to transgender Samurai, bisexual Roman soldiers and gay African warriors, "don't-ask, don't-tell" videos have had a long and proud history. Then there are the inspiring real-life stories, such as Coming Out Under Fire (1994), an award-winning documentary based on Allen Bérubé's book "Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II." The film revolves around nine gay men and lesbian officers who share their experiences, both positive and negative, while serving a government that viewed them as undesirable pariahs.

But in the end, it usually all comes down to one category, "Soldiers In Love," or at least in lust.

In William Wellman's 1927 silent World War I classic, Wings (the first Best Picture Oscar winner), the story focuses on the friendship between two handsome young Top Guns, Jack and David (Buddy Rogers and Richard Arlen) and the woman (Clara Bow) who comes between them. The film can be read as either a gay or straight love story (it was the 1920s, after all), but the attraction between the two men is quite obvious, especially during the deathbed scene, which plays more like a love scene.

The Canadian video For The Moment (1992) features fly-boy Ari Cohen as a gay British pilot whom Russell Crowe catches having sex (off screen) in the barracks showers with another gay pilot (Glen Thompson). Tragically, Cohen watches his lover die in a fiery plane crash in the end.

Director Max Farberbock's lavish production of

Aimée and Jaguar (Germany/2000) falls into the "Lesbian Nazi" category and is set in war-torn Berlin in 1943. Maria Schrader plays Felice, a free-spirited, Jewish lesbian, working undercover for a Nazi newspaper. Juliane Köhler plays her German lover Lilly Wust. Ignoring the fact that Berlin is being bombed daily, these Blitzkrieg lovers act as if it were Springtime in Paris. While Felice's group of lesbian girlfriends are smuggled out of the country, Felice decides to take her chances and stay with the woman she loves, even if it means she will die.

Alexandra von Grote's similarly themed earlier film, November Moon (Germany/1984), again focuses on the struggles of lesbians during World War II. Gabriela Osburg plays November, a Jewish lesbian who moves to Paris to flee the Nazis. Her lover Ferial, a young French woman, becomes a Nazi collaborator to save the life of her lover, when the Nazis arrive in France.

Military academy cadets were the focus of the 1986 drama Dress Gray, starring Alex Baldwin. On a combat mission for laughs is Up the Academy (1980). Tom Poston plays Master Sergeant Skip Sisson, a flamboyant, gay caricature who teaches ballroom dancing to a group of young male military cadets in this mindless teenage comedy. That's when he's not measuring their inseams or trying to get them out of their shorts. For balance, the women of the nearby Mildred S. Butch Academy are all lesbians.

While boot camp has often provided laughs at the movies, Neil Simon made a dramatic direct hit with his Biloxi Blues (1988). The Russian video 100 Days before the Command (1999) likewise goes for the heart. In this story about a group of young Russian soldiers, mostly in their late teens, trying to survive the difficulties of boot camp, Oleg Vasilokov and Alexander Chislov are singled out as gay and then ostracized. There's almost no dialogue and little story, but this video, full of handsome young soldiers, hits its target nonetheless.

If naked Roman soldiers spin your compass, there are plenty of videos to choose from. One of the earliest, and more innocent, is Stanley Kubrick's Spartacus (1960). Laurence Olivier plays Crasius, the bisexual emperor, in this historical epic. Tony Curtis plays his poor, young slave, who runs away to join up with Spartacus (Kirk Douglas) after Olivier puts the make on him. The late Derek Jarman's Sebastiane (Italy/1976) featured even hunkier Roman soldiers and provided a satisfying full-frontal

assault.

Kubrick fans will also remember Barry Lyndon (Great Britain/1975), in which two gay privates are spied skinny-dipping in a river. They also hold hands and pledge their love to one another. Barry Lyndon (Ryan O'Neal) watches from the river bank and then steals one of their horses.

But when it comes to romantic wartime tales featuring enlisted men, For a Lost Soldier (Netherlands/1992) is tough to beat. Jeroen Krabbe plays Jeroen, a middle-aged gay man who flashes back to his childhood and recalls the unforgettable summer of 1944. The setting is Holland at the end of World War II. Maarten Smit plays the 12-year-old Jeroen. Just becoming aware of his sexual attraction to other boys, he is befriended by Walt (Andrew Kelley), a handsome American soldier who has come to liberate Holland from the Nazis. Their friendship blossoms into a mutually gratifying sexual relationship, only to be cut short by the soldier's departure at the end of summer.

On the lighter side, Goldie Hawn plays a "Jewish American Princess" who enlists in the Army in Private Benjamin (1980). Eileen Brennan plays Captain Lewis, a frustrated officer who turns to women when she is shipped off to Europe. The advertising tag line read, "Can the Army make a Man Out of Judy Benjamin?"

A gay African warrior is certainly a novelty, as in Ace Ventura 2: When Nature Calls (1995). And gay French Foreign Legion recruits are exotic, as in Beau Travail (France/2000). But in Beautiful Mystery (Japan/1983), gay Samurai add an element of surprise. In Gohatta, also known as Taboo (Japan/2000), the action is set in Kyoto, Japan in 1865. Ryuhei Matsuda plays Kano, an androgynous, eighteen-year-old Samurai soldier who is recruited by an elite militia. Toshiro (Tadanobu Asano), a fellow warrior, falls in love with Kano, as do many of the Samurai, old and young. Homosexuality is openly discussed and accepted among the Samurai of this period. But while everyone is in love with Kano, and under his spell, Kano is a manipulative, cold-blooded killer who is only in love with killing.

Draft dodgers, as in The Gay Deceivers (1969), and deserters, like the one featured in We Were One Man (France/1981), are another common

category. But being discharged or court-martialed is even more routine. For instance, Dean Cain plays a Green Beret in Best Men (1998) discharged for being gay. In Toby Philips' Lover's Leap (1995) Andria Mann, in a small role, plays a lesbian novelist who writes lesbian romance books. In researching a story, she discovers that two lesbian lovers committed suicide at Lover's Leap after being kicked out of the military in the early '70s.

Breaking new ground, 1995's Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story is a moving dramatization of the life and career of Margarethe Cammermeyer, a lesbian Army National Guard officer and the highest-ranking woman in the Armed Forces. She was also drummed out of the military for coming out as a lesbian. Oscar-winner Glenn Close turns in one of the most memorable performances of her career. Judy Davis plays her lover Diana.

Being booted out of the military will likely continue to be a common theme for some time. Common Ground (2000) is a trilogy focusing on three generations of gay men and lesbians and how they dealt with the homophobia of their time. Beginning in the 1950s, Brittany Murphy plays Dorothy and Jason Priestley plays Billy, gay friends who meet in the Navy. Mimi Rogers plays Brittany's closeted and

homophobic Naval Officer, McPherson. When Billy takes Dorothy to a gay bar, McPherson has it raided. Dorothy receives a dishonorable discharge for sexual deviancy while Billy is court-martialed and receives hard labor. If this film had been made in the 1950s, he likely would have just been killed.

It may be a while before the rumored Bin Laden in a Burka film makes it to your local Blockbuster. But each of the videos mentioned here are worthy of a "Purple Heart" film award for courage under fire on the screen. They'll also make you proud of our finest men and women, in blue—and pink.

And, while Uncle Sam may not want us in the bunks and the showers, when it comes to the movies, we're likely to have the last laugh, as did Bill Murray and Harold Ramis in the 1981 comedy Stripes. When an Army recruiter asks "Are either of you homosexual?" Murray asks, "You mean flaming?" "Naw, we're not homosexual, but we are willing to learn," adds Ramis in earnest.

Now that's patriotic!

Steve Stewart is the author of OUT ON THE SCREEN: The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Guidebook to more than 2,000 movies and videos from around the world.

For more information about this book, or to sign up for his FREE monthly "Naked Hollywood Newsletter," visit <http://www.companionpress.com>. OUT ON THE SCREEN not sold in bookstores and is only available directly from the publisher at <http://www.companionpress.com>.

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Phone: [redacted]

Fax: [redacted]

This article was submitted to The Voice by Steve Stewart.



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COMMUNITY GROUPS

SUNDAYS

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

First Unitarian Congregation of Waterloo - Open and diverse congregation respecting a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. Christians, Post-Christians, non-christians, mystics, pagans and humanists - all are welcome. 10:30 Sunday mornings. 96 Dunbar Road South, Waterloo
www.gpcmp.com/waterloounitarian/

Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto (MCC) 115 Simpson Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M4K 1A1. Phone (416) 466-6228
www.mcctoronto.com

AWARE K-W :Aware K-W. A discussion and support group for gay Christians, their parents and friends who have been disillusioned by the church's often negative approach to homosexuality. We meet the 3rd Sunday of every month. For more information call Gary at [REDACTED] or Ada at [REDACTED]
Email [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 Rainbow Community Conversation Group Now meets once a week, every Monday at 7:00 P.M. in 119 Hagey Hall (University of Waterloo Campus). For more information www.qlife.on.ca

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.

The Rainbow Parenting Network - A forum for GLBT parents, parents-to-be, and those considering parenting. For more information call [REDACTED]

Tri-Youth Pride - meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at Planned Parenthood - 4-6pm. For more information call Gail at [REDACTED]

WEDNESDAYS

GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Groups explore issues in sexual orientation; University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Information: 884-4569. **A social gathering follows the discussion group weekly from 9pm to 11pm.**

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

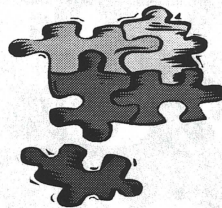
Rainbow Chorus: Holds rehearsals every Wednesday Night. 7:30-9:30 pm at the Guelph Unitarian Fellowship, 122 Harris St. at York Rd., Guelph. For more information call Bob Miller, Director, Rainbow Chorus at (519) [REDACTED]

Discussion Group: A group for people aged 16-25, sponsored by ACCKWA and held in Waterloo, 7:00-9:00 pm. To join, or for more information, call ACCKWA at (519) 570-3687

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]

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 information call Marilyn at (519) [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) 528-0207 ext.43, or e-mail: htpspg@gto.net <http://home.golden.net/~kcr/htpspg/htpspg.html>

BI- MONTHLY

PFlag (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meets bi-monthly. PFLAG is a support group for those with an LGBT family member. Children or teens with a gay parent(s) may also seek support from our group. Call Evie at [REDACTED] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [REDACTED] Cambridge) or email them at: [REDACTED]



Do you have a group that is not listed here? Would you like to change that? Email us at [REDACTED]

or call (519) [REDACTED]

Help us keep you informed!

Peter D. Martel

Chartered Accountant

Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

COMMUNITY LISTINGS

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

BMC (Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian & Gay Concerns): A social group that provides support for Mennonite GLBT people, their friends and families. Various events throughout the year. For info write P.O. Box [redacted] Eastwood Square, Kitchener, ON N2H [redacted] or call Colleen at [redacted]

Gay Men's Group: is a social group for males of all ages and orientations. For more information call Gordon at (519) [redacted]

Global: is available to help anyone in the Laurier community who is dealing with LGBT issues. Staff, students, or faculty can reach GLOBAL directly at the club's e-mail address 00global@mach1.wlu.ca Laurier Peer Help Line 884-PEER.

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

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

Sexual Assault Center:
KW.....(519)741-8633

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

WOUF: Waterloo Ontario Ursine Friends, or big and hairy gay men and their friends. For more information email: questor24@yahoo.ca
Women's Centers: UofW (519) 888-4567 ext. 3457

Want to add a resource?
Contact The Voice today!

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

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 [redacted] or Cory at [redacted] <http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Sexual Assault Center:
Guelph.....(519)823-5806

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 - Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. 905-546-3541- Hamilton General Hospital Outpatient Dept. Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. 905-546-3541

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: glbt@msu.mcmaster.ca
www.msu.mcmaster.ca/services/glbt/glbt.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. Catharines: (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

BRANTFORD

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.

To find out more information about anything else happening in Brantford email: [redacted]@yahoo.ca

CAMBRIDGE

Sexual Assault Center:
Cambridge.....(519)658-0551

RAISE YOUR VOICE!!!!



The Voice Magazine is committed to reflecting the communities it serves. To bring you local interests and opinions we need to hear from you! We welcome your input in our "Have Your Say" section and on our Opinion Page. We especially welcome article submissions. Please update us on what your groups and organizations are doing so we can keep our readers informed!

We are growing. Our readership has continued to increase with each passing month these past four years. The Voice is your vehicle to advertise, to express yourself, and to have your cares and concerns aired. Write to us today!

Our contact information is on page three.

Individual and Couple Counselling Anger Management

LGBT POSITIVE

Susan A. Cox
M.A.Sc. (Psychology)

279 Weber Street North,
Suite 102, Waterloo, Ont

Tel. [REDACTED]
Fax. [REDACTED]

MARCH EVENTS

Sunday March 3rd

International Women's Day is March 8th - (locally) Sunday March 3 **Advocating for Wellness:** An interactive health fair with women who promote helping wellness in our community 12-4pm at Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex on Father David Bauer Dr in Waterloo. For more information call Dianne [REDACTED] for more information and bus tickets are available if required.

Tuesday March 5th

K-W Solidarity Network communications meeting 6pm at WPIRG office (second floor, SLC, U of W) and 7:30pm at a location to be determined. For more information call 244-1140 or email:

ontario@indymedia.org

Friday March 8th

Rainbow Chorus Monthly Dance at CAW Hall, 611 Silvercreek Parkway N. Guelph. Doors open at 9:00 p.m. Must be 19 years of age or older to attend.

Saturday March 9th

Friends of Dorothy Bowling 3rd Annual Charity Tournament for Breast Cancer & Now ACCKWA. For more information call 579-7747 or email: friendsfordorothys_kw@hotmail.com

Thursday March 14th

Television: Prime Time Live Thursday on ABC at 9pm EST (2 hour special), Rosie O'Donnell appears. The subject is gay adoption laws. (more on page 15)

Saturday March 16th

ACCKWA presents its 9th Annual Chairs For Charity at Kitchener's City Hall in the Rotunda. For more information call ACCKWA at 570-3687.

Television: The Matthew Shepard Story 9pm, NBC & CTV (more on page 25)

March 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th,

Rainbow Reels film festival: March 14th at 11:00pm along with the Princess we'll present the Canadian Premiere of the movie, Lie, at the Princess Cinema.

Friday March 15:

8PM: The edge of each others battles: The vision of Audrey Lorde
9:30PM: Jonny Grey Eyes

Saturday March 16:

7:00 PM Bombay Eunuch
9:00 PM Hey Happy

Sunday March 17:

7:00PM Drift

9:00PM Paragraph 175

(Discussion to follow)

All of the above will be shown in room 1302 of the Davis Centre at the University of Waterloo. Admission is free and open to all.

Saturday March 23

Rainbow Chorus presents "Sing N' Swing" Concert and Dance at Harcourt United Church, 87 Dean Ave. Guelph. Concert starts at 8:00 p.m.

Each Monday in March

The Rainbow Community Conversation Group meets once a week, every Monday, at 7:00 P.M. in 119 Hagey Hall (University of Waterloo Campus). This group meets to discuss topics of interest to the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Trans-gendered/Queer Community.

2nd & 4th Wednesdays in March

On the second Wednesday of February, Glow will hold its Heart to Heart Discussion Group. On the fourth Wednesday in February the Diversity Discussion Group takes place. For more information on either group or the Coming Out Discussion Group call GLOW at 884-4569

Have an event that you'd like to publicize? Get the word out by letting us know about it.

ONTARIO MEN'S SURVEY COMMUNITY IN ACTION

The 2002 Ontario Men's Survey will question Gay and Bisexual men on social issues, sexuality and HIV. This two-part study, guaranteed anonymous, is an important follow-up to the 1991 National Men's Survey. During the coming weeks we will approach men in bars, bathhouses and local community groups.

For more information on how to participate, call ACCKWA

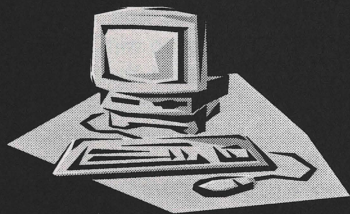
1-519-570-3687
OR
1-888-266-1449

or visit us online at:
www.mens-survey.ca

THE VOICE ONLINE

Each issue of The Voice is on our web site in pdf format for your convenience.

www.thevoice.on.ca



Classified Page

The Voice Welcomes Your Submissions

If you have something you'd like to submit, please write, email, or phone us today.

The Voice Magazine
P.O. Box [REDACTED] RPO Evergreen
Kitchener, Ontario
N2M [REDACTED]

Phone: (519) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

www.thevoice.on.ca

LGBT Business Networking

Are you LGBT and own your own small business? Are you interested in networking with others like yourself?

If you'd like more information about this relatively new LGBT Business Networking Group please call Gordon Husk at [REDACTED] or email him at:

[REDACTED]

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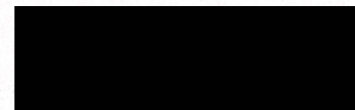
On Line

The Voice Magazine online has news, articles, tons of links, our Pride Album, and much much more and all there for your convenience.

Check back often as we keep adding new pages. We want to keep you informed!

The Voice Magazine online - community at a glance!

Voice Classified Ads cost \$15.00 a month. Advertise your product or services to the LGBT community. Do you have something you'd like to sell? Are you looking for that someone special or want to make new friends or start a new group? Voice Classifieds are a great way to let others know about your product, service, merchandise for sale, or your new group.



Mailing address is at top of page



Is Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride Failing To Meet Its Mandate?

Since October 1998, AJ Mahari has been writing for, editing, and producing "The Voice Magazine." It has consistently provided up-dates on community events. It has provided a vehicle for advertisers to promote their goods and services to the LGBT community. We have read local writers expressing their opinions, and LGBT news and views from around the world. The Voice has also promoted Pride events locally and in other communities around South Western Ontario.

Since January 2002, WWRP (Waterloo Wellington Regional Pride) began distributing the "Pride Pages." This is available at all the same locations you can pick up The Voice. This publication, according to WWRP, was primarily to promote Pride. Within two months, it has become an eight-page monthly newsletter with advertisers, articles by local writers, and community events. Sound like what The Voice does? I have no problem with WWRP promoting Pride in a publication. If this publication causes division within the community and has the potential to effect a highly-valued member's livelihood - then I have a problem. What do you think?

About these "Pride Pages", WWRP says:

"The Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride Committee is working to build community and awareness within the area by publishing its own newsletter called Pride Pages. Our main focus is on local events with articles by local writers."

Isn't this what The Voice does?

Recently events occurred with some members of WWRP and A.J. Mahari. The "Pride Pages" is the result. I

suggest WWRP finds another way to deal with this situation and focus on Pride. Duplicating what already exists and as a result, dividing our community and causing advertiser confusion, does nothing for Pride or *community-building*.

I know that A.J. Mahari, in her capacity as editor of The Voice, will set aside any differences to work toward what best serves this community. There is no refusal on her part or on behalf of The Voice to support the efforts of the WWRP. The WWRP has chosen to not provide information to The Voice choosing instead to compete with it. Although statements are made in the "Pride Pages" that claim that they are an addition to the community and are not meant to compete with or replace those already existing publications or services this has now become questionable based upon the letters that were sent out to past, present and potential future advertisers of The Voice Magazine.

In these form letters that were sent out to local businesses and organizations, by the WWRP, they asked for financial assistance to print the "Pride Pages" by offering advertising space. Of course, they wouldn't need to do any of this if they simply wrote and advertised in The Voice. So why are they doing this?

I hope WWRP gets itself focused and creates the 'best' PRIDE event possible. Pride is less than four months away and I'm sure much organizing needs to be done. They should be spending all their energy on Pride, and let The Voice promote their efforts, as it has always done.

As a local business owner in the LGBT community providing income tax and

"The oppression of any people for opinion's sake has rarely had any other effect than to fix those opinions deeper, and render them more important."

--Hosea Ballou

bookkeeping services, I would not advertise in TWO publications. The target market is the same. My advertising dollars need to be spent on marketing tools getting results. To date, advertising in The Voice has provided my business with a good return.

Causing hardships, creating divisions and unnecessary competition in our community are not objectives mentioned in the WWRP constitution voted on at the AGM. They did include providing a supportive atmosphere so LGBT persons and their allies can discuss issues of common concern and/or to socialize. Competing with The Voice fails to meet this objective. Working in conjunction with The Voice would, however, meet their objective of fostering the development and promotion of supportive and affirming lesbian/gay/bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) communities in the Waterloo-Wellington region.

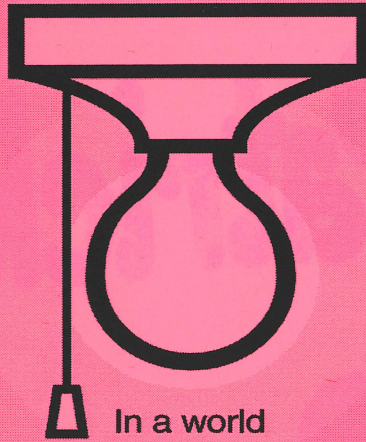
Business and organizations should cooperate to develop a stronger community. By referring business, promoting and sponsoring each other, our community will be stronger. Unfortunately, recent actions by WWRP are doing the opposite of strengthening our community.

Recent WWRP actions serve only to illustrate how ideals are lost to personalizing differences. These kind of personal agendas have no business in the service of community. Those perpetuating them need to take a hard look at what they are doing and why.

-- Darren Kregar, Waterloo

Do you have an opinion about this topic or any other? If so, please write to us and Raise Your Voice! Our contact information is on page three. We want to hear from you!

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On Saturday, March 16, 2002

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