

The Voice

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Volume Two

Tuesday, February 1, 2000.

Issue Five



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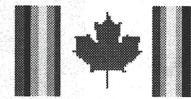
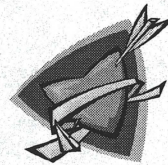
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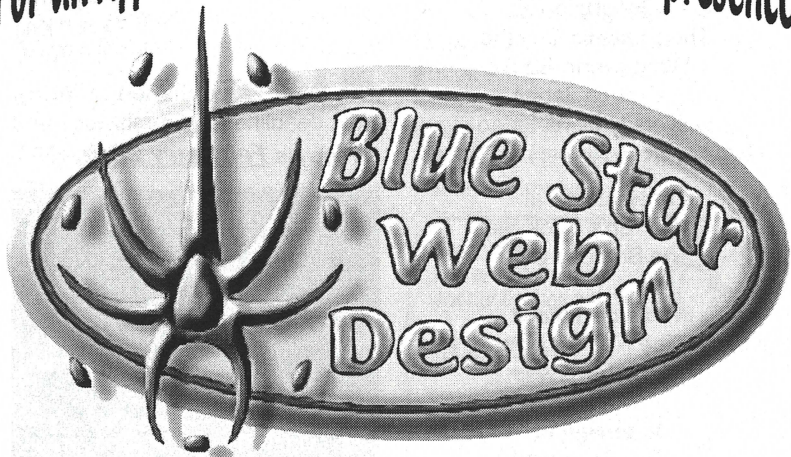
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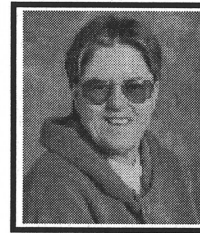
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Gay 2k?



The year 2000 came in like a lamb after all the dire predictions and the doom and gloom scenarios that we had heard about for the last couple of years. How much of that was hype?

The world celebrated the new Millennium as a global villiage, albeit, technically one year early.

Through our technology, specifically the television and the internet, each country of the world could watch all of the other countries celebrating. It was a day and a night rich in the hertiage and tradition of the vastly different socities that make up our global village.

Where, how and to what extent will we, as lesbians, gays, bi-sexuals and transgendered people, fit into this millenium-enhanced global village?

This is Gay 2k after all right? I mean we are making continual progress in the fight for our rights and freedoms. The end of the 20th century saw us just barely beginning to truly come of age. Though "the road is long" and the path may still be somewhat uphill we are on it!

Being on the path, and staying on the path establishes our foothold of truth, visibility and of substance. I do not agree with those who say that we have an "agenda" though.

How is wanting our basic rights and freedoms as human beings an "agenda"? How is wanting to be respected and safe within the confines of our ever-burgeoning freedom an "agenda". It is the extreme and 'religious right' that has the agenda. They are the ones after all who continually sanction the brutual treatment and abusive bible-thumping, all the while hiding behind broken down systems and institutions that are massively behind the times, in the name of a God they say loves them and condemns us. Whooy! It's Gay2k--celebrate away!

We will continue to make the necessary in-roads to what belongs to us. We will parent in greater numbers. We will raise children who know how to love and who have respect and appreciation for difference. We are not the ones behind an agenda to "oppress" the straight world. We want what the straight world affords its "citizens" and we want it **NOW!** We do not want to take away from "them" but to add all that we are into the mix with them. Gay2k--the dreamt of is becoming reality.

EDITORIAL

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Freedom Airlines Wants Flying to be Happy and Gay

The Daily Telegraph

MANCHESTER, England - The world's first "gay-friendly" airline is being launched in a bid to allow homosexual travellers the space to be more demonstrative toward one another en route to their holiday destinations. Freedom Airways will fly out of Luton and Manchester, offering a service to capitalize on the strength of the growing market for gay-oriented services. The venture is the idea of Martin Langham, a former flight attendant who has convinced financial backers to provide tens of millions of dollars. The 34-year-old founder hit on the idea four months ago when a flight attendant woke him up after he had fallen asleep on his partner's shoulder, asking him to refrain from being intimate. His venture follows attempts by the British Tourist Authority and British Airways to cash in on the gay travel market by

portraying Britain as a gay-friendly destination. Freedom Airways will not prevent many of the open displays of affection between gay couples that other airlines frown upon, he said.

Twenty-three tour operators who sell holidays targeted at gays have already indicated their backing for the venture.

AUSSIE YOUTH POLL 6 PERCENT GAY

More than 6 percent of Australian students in grades 10 to 12 are attracted to people of the same sex, a new survey from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society has found. Another 2.3 percent are unsure of their sexual attractions. Researchers questioned 3,500 students at 118 schools. They also found that students who acknowledge same-sex attraction are up to four times more likely to binge drink or use illegal injectable drugs. The study is published in the current issue of the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health.

GAY JOURNALIST MURDERED

Openly gay U.S. journalist Larry Lee, 41, was murdered Dec. 28 in Guatemala, where he was based.

Lee, a member of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, was found stabbed to death in his Guatemala City apartment.

He worked for Bridge News, a financial wire service.

No further information was available at press time.

GERMAN SINGER COMES OUT

One of Germany's leading show-business personalities, singer **Patrick Lindner**, has confirmed media reports that he is gay. He added that he and partner Michael Link are preparing to adopt a second child.

"I would say 90% of the fans wrote really, really nice letters," Link told reporters. "Most of them said: 'We love your music. We like you. But we don't want to marry you. And we don't care what you do when you go to your bedroom.'

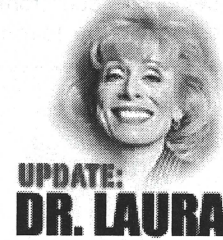
Dr. Laura On...

THE GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND ETHNIC CLEANSING August 11, 1999

"I said in the last hour that I picked one arbitrarily - because I didn't want to read them all - letters from homosexual men that I thought would be of interest, in particular for all the activist stuff happening - all the arguments. And I've been trying to come up with a word - maybe you folks can help. You know what "ethnic cleansing" is - that's virtually picking out an ethnic group and trying to kill all its members. Cleansing É sort of a sanitized word in a way, but also an awful word for what we've seen recently in Eastern Europe.

So I was trying to figure out a word for the homosexual activist groups. So I came up with a few things - sort of brainstormed with my husband and my chief of staff - couldn't find anything as short as "ethnic cleansing" É "alternative position cleansing," "oppositional philosophical point cleansing." You see, they're all too long. But my main gripe here, before I read this letter, is that it has been my experience that people who are on the liberal side of ideas and philosophical points, scream censorship and First Amendment if there appears to be any disagreement with their point of view. Meanwhile, I have not seen anyone try to shut down their point of view. But what you will see is an extraordinary attempt by so-called liberals who don't believe in censorship and believe in First Amendment, to shut down the ability of an oppositional point of view to be heard. That's done a number of ways: the severe name-calling to discredit. That's mostly what I see in articles about me when people have a different opinion than mine. They don't seem to argue the opinion with facts or argument, and just seem to call me bad names. So that's one way they do it. The second way is the standard thing you've heard with Rush [Limbaugh] and with me and a with a million other people. You try to go to their sponsors - be it on radio, television, newspaper syndication - and try to get them shut down.

eye on the media



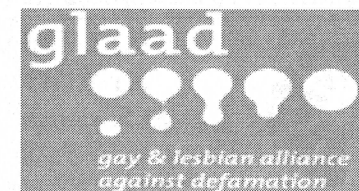
Somehow they don't see that as censorship, and they don't see that as interfering with the free rights of somebody else to say their points. So perhaps you could help me, because I want to start using É I want to coin a phrase here, and I don't mind help. What would be the communication version of "ethnic cleansing?" Because that's what in particular the homosexual activists try to do. Try to get your column pulled, your show pulled - whether it's radio or television - so that there cannot be an opposing point of view. It's not permitted. But they don't see that as censorship, and they don't see that as a First Amendment abridgement. They see that... how, I don't know. I don't know how they rationalize it, except you're the enemy and you're evil and you're bad. Oh that's it, they're like Raid; they're going to get rid of bugs. So if you have an oppositional point of view you're a bug and they're Raid. They're going to cure society of your "bugism." So "oppositional position cleansing," you're going to have to help me here.

But anyway, here's a person who's gay who has the same feeling:

"Thank you for taking on the radical left, the American Psychological Association and other pro-gay groups head-on with the simple truth. By listening to you with an open mind I have begun a journey which will forever change my quality of life."

...And we do get a lot of letters like that from the homosexual community that is just sort of overshadowed by the major agenda - which wasn't civil rights; it was normalization of all forms of sexuality. That's what it was about. It was never about civil rights."

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ACCKWA Presents:
CHAIRS FOR CHARITY
By Scott

A chair becomes a medium for artistic expression at the Chairs for Charity & Art Auction, an AIDS fundraising event at Kitchener's Rotunda Gallery, Saturday February 19. John De Boer, Christine Donovan and Steve Walker are among the local luminaries from the arts community who have created works especially for this event. Using every art medium at their disposal, local artists have tapped the depths of their imaginations to produce sculptures, paintings, prints and chairs that are not only artistic, but functional. De Boer calls his chair, featuring small polished

stones from many countries, a mosaic medley "It has a lot of countries on one seat, like the United Nations. It's something new. I've never seen one. The lines make it look like space age." This kind of avante-guarde art has made Chairs for Charity, in its sixth year, one of Waterloo Region's top art attractions. Organizing Committee member Kevin Chadwick says it looks like this is going to be the best year yet. We've got new volunteers, new artwork and new promotions? We're getting art work and pottery sent from Mexico. Our artwork will be featured on City TV's Around



**ACCKWA HOSTS THE SIXTH ANNUAL CHAIRS FOR CHARITY AND
ART AUCTION SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19, 2000**

Reception at 6:00 p.m. Quick Auction at 7:00 p.m.

Main Auction at 8:00 p.m. at Kitchener City Hall.

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Athena in Conestoga Mall, Wyndham Gallery in Cambridge,
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The House, on February 7."

Drop by the Rotunda Gallery to see these unique works of art, on display the entire month of February. Along with the art, the evening includes a quick auction where participants have one minute to bid on small items such as gift certificates and gift baskets, a hors d'oeuvre reception catered by some of Waterloo Region's finest restauranteurs, a cash bar and musical entertainment. This year, for the first time, a preview of "Elements Of Style" - the region's premiere fantasy hair and fashion show - will be featured. This is your opportunity to catch a glimpse of the excitement to come at the "Elements Of Style" fundraiser in May.

The reception starts at 6:00 p.m., followed by the quick auction at 7:00 p.m. and the main auction at 8:00 p.m. Advance tickets for the semi-formal auction are \$20. A limited number will be sold at the door if space permits. Tickets are available at the following Kitchener-Waterloo galleries: Pictures, Eldon Gallery, and Athena. In Cambridge tickets are available at Wyndham Gallery while Guelph residents can purchase their tickets at Wyndham Art Supplies. All proceeds will help fund local support, education and advocacy offered by ACCKWA: The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and surrounding area.



HUMOUR

Dieter's lament: "A waist is a terrible thing to mind!"

Right now I'm having amnesia and deja vu at the same time. I think I've forgotten this before.

In life, you have two choices: get over it or die with it on your mind.

"I Have a Degree in Liberal Arts — Do You Want Fries With That?"

Did you hear about the merger between FedEx and UPS?

The new company is going to be called Fed Up.

What do a nagging partner and a laxative have in common?

They both irritate the shit out of you.

I'm very disciplined. I get up at six each morning no matter what time it is.

What is the difference between God and a doctor?

God knows that he is not a doctor.

I am reading a very interesting book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

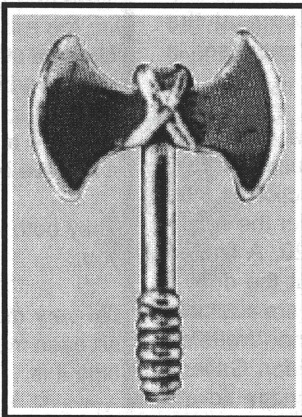
I went on a 30-day diet - and lost 30 days!

I spilled spot remover on my dog, and now he's gone.

The Labrys

By Mary Ann Moore

Many years ago now, in the early eighties, I was given a labrys, made in Germany in two differing shades of metals. The labrys is a double axe, two triangles, like a butterfly, that modern day lesbians adopted as a symbol in the seventies. Whenever women go to dyke marches, Pride Day events or to music festivals like the yearly one in Michigan, they can buy all sorts of paraphernalia bearing the double axe symbol: tee-shirts, key chains, decals for car bumpers and windows, buttons, pot holders, socks, pins and necklaces and all kinds of art work. The origin of the labrys goes back to ancient communities in which women were honoured and where people worshipped a feminine divine. When I travelled to Crete, the largest of the Greek islands, in the fall of 1995, I saw the labrys everywhere: on sugar packets in cafes, on key chains, on pottery, walls and sarcophagi. Travelling in a group of women, I got to see what life in a all-female community would be like. Just like the Amazons with whom the labrys originated. The Amazons used the double axe as a weapon and then as an agricultural tool until it evolved into a symbol denoting a sacred space. Because pre-history offers us little in the way of the printed word, we rely on pottery and other artifacts to tell a story. A



sarcophagus found at Ayia Triada, a royal villa in Crete, shows a funeral ritual with large double axes - twice the height of the people - denoting the sacred surroundings. It is dated from the Late Minoan Period which means some time between 1600 and 1100 bce. The sarcophagus is carved from a single block of limestone and covered with a layer of plaster that would have been painted while the plaster was still damp. Other symbols related to sacred ritual are included: the bull, the bird, the tree, the altar with horns.

The labrys is especially evident at the Palace of Knossos on Crete and that's where it's name comes from. One area of the palace is called the Hall of the Double Axes or the King's Megaron so-named by Sir Arthur Evans,

the archaeologist who excavated the site. The Hall of the Double Axes takes its name from the masons' marks of double axes on the blocks of the light well. (The light well is an architectural feature still used in Crete whereby interior rooms without outside walls get their light from a vertical tunnel from earth to sky.) It was Evans who decided there was a king and queen and gave the people of the period (3500-1600 bce) the name of Minoan based on the legend of King Minos. But the word "labyrinth" which we

have thought of as a maze according to the legend of King Minos and the Minotaur, actually refers to the labrys or double axe. My favourite image from Crete is of a priestess wearing a skirt or sarong decorated with meanders, triangles and dots, bare chested, holding a labrys in each upraised arm.

At Catal Hoyuk in Anatolia, present day Turkey, a purple labrys or double axe symbol was found painted on a wall. Catal Hoyuk has been described as the world's oldest city dating back to 6500 bce. There the people lived peacefully drawing pictures of their everyday life on the walls and worshipping a Great Mother Goddess. In central Europe, a pottery dish was found that shows a whirling design around a butterfly in the shape of a double axe. It is dated to 7000 bce.

In my column on the Amazons, I mentioned there were Amazons among the Vikings. Some scholars believe that the emblem of Thor, the Norse god of thunder, is a magic hammer derived from the double ax or labrys. One of my souvenirs from Crete is a tee-shirt covered with various ornate double axe symbols from Minoan Crete. It's great to

wear a symbol that has so much women-honouring energy and story attached to it. It's a symbol of regeneration and of our unfolding stories of remembering, renewal and rebirth. The labrys I brought back from Crete is a beautiful turquoise and gold one. I used to wear it to my old office job in Toronto. One day, the receptionist told me a new client had come in wearing a labrys shaped like the one I always wore. She said, "She must have gone to Crete too". That receptionist is now a friend who now knows the ancient and modern significance of the labrys.

Mary Ann Moore is a writer in Guelph where she facilitates Flying Mermaids, a women's writing circle and gives workshops called "Remembering the Goddess: Mapping Your Spiritual Journey" and "Writing the Rainbow: Celebrating All Our Colours". Her CD of poetry, "When My Heart is Open", is available at Macondo Books and The Book Shelf in Guelph and Words Worth Books in Waterloo. You can reach her at 519- or by e-mail at

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Like Riding a Bicycle

By Holly Farris

My pulse raced when the dealership called. "You're the winner," he said, "of a Blobbity-Blah Blah Blah mountain bike!" I was speechless, obliged to fabricate.

"When you test-drove next year's model ...," Bob explained carefully, lest he had announced the good news to an imposter. "Great!" I mewed, remembering a chain of events.

Barely ten days ago, he'd dealt us lady customers one of his business cards, the bottom of a tattered deck. Scrawling our farm address on the back, we dropped it into the kitty, wondering how long the new car smell would linger in our hair. Karen and I never gave it another thought.

Later that winning day, I went to be measured for the bike they would ship. Employees gathered in a throng of happy-for-me salesmen. Each man crowed biking exploits from a time in his life when he was very nearly in training for some French race. Pumping pedals for

miles (and living to tell), they zipped around drunken drivers or pavement sinkholes in their stories.

The field, stretching long below me that spring weekend morning, was still winter-rutted and mud-stripped gray. My greatest attempt to that point in my ten-year-old life was to guide my Huffy ten-speed down its pocked face. Looking back, I know it was the foolishness children cling to that makes them believe they can fly from the garage roof, swim across a lake, play with a gun: the folly that is It Seemed Like a Good Idea at The Time.

Red-cheeked, full of it, I shot the kick stand horizontal and took off. That my father could clear the yard fence in a leap to intercept me, that a handlebar could snap and dig itself inches into the earth, that I could be airborne for what seemed a long time before I forgot everything else were some of the things I learned that day.

Let me say that my worst outcome was bleeding. Two of three orifices seeped for a day; yes, the one that worried my mother most was involved. My front bottom lip split in what kids call a face-plant. Lingering damage was terror of bikes; I never attempted to get back on.

"Ride it around the lot," he said, the measurer. "I'm just learning," I lied. Dearest Karen had already tutored me in the basics of design, why this model was preferable to any we could afford. When I stood astride,

he blatted about the fork's generous shock absorbers and the mystifying gears he clicked.

I was blunt. "I want the bar more distant from my crotch."

Neon-slicked metal, the color I chose, at last arrived. My lover was so excited she nearly skipped work.

We drove the bike to the park. I garbed in novel padded accessories before I dragged its two wheels out of the truck. Pushing it beside me, I learned to walk behind the pedal. The pretty toy clicked, navigating itself with an infrequent pinkie-finger touch. That was the first day of the rest of my cycling life.

When the weekend came, she pressured me, upping the tension as surely as a gear could tweak the scary thing. My head egg-cartoned inside the helmet, my fingers looking as long as when I was ten and they spanned hand brakes, I tried. Saturday reminded me of childish lust about a new cut, the urge to finger it reverently and show it to everyone. People indulged me and my newly-mangled shin.

Sunday, a new day, we promised ourselves double cappuccinos after my biking. I cried in the car on the way to the park, pinching my spreading black-and-blue to make myself feel worse.

"So you're not afraid," she said as she cinched the helmet strap under my quivering chin. Just that simply, freed by her confidence, though not yet by my own, I rode. These parts, in order of soreness from great to small, reminded me of my wimpy

flight: pelvis from sitting, wrists from gripping, calves from pumping.

Midweek, all by myself, I biked.

Some few times I noticed shadowy falling leaves, how unafraid squirrels clung delicately to treebark as I swept past. Hair blowing wisps about my face, I waved to pedestrians less fit, older than I.

One crooked gentleman whom I'd seen before, maybe the crying day, scoffed. "When did you last ride a bike?" he queried, pointing to some obviously jerky steering on my part. Instead of thirty seven years, five months, and thirteen days—the answer on the tip of my tongue—I graciously shared: Yesterday.

Holly Farris is a writer who lives in Draper, VA, USA. This essay was submitted to The Voice by Holly Farris.



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Gay Men and Married Men

By D.J.

This month, I want to address a topic which is quite strongly felt by many men. That is the issue of dating married men. I have been married for many years. I married before I admitted to myself that I might be gay. It seemed normal to marry. I was sometimes able to function with a woman, particularly when I was in my twenties, and I got so caught up in my profession and raising children that I completely ignored the issue.

When I finally came out to myself, my career had reached the point where I had achieved the highest possible level and my children were starting to earn money of their own.

I can recall the first time I was told by a gay man that he did not date married men. I could not figure out why. I did not believe that I was bi. If I were to place myself on the Kinsey scale, I think I am almost at the gay end of the scale. One gay man whom I used to have lunch with (sort of my sounding board as I was dealing with so many issues) suggested I ought to look to other married men for my pursuits.

As I did that, I began to realize why gay men do not like the idea of being with married men. Married men have obligations (graduations of their children, weddings, and such) and it is so much more difficult, sometimes impossible, to get together. Things come up between husband and wife which can mean cancelling a much desired time with one's male partner. With two

married men, they share the frustrations but they also have fewer opportunities when things can work out between them.

To some extent, there is also a feeling that one does not wish to be the one who breaks up a marriage. If the other guy becomes attached or if his wife decides that because he has a male partner, she no longer wants to be part of the marriage, then he is left with the guilt and the emotional problems of that marriage split.

There is one man who is recently married, not out to his spouse, who has a married male partner BUT they have trouble getting together and recently the partner was sick and could not contact my friend. Nor could my friend just call him at home. My friend went out with another guy for the first time and had a whole series of guilty feelings.

On the other hand, what is the married gay man to do? He may have married legitimately thinking he was not gay. Is he to just up and leave a wife and children? I do not think our society would look kindly on that kind of response.

There is no solution here. I wanted to raise the issue because some of our gay brothers are dealing with the issue. I wish I had an answer for them but there is no one answer. It is a decision that each man must make on his own.

DJ is a resident of K-W.

2/22, 2000

My Week On Crew (Part One Of Two)

by Carol P. King



A friend who had worked many crew weeks in years past clearing trails on the Appalachian had talked me into it. Several months ago I signed up for it. This past week I actually did it...and survived! The first ever all women led, all women work crew to participate in trail clearing and building on the Appalachian Trail system through ATC.

The Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC) is a non-profit, low-key focused environmental organization that for the past three quarters of a century has worked with individuals, groups and governmental agencies to create and maintain over 2,100 miles of wilderness footpaths from Maine to Georgia through one of the most popular corridors in our nation. In 1921 the Appalachian Trail system was started by a forester Benton Mackaye and within 15 years there were beginning paths stretching from Katahdin, Maine to Springer Mountain Georgia. The ATC was established in 1925 to coordinate efforts between different hiking and maintenance groups along the trail as well as to decide routes and trail management problems. In 1982 the US Forest Service began supplemental funding for the ATC to sponsor work crew programs. The crew program was originally based at an old Lutheran Girl's School in Konnarock, Virginia

before moving to its current location in Sugar Grove, Virginia near Mt. Rogers.

Our crew was assigned to Konnarock, Virginia as a base camp and our field base was off the Upper Paint Creek Road near Hot Springs, North Carolina about an hour north of Asheville. You have one gathering night at base camp to meet leaders and crew mates before shipping off the next morning to set up field camp and still be at the work site by lunch.

Now I had arranged for the kids to have their visitation with their father for the week, lined up a co-worker to cover my files for the week and packed as much as I thought I would need for a week in the woods but still had no idea what I'd really be doing. My friend had said allot about "clearing scrub", "moving rocks" and "no showers" but as a 39 year old mother of 3 that was pretty active and adventurous I still questioned my own ability to fit the bill. It didn't really hit me the importance of this being the first all women's crew until we really set out on our tasks.

We had a very diverse mix of women from across the country. Most had, that impressed me enough, heard about the volunteer crew over the internet. Our country was widely represented. The rest of us had learned about it through friends or associates working within the Appalachian Trail Conference or

Continued on Page 18

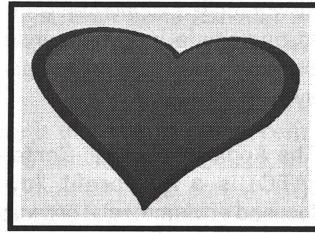
Reflection on the Meanings of Love

by Dr. Jeffrey Chernin

Valentine's Day can be a difficult time. If you are single, you are made to feel like a homebound Cinderella while every one else is at the Ball. For couples, there's pressure to have a perfectly romantic evening or give the perfect gift. How can you enjoy the day if you're one of the people who struggle with it?

Before turning my attention on how to make the day more enjoyable, I'd like to offer some notions on love. While contemplating Valentine's Day, I thought about our culture's idea of Love. In this culture, we are taught that love is purely romantic. Indelibly etched into our minds is the idea that we should meet the right person, fall in love, and live happily ever after.

This idea has made fools of every one of us, and we seem to have forgotten that there are many kinds of love. Just as we as LGBT individuals want the general culture to accept same-gender love, we need to expand the definition of love to include its various forms of expression.



Not only is there romantic love, there's platonic love. Even within those categories, there are still different ways of feeling and expressing love. The love for your current partner may be different from the way you felt toward your prior partners, for example.

Also, love for your spouse is distinct from the love you have for your families of origin, which is different from the way you feel toward friends, your pet, and yourself.

The reason for expanding the definition of love is not only to enjoy Valentines' Day, but to make love more real—to take it out of the abstract and bring it to everyday reality. Sometimes, expressing love takes a word, a gesture, or a token of affection. One of the greatest forms of love is giving time, thoughtfulness, and attention to another person. Giving love—and not attaching strings or expecting anything in return—can do wonders.

Another way to expand the definition of love is to include forgiveness. Often, people think that if you forgive someone else, you are letting them off the hook. Rather, it's important to forgive others because ultimately, forgiveness is for you and you only. Not only can it take give you peace of mind, but it can make you a more loving individual.

I've come to the conclusion that, like most other qualities in our personalities, love is not a thing—it is a process. As we grow, we are

capable of more love. And we can learn to express it in ways that others receive it. Like happiness, love must come from the inside.

In this article, I have attempted to expand the meaning of Valentine's Day—to give you the big picture, so the actual day doesn't have to be a burden. This February 14th, remember that romantic love for a partner is only one kind of love, that passionate love must fade, and that you have to build love for yourself, your partner, and your community.

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

Surviving the Wounds of Love

"If we are going to be lovers, we must be as open to the wretchedness as we are to the bliss it can bring, for both are a part of the reality of loving. Since earthly love is imperfect, we will never be able to avoid pain, but the lover finds ways of surviving the wounds. I have often noted that there is not a lover worth the name who is not covered with minor scars.

Most individuals outlive their injuries, but there are some who continue to flaunt them like proud battle wounds as they continue their war on love. They keep a sacred list of wrongs that burn in memory as a warning to never let it happen again.

Love may bring disappointments and devastation, but it is the wise among us who learn from them. Having done so makes love's triumphs even sweeter. Our emotional strength and growth toward wisdom develop over a lifetime, and quite often, arise out of adversity. This is a small price to pay for such powerful knowledge." --- Leo Buscaglia (Book: "Born For Love")

"Adversity not only draws people together, but brings forth that beautiful inward friendship just as the cold winter forms ice figures on window panes, which the warmth of the sun effaces."
---Soren Kierkegaard

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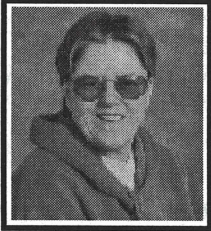


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Dying To Be Visible

By A.J. Mahari



Matthew Shepard, dead at the age of 21, October 12, 1998, after being brutally beaten in Laramie, Wyoming and left to die because he was a homosexual. Shepard blazed a trail from invisible to painfully visible at the hands of two men who acted out their intolerance and misunderstanding of difference in what has been labeled a "hate-crime". Homosexuality remains misunderstood and feared as a direct result of the oppression of religious fundamentalists and it remains misunderstood, feared and shunned by many in society today due to our own apathy. If we are too afraid or too apathetic to educate the masses how will the masses who oppress us ever be educated?

Visibility is the relative possibility of being seen within the limitations of perceived or actual difference. Was Shepard, the man, seen at all? Or did his killers just see all that they have been mistakenly taught to believe about homosexuals? Were they killing the man or the homosexual? Why was there no distinction made: Is there a difference?

Difference is not right or wrong. Difference will not ever be eradicated. Difference is meant to exist. Lesbians and Gays share much more sameness than difference with the rest of society.

In celebration of the right to live a diverse and free life it is up to all of us to meet in the middle of impossibility – a respectful acceptance of any and all of our differences; from a mindset that is open to continually further assimilating difference.

In the case of homosexuality there is hate-mongering and fear-mongering put forth often by the religious right in the name of God. We are all diminished by this mindset. There is nothing to be gained by trying to oppress any group of people in the name of God or anyone or anything else. No one group of people is less than another. There is no favored group in the eyes of God. We are all a part of the main in the human condition.

The visibility of our differences is as valuable as the visibility of our sameness. No one should have to die in the name of this visibility. Hate is often a response to the fear that is felt in the face of difference. Hate sows its seeds in the dark and in the ignorance of silence. Murders like Shepard's are the result of more than hate. They are the result of a failure to assimilate difference which becomes devaluation and subsequently can easily grow into hate. Hate kills people who then kill others.

What happened to Matthew Shepard in Wyoming was another wake-up call. The alarm is ringing. Are you going to wake up to the fact that sexual orientation does not an

entire human being make? We need to build bridges of understanding across the gaps of ignorance, intolerance, and the constrictive "all or nothing" thinking of "us" versus "them". There is no "us" versus "them". There is only hate versus acceptance. Not one among us has the right to judge another, let alone to perpetrate violence and or to kill another because they are of a different sexual orientation. Being gay isn't wrong. Being straight isn't right. They are differences, equally incontrovertible in the measure of their being.

There are many ways that we die each day to be visible if we haven't yet found our path to this emancipation.

Literally, like Mathew Shepard, and others, some of our brothers and sisters lose their lives because of who they are; most of us lose pieces of ourselves and of our potential happiness and joy. Many, in our community, choose to remain separated from the visible-freedom that they are entitled to through their own fear, apathy or denial.

Oppression is real. Oppression can kill. Visibility is freeing. No one "should" ever have to "die to be visible" or "live invisible" to be safe. Just as those of us who are lesbian, gay, bi or transgendered seek this "safe" visibility we must also be willing to be open to those who have been (or who remain our oppressors). They cannot educate themselves. **WE need to educate "them" and to be educated by "them."** In order for all of us, our orientations notwithstanding, to acquire and maintain the relative-freedom to live our lives visibly and to not be literally dying to be visible lesbians, gays and straights have to learn to more-fully appreciate understand and accept difference. All of us also have to learn to deal with the plethora of sameness that can be equally as uncomfortable at times as are our differences.

How many more people have to die to be visible? How much longer do so many have to live invisibly to placate the beast of an unenlightened majority?

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

Brad Douglas *Sales Rep.*

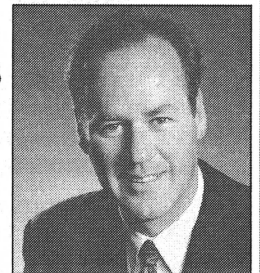
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My Week On Crew

Continued from page 13

a sister group Natahala Outdoor Centers.

There were two college students, one from Colorado and one from Florida State. A nurse from Kansas, I believe, that was taking the summer off to lead trail crews before hitting a hospital in one state or another. A painter, writer from the western North Carolina mountains who had lots of trail experience with mixed crews. A state social worker from New Orleans that was 53 and out sledged us all. A secretary from New Jersey that had walked many trails but was working her first crew work week with us. An office worker, writer that was working the summer at the ATC in base camp coordination that also took a turn to lead crew. And me, mother, Realtor, and wild woman from Charlotte, North Carolina. Some were in their second week of crew. Some were working this week and had yet another to follow and some, like myself were just there for the one work week for women.

On Thursday morning the van kept going further and further up the mountain gravel road towards the top of Upper Paint Creek. Near the top, after 30 minutes of bouncing pits and loose gravel there was a surprising section of asphalt. One of our leaders, Jenny, explained that many years ago there had once been an attempt at a ski resort on this mountain to no avail with the shifts in winter seasons for the area and now only a lone gutted A frame disintegrated off the road along with the dwindling patches of asphalt.

The van stopped and we were pointed towards "field camp". A path that lead to a crossing point of the Appalachian Trail about a half mile off the road about 200 feet from a nice very cold creek. We were instructed to pitch our tents and set up the base kitchen. Please understand that this is after hauling, in several trips, all the coolers, tents, equipment and necessities for the week down that trail, over two creeks and along a mountain top's edge. We helped each other with tents and tarps. Two dug the privy.

We were told to make a lunch and

pack water and snacks into our daypacks and we set back off for the van. No, we didn't rest between. I have memorized that trek. Over the creek, twice, down the path past the two downed trees, up the grade, over the old creek bed, up more grade, through the weeds, then to the road.

The van then took us another 1/2 mile to the bottom of the mountain side trail we'd be working on. We loaded backpacks with sledges, rock picks, axes, clippers, shin guards and hard-hats. And our day packs. And the medical pack. We were then traileed back to the start of "our section". This would be a new section of the AT that would open sometime next year. As my already tired, amazed body hit the middle segment of trail before our work site came up, I

stumbled with my load and got my first rock scrape for the week on my left knee. I didn't go all the way down. Just a miss step, jerk and a scrape to then steady back up with my load. My reminder of the territory and terms. After 20 minutes of hiking back further on the trail we started up the mountain face where previous crews had fashioned sections of 25 feet, then 30 feet then 20 more feet of completed trail and rock steps. It would only be after another 48 hours that I would truly appreciate the work that I now stumbled onto as we hiked towards our section. Suddenly the cleared

area ended. The rocks were jumbled and slick. Rhododendrum and brush filled the pink flagged trail. This was our section.

In brief, the crew leaders pointed out areas that we would build steps, clear Rhodo and fashion pathways. We all looked at each other and our laughs were very strained. We were all still sweating profusely from the hike in with all the equipment in 95 degree weather. We were on this side of a mountain, a bunch of women, setting out to clear this trail and most of us had never done this



before. Our crew leaders were very good at filling us in with care, in pairing us up and assigning tasks to break us in. **U l t i m a t e l y** concerned with safety first they instructed us in the use of the rock bars, picks, sledges and other moving tools. For the next four plus hours we started right in on it.

Moving just one huge rock at a time onto a prepared base of crushed rock. Pushing it, pulling it, turning it perhaps three times until it set firm and solid in its final place. It wasn't until halfway through the second day that we actually were amazed at our accomplishments and saw two or three steps together, completed, that accounted for all the hours spent. **(End of Part One)**

Carol P. King is a writer living in the Carolinas, USA.

Look for Part Two of Carol's "My Week On Crew" in the March issue of The Voice. This article was submitted to The Voice by Carol P. King.

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Increase Your Refund ~ Reduce Your Taxes (Part 1) By Darren Kregar

It's that time of the year again, financial institutions are promoting RRSPs, Revenue Canada is sending out labels and income tax return packages, and we all will soon either do our own taxes or go to a tax service or an accountant. Be sure to have all of your receipts and tax information to ensure you pay the least amount of tax possible.

Following are deductions from income that you may be able to claim to reduce your taxable income.

RRSP Contributions (Line 208)

Maximize your RRSP contribution. An easy way to reduce your taxable income and increase your refund is to maximize your RRSP contribution. To determine the maximum amount you can contribute you will need to obtain your tax assessment for the year 1998. The assessment will contain a section that states what this amount will be. If you do not have your assessment you can find out by calling Revenue Canada's automated T.I.P.S. service (1-800-267-6999) or the general inquiries number (579-2230). If you are unable to maximize your RRSP contribution, any amount towards your RRSP will increase the amount of refund you may receive.

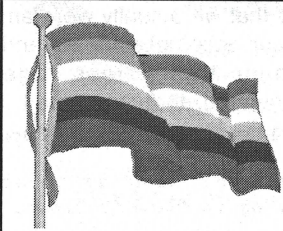
Annual Union, Professional or Like Dues (Line 212)

You may deduct the total of all annual membership dues you paid to belong to a trade union or an association of public servants, dues paid to a professions board that you had to pay under provincial law, professional or malpractice liability insurance premiums or professional membership dues you paid if you had to pay them to keep a professional status recognized by law.

Child Care Expenses (Line 214)

You may claim expenses for child care if you or your spouse paid someone to look after your child so you (or your spouse) could earn income, go to school or conduct

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research in 1999. The child must have been under 16 or had a mental or physical infirmity at some time in 1999.

Moving Expenses (Line 219)

If you have moved at least 40 kilometres in 1999 to start a job or to study full-time at a post-secondary institution, you can deduct your moving expenses from income you earned at the new location. Any expense you are unable to claim for 1999 may be carried forward to your 2000 tax return.

Employment Expenses (Line 229)

If your employer, under a contract of employment, requires you to pay your own expenses, be required to work away from your employer's place of business, you were paid in part by commissions based on volume of sales AND you did not receive a non-taxable allowance for travelling expenses, you may be eligible to deduct your employment expenses. Your employer must fill out Form T2200 'Declaration of Employment Expenses'.

Carrying Charges and Interest Expenses (Line 221)

You can claim fees to manage or take care of your investments including safety deposit box charges, most interest you pay on money you borrow to try to earn investment income. You cannot deduct the interest you paid on money you borrowed to contribute to a RRSP or an RESP. You cannot deduct interest you paid on your student loans on Line 221; however, you may be able to claim a credit on line 319.

Social Benefits Repayment (Line 235)

You may have to repay part of the EI benefits you received in 1999 if there is an amount in box 15 of your T4E slip and the repayment rate in box 7 is 30% and your net income before adjustments is more than \$48,750.00 - OR - there is an amount in box 16 of your T4E and your net income before adjustments is more than \$48,750.00 - OR - there is an amount in box 15 of your T4E slip and the repayment rate in box 7 is more than 30% and your net income before adjustments is more than \$39,000. Be sure to complete the charts included with your T4E slip to calculate how much of your EI benefits you have to repay. Be sure to also enter this amount on line 422.

Other Payment Deductions (Line 250)

You can deduct the amount from line 147 of your return. This is the total of the workers' compensation payments, social assistance payments and net federal supplements you entered on lines 144, 145 and 146. Other deductions you may be able to claim include support payments, non-capital losses of other years, net capital losses of other years and the capital gains deductions.

Darren Kregar is the owner of Economical Tax Services (ETS). **Note: Economical Tax Services will be offering a 20% discount to all 'Voice' readers. Just let us know you saw this article in 'The Voice'.**

In the next issue of the Voice, Part 2 will highlight different types of non-refundable tax credits you may be able to claim that can reduce the taxes you owe or increase your refund.



GAY MONEY

by Bonnie J. Babin,
Investment Planning Counsel of Canada

ESTATE PLANNING

WHEN SHOULD YOU PREPARE AN ESTATE PLAN?

Some people think they are too young to do estate planning. Yet age is not the main factor. We all hope to live to a healthy old age; not all of us will. As soon as you have some assets or a family, you should have an estate plan. Estate planning is not something that you do at the end of the day. Rather, it should be part of your ongoing financial strategy. People in their late forties bury their friends, people who were in their peak earning years who hadn't stopped to consider that they may be mere mortals. Despite all our medical and technological advances, we cannot escape death. Now this does not mean that we should live in paranoia. It just means that every once in a while you should imagine what would happen if you were suddenly not in the picture. And take the appropriate measures.

Like any financial plan, your estate planning requires periodic tune-ups to keep it effective. If you change partners, a review of your estate plan may indicate that changes are needed to reflect your new personal circumstances. If the people appointed in the will are unable or unwilling to act on your behalf, the documents should be updated. If your assets increase or decrease in value, the amount of income tax due to your final tax return will change. And importantly, your estate plan should reflect changes in tax legislation, succession law, and family law. If you retire at 65 and live to be 85, that's 20 years of changing legislation and family dynamics.

When it comes to estate planning, it is better to be too early than too than too late!

DO YOU WANT THE GOVERNMENT TO BE ONE OF YOUR BENEFICIARIES?

Governments are waiting for you to die - so they can collect those final income taxes. Since the \$ 100,000 capital gains exemption was eliminated, estates face for higher income taxes than ever before. The tax planning side of estate planning can help keep more for your beneficiaries, reduce your taxes, or provide a higher income for yourself in your retirement years.

Even Canadians who do not consider themselves wealthy by traditional standards have accumulated significant wealth during their lifetime. People who are now 60 or more were taught to be savers. They also invested in property - property whose values rose rapidly through periods of high inflation. (You may remember when houses cost \$ 10,000!). The values of personal real estate and other assets have increased the net worth of more than one generation of Canadians. Surveys reveal that more disposable wealth is about to change hands in the next two decades than ever before.

If leaving a large estate is not one of your priorities, you might look at ways to reduce the size of your taxable estate. You might spend more money today on yourself or give some away. Take your RRSP (Registered Retirement Savings Plan) or RRIF (Registered Retirement Income Fund). Many people believe it is better to leave money in these registered plans for as long as possible but this is not always the case. So let's say you are 62 and your partner dies. Without planning, up to half of your RRSPs will be collected as income tax by Revenue Canada. A RRSP worth \$ 150,000 when you die, will have a tax bill of up to \$ 75,000. Of course, you want to be sure that you have enough for your needs, but do you really want the government to be a major beneficiary? I'm not advocating that you run out and spend all of your RRSP but you may want to see if the tax bill at death can be minimized and your income over your lifetime maximized.

SAME-SEX COUPLES

While the laws affecting same-sex couples are changing, I wouldn't wait for them to be fully in place in order to cover your estate planning needs. There are steps you can take now to protect your partner.

Be sure to prepare wills that clearly state your instructions and name your partner as the beneficiary on RRSPs/RRIFs, life insurance, annuities and pension plan, where appropriate. Also prepare your power of attorney.

Consider registering assets as joint tenants with rights of survivorship (not in Quebec) or, for added privacy, setting up a living trust prior to death.

If there are children involved, set up testamentary trusts for any assets they might inherit and name the appropriate guardian in your wills.

Bonnie will be hosting a series of seminars starting in February, 2000, for same-sex couples. On February 16 th. at 6:30 p.m. she will explore "Do RRSP's Still Make Sense?" Please call to reserve. If you would like a complete listing of her winter/spring seminar series, please email us.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Please respond to e-mail address:
[Redacted] Fax (519) [Redacted]

*Investment Planning Counsel
of Canada*

Financial Planning Professionals

BONNIE J. BABIN - Financial Planning & Tax Consultant - Phone (519) [Redacted]

Parental Denial and other Truths

(The Outcast Column Visits This Section)

By Timothy Lee

Parents are full of surprises. I came-out to my parents at age 16. This incident was THE EVENT. Everyone was surprised. Parents are naturally surprised when their child comes-out to them. Accidentally coming-out to my parents while defending my school marks was the source of my surprise. I was totally unprepared. This was definitely not the desired come-out procedure under ideal conditions. However, the past is behind and we can only look ahead to the future. One may think coming-out at age 16 is incredible. I suppose for someone aged 16, seven years ago, to come-out wasn't very common. A small handful came-out in their teens

while the rest waited until their twenties. So the big question after surviving THE EVENT is "How did the parents take it?" They seemed fine. Don't get me wrong. In the coming-out talk and the various post-discussions, tears were shed and voices were raised.

It's not unusual for a kid to communicate better with one parent than the other. Mom and I talked frequently—about her day at work, my studies, my co-op jobs, cooking tips, health tips, and current technology. However, my father and I rarely conversed beyond, "Hi, how are things going?"

At THE EVENT, Mom sobbed with despair, while my father charged me with his usual volley of questions of anger. Back then, that was the apex of our communication. Ever since THE EVENT, Life proceeded as if nothing had transpired. In fact, things got better. Mom and my father frequently asked if I had enough money, food and warm clothing. They always gave me more if they suspected I lacked any. It must have something to do with my bestowed independence while attending university. Or perhaps they are merely reacting, in their own way, to the "empty nest". In any case, I'm thankful for the basic necessities with which they shower me. I know they care for me a great deal. But then, why shouldn't they? I am still my parents' eldest son. THE EVENT certainly shouldn't have changed that relationship. It's easy to bury the mess of unfinished

business deep down, but sooner or later, it pops its ugly head back in your face. So, "How did the parents take it?" As I eventually found out, they never took it. I'm 23 years old now. That's 7 years of denial.

Mom and my father recently made a surprise visit here in Waterloo. In all my 4 years at university, they have never visited. It was clear they wanted to talk. They wouldn't say what it was about. Of course, once they arrived and taken me out for lunch, they began an interrogation. They wanted to know everything I had done ever since THE EVENT, with questions such as:

"Who do you hang out with?"

"Are they homosexual?"

"Why must you hang out with them?"

"Do you go to bars?"

"Is it a bar for homosexuals?"

"Why do you feel the need to go to those places?"

"Are you having sexual relations with anyone?"

"How long have you known him?"

"How many people has he had sexual relations with?"

These were the exact questions they asked me 7 years ago in those early post-EVENT discussions. How does one begin to answer all these questions? Answering them at age 16 was tough enough. Answering them again at age 23 isn't any easier. It's similar to someone asking me to re-write every engineering examination I have ever written all over again. The main difference is that, in this case, the questions are personal and some answers are embarrassing. But the truth is: if all one needed to

do was dodge probing questions by deciding when to respond generously and when to say "none of your business", then there'd be no trouble. Accepting a gay son is the real issue for my parents. My father remained calm. He objected to sex before marriage and pointed out potential health risks while involved with another male. These concerns were wholly warranted and understandable. Such rational thoughts coming from my father astonished me in a very positive way. Mom, with her Buddhist background, focused on the Right and the Truth. She asked what she did wrong that made me turn out gay. All I could think about was that ever-popular coming-out book, "Now That You Know". I was damned when I bought it for my parents. They didn't even touch it. Now I am damned for donating the book to those who might actually

Continued on page 46

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



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The National Gay Press and Gay Culture

by Perry Brass

The national gay press has made light years' progress in getting recognition for itself. But as the gay media business has become more mainstreamed and professionalized, it has also moved farther away from the people who are actually making gay culture. By "gay culture," I do not mean hyped media figures. A lot of the gay press seems to feel that gay culture ends with Madonna, Chastity Bono, and Rupert Everett. I'm talking about gay men and lesbians who write real, thoughtful, enriching books, not window-dressing glitz, and who'll never get their work reviewed in the slick gay press unless their publishers pony up to advertise in it. I'm also talking about painters and photographers who are not Soho celebrities but who're making important images. And openly gay (but non-"celeb") singers, musicians, choreographers, dancers, composers, designers - people who are actually creating a living, breathing gay culture - that thing that the corporatized media has been declaring "dead" for about a decade now. As the mainstream, gay and straight, sees it, gay culture no longer has big box office "legs." Certainly not enough to make Simon and Schuster and others drool at the cash registers. There just ain't enough gold in the "limitless discretionary" pockets of the queers to make us worthwhile anymore. For non-mainstream, openly gay artists to get even passing review mention or attention from the slick national gay press has become

a heartbreaking joke. Example: for a long time, it appeared that OUT magazine wasn't interested in reviewing gay books unless they came with an ad budget. When James Collard was editor, he declared in an editorial that he was more interested in books that would appeal to "gay consumers" than in meaningful books. Similarly, it seems the vast majority of the books reviewed in the Advocate come from publishing houses with large ad budgets. If gay culture appears to be dead, it's only because it's not reflected in the national gay press. Instead, we have a phony excuse for a culture, one that is all about sex clubs, consumerism, and a handful of writers choking on their own internalized homophobia. I don't recognize this. I do recognize hundreds of gifted, openly gay working artists, writers, dancers,

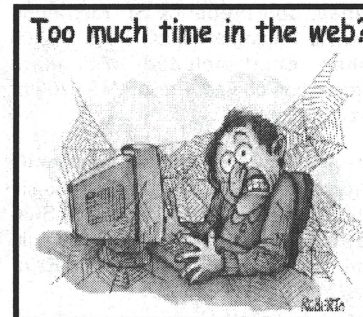
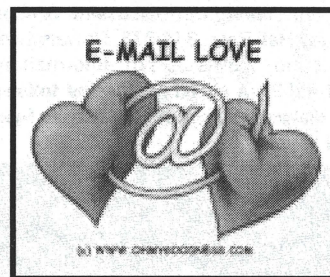
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singers, musicians, composers, choreographers - a complete cultural movement - who are never mentioned in the national gay press, unless they become mainstreamed enough to get ad revenue or P.R. machinery behind them. They are a truly flourishing gay culture; the gay press is just missing the boat with them.



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- *Be careful about putting antique china or glass in the dishwasher. Glass will sometimes crack from the heat. China with gold overglaze decorations often loose their gold. Also damaged or crazed glaze will sometimes pop off in large pieces.
- *New research suggests that you should never use Silicone based furniture polish or feed the wood with oils. Just dust with a soft cloth.
- *Mahogany furniture can be cleaned with a sponge dipped in equal parts of warm water and white vinegar. Dry thoroughly with a soft cloth.
- *Keep furniture away from a humidifier. The damp air will eventually cause the furniture to mildew.
- *Coffee or tea stains can sometimes be removed from a cup by scrubbing with salt on a sponge.
- *Brass can be polished with this homemade remedy. Make a paste of equal parts salt, flour, and vinegar. Rub the paste on the brass with a soft cloth. Rinse completely, Buff with a clean, dry, soft cloth.

Sundays

KW-Friends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Bowling League, meets every Sunday at 3:45pm at the Brunswick Frederick Lanes. 385 Frederick St. Kitchener. (behind Frederick Plaza) Cost: \$12.00 (shoe rental included) For more information contact Phil at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

The Rainbow Metropolitan Community Church: An LGBT-friendly Community Church. Services take place each Sunday at 7:00 p.m. at St. Matthias Anglican, 171 Kortright Road. Call the Rainbow MCC at 519-823-0251

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

Tuesdays

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

Wednesdays

Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group We meet every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Call us for more details: 905-526-1074, or toll-free 1-888-338-8278, or email info@gomorrah.com <http://www.gomorrah.com>

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. A safe and confidential place for women to share their struggles addictions. For more info, call Marilyn 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 (Kitchener).

GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Groups Hagey Hall Rms. 373/378, University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Information: 884-4569. A social gathering follows the discussion groups weekly from 9pm to 11pm.

The Coming Out Discussion Group:

February 2: Nurturing Our Friendships
February 9: Internet and Other Media: Their Role in Coming Out
February 16: Crushes and Infatuations
February 23: Hometowns: Where I Came From
March 1: How Do I Meet People?

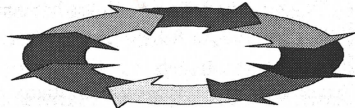
Rainbow Community Discussion Gr.

February 2: Work Place Issues
February 9: Body Image
February 16: Being Single :Finding a partner in a small community
February 23: Stereotypes and Stereotyping
March 1: Safe-Sex Workshop (AIDS and other STDs)

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 905-[REDACTED] or Michael at 905-[REDACTED]

Thursdays

Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group (FTM - MTF) If you are post-op or pre-op transsexual or are dealing with gender dysphoria, come join this bi-weekly peer support group. Meetings are held from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm - bi-weekly at the Hamilton AIDS Network, 512 James St. N. For further details, please call (905) 528-0207 ext.43, or e-mail Janet at: [REDACTED] www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/cafe/8922/



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Toll Free: 1-877-635-2352

Friday February 4

Proud Voices is a five-part gay and lesbian speaker series that is taking place at the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall, at 31 Kings College Circle, Toronto. 7:30 pm: Michelle Douglas, "Saving Private Douglas: How a Military Follower Became an Activist Leader" Douglas tickets cost \$12.50 to \$19.50; to order, call (416) 872-1212. For more information you can visit our website www.proud-voices.com or give us a call at (416) 864-0210.



Friday February 11

The Rainbow Chorus is holding a **DANCE** at 611 Silvercreek Parkway North, Guelph. Doors open at 9pm. Come share some great music and dancing with good friends. For more information call Cory at [redacted] or Robert at [redacted] www.webpoint.net/~cory/

Friday February 18

PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meet at 8:00 pm. For the location of the meeting and more information, call Evie at [redacted] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [redacted] (Cambridge) or email: pflag@rainbow.on.ca

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

Saturday February 19

Aid For AIDS Benefit!, proudly presented by **Club Renaissance**. It will be a Drag Extravaganza! All door cover and tips will be donated to ACCKWA. Club Renaissance is located at 24 Charles Street West (Kitchener) across from the KW Bus Terminal. Info Line: 519-570-2406. Toll Free: 1-877-635-2352.



Sunday February 20

Waterloo-Wellington Region Pride Committee Meeting at 3 pm. Location: Conference Room, Davis Centre Library, University of Waterloo. Inquiries can be directed to the RPC at rpc@rainbow.on.ca. Visit our Pride 2000 page at: <http://www.rainbow.on.ca/pride2000/>

Saturday February 26

6th Annual Chairs and Art for Charity Auction at Kitchener City Hall, hosted by ACCKWA. Artists follow the symbolism and philosophy that chairs may be associated with practicality, comfort and support which fundamental to ACCKWA's services to the community. Other artworks of photography, paintings, sketches, sculptures, etc. will be available to expand on the items auctioned to promote the wide variety of artistic talents of the people in the Waterloo Region who follow the same basic principles of ACCKWA.



KITCHENER-WATERLOO

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

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

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

NEW GAY MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP discussion, social activities in small group has just started meeting in the KW area. Call Tim at [redacted] or email at: [redacted]

Global: is available to help anyone in the Laurier community who is dealing with LGBT issues: 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) 743-5832

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

WOODS: Women Out Opening Doors Socially is a social club for lesbians and lesbian-positive women in K-W and area. In Kitchener contact Wanda at 846-9197 and in Guelph the contact person is Debbie at 822-7876

G U E L P H

ACGWC (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 204-85 Norfolk Street, 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 <http://www.uoguelph.ca/~outline>

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

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

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge Help Line: [redacted]

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

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

HAMILTON

Alcoholics Anonymous-For the location and time of the Gay, Lesbian and Alternative Lifestyles Group in Hamilton call: (905) 522-8399.

Alternatives for Youth- 126 James St. South, Hamilton - 527-4469

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

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 522-0607

Greater Hamilton Gay & Lesbian Business Association (905) 526-1074

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/glb/glb.htm

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

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police-General Assistance: 546-4925
Jane Mulkewich, 546-4910
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

Community Education 546-3541 to book a presentation or consultation

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

MCC--Centenary United Church 25 Main Street West Hamilton (McNab Street Entrance) 2nd and 4th Sunday: 2 to 5 pm 526-1147

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 662-1510

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

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 For information check out their website at <http://home.interlynx.net/~ghla1> or e-mail them at ghla1@interlynx.net

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

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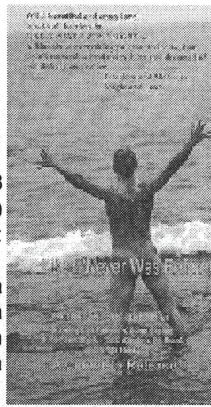
Late Bloomers

(1997, 104 min, US)
 Director: Gretchen Dyer & Julia Dyer
 Starring: Connie Nelson, Dee Hennigan, Gary Carter, Lisa Peterson, Val Lumpkin

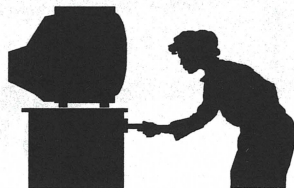
Novice filmmakers and sisters Julia and Gretchen Dyer have produced a delightfully romantic lesbian coming-out love story. Set in all-American suburbia, the comedy-drama is set in Eleanor Roosevelt High School where Dinah, a gangly fortysomething math teacher and basketball coach, becomes friends with the cute but doughy Carly, a married school secretary and mother of two. What begins as innocent friendship soon becomes much more as Carly, dulled by years of domesticity, is intrigued and attracted to the shy Dinah. As the two become more bold in their public affection for each other, Carly's husband, her sensitive daughter and young son, as well as neighbors and coworkers begin to talk and become increasingly troubled. But romance triumphs over all adversities as the two women throw caution to the wind and fall passionately in love with each other. Homophobia, and the disruption of the family unit by lesbianism is explored, but it is the invigoratingly tender and refreshingly romantic nature of the women's love affair that prevails.

Like it Never Was Before

(1995, 108 min, Sweden)
 Director: Susanne Bier
 Starring: Loa Falkman, Stina Ekblad, Simon Norrthon, Ghita Norby



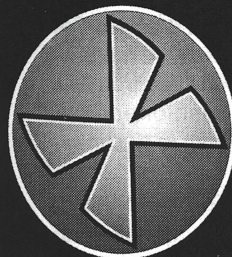
Based on a script by popular Swedish gay writer and stand-up comic Jonas Gardell, this breezy social/sexual comedy with an edge blends drama, humor, reality, and fantasy as it tells its story of sexual liberation. Rune is a puffy, slightly buffoonish husband and father of three who undergoes a remarkable revelation while on summer vacation with his bickering family. There, at the lakeside Pension at Oskar, he meets Petrus, a handsome blond youth with a mischievous smile and devilish charms. Intrigued by Petrus' amateur magician powers and startled by his sexual provocation, Rune is soon seduced by Petrus -- an act that unleashes pent-up emotions and desires and confused sexual identity. (Swedish with English subtitles)



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DEVILS IN SKIRTS

By Howard Watson

The Sexual Allure of the Kilt

In the last episode of This Life, the cult BBC drama about law students sharing a house, an answer was provided for those who wonder what a Scotsman wears under his kilt. It is when the kilted Lenny, as played by Scottish actor Tony Curran, is being graphically buggered by Ramon Tikaram, in the role of Ferdy, in the men's toilets at the climatic wedding reception. The kilt is one of the few items of male attire men can actually wear without being labelled a transvestite or latent homosexual, or both. What is the sporran but a large purse?

Witness David Beckham's treatment at the hands of the tabloid press when he strolled out with Victoria Adams, also known as Posh Spice, wearing a sarong, before the World Cup. He preserved modesty by wearing trousers underneath this sartorial faux pas. Fortunately, such a fashion crime was swiftly overlooked after he had been given the red card in England's game against Argentina, although some would consider it a close-run thing.

Jean-Paul Gaultier, the camp London-based French fashion designer, has been dogged in his persistence to popularise a modern version of the kilt; without much success it has to be said. Could it be that his designs were too obviously homoerotic?

No Englishman would ever be brave/stupid enough to go up to a big, hairy Scotsman and insinuate that his friend from north of the border was less than one hundred percent pure heterosexual? Unless, of course, he was inordinately fond of hospital food, that is.

There is a photography by Jack Fritscher's entitled 'Actual Prison Guard, American Kilt, 1990' from American Men, which captures perfectly the erotic charge of the kilt, as an athlete is engaged in throwing the hammer at a Highland Games. The shorts he wears beneath his kilt add a sensual frisson, rather than detracting from such a magnificent sight, as the referee, also kilted, watches on. As Edward Lucie-Smith explains in his introduction: 'It tells us nothing of the sexuality of the subject, but much about the image-maker's own reactions to the world which surrounds him - the things he is attuned to, and is likely to notice and record.' To cut a long theory short, beauty is in the eye of the viewfinder.

Whilst tartan remained an icon of style, during punk it was the material from which most bondage trousers appeared to be fashioned, the wearing of the kilt was in decline.

The rise in Scottish nationalism allied to a cultural resurgence north

of the border has brought Scotsmen the confidence to don their national dress. To be Scottish now is to be hip, cool and trendy. Everyone from Ewan McGregor to Mel Gibson have been sporting the kilt.

One of the few redeeming features of, the dire Americanised big screen version of The Avengers, the classic British 60's television series, was the glorious sight of Sean Connery, the first and best 007, clad in plaid. In my humble opinion, a magnificent sight that was worth the price of admission alone.

Yet the origin of the modern short kilt, or philibeg, is a subject of heated debate in some quarters. Thomas Rawlinson, the ironmaster at the Glengarry works in the eighteenth century, was an Englishman who had adopted Highland dress, is considered to be the prime originator of the kilt as now know it.

There is no available evidence to suggest that the kilt, in its present form, existed before the early 1700's. This has failed to stifle the long-running debate which, if truth be told, has all to do with the fact that the first man to wear it was far from being a favoured son of Caledonia but a damnable Sassenach!

Howard Watson is a 35 year old freelance writer who lives in London, England. He found us on the web and will be writing a monthly column for The Voice.



RADIO



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

Women's Spin-- CKMS 100.3 FM
airs Wednesday Nights-6-7:30pm

Nowhere To Hide--CKMS 100.3 FM
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Airs Wednesday Nights 7:30-9pm

Queer Radio Hamilton--CFMU 93.3 FM
Hamilton Airs Thursdays 5-6pm

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

TELEVISION



10% - Qtv broadcasts Sunday's
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channel 8 in Guelph, or channel 13 in
London

HUMOUR

I think, therefore I'm single.

Ty has come up with a new Beanie Baby for the Millenium. It's a sheep named "Consumer!"

I've been retired for a couple of years now. How the hell did I ever find the time to work?

Two things you should never see being made: laws and sausage.

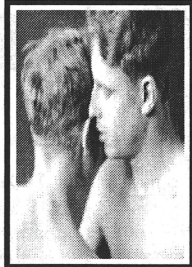
If meteorologists study the weather, who studies meteors?

LOOKING FOR MR. RIGHT: THE PERFECT GAY 10

Charles W. Westfall



AJ asked for a column about something of special interest to Gay Males. Aside from themselves, the only thing of special interest to Gay Males that I could think of was Other Gay Males. Everyone is on the prowl, the lookout, the hunt for Mr. Right, Mr. Perfect Gay 10. Like the song says, "I want a guy, just like the guy, that married dear old dad. He was a guy and the only guy that Daddy ever had. (Ha, Ha, Ha). A good old fashioned guy with eyes of blue; a super model guy with nice pecs too. Ohhhhhh, I want a guy, just like the guy that married dear old Dad." (Switch to four part harmony on the last 5 bars.) In terms of who's ahead in the ranking system in this area, Burlington Boys, from what I'm told, are tops: lookers, dancers and socializers. They are much in demand and anyone lucky enough to be seen with one is much envied by all. They generally fall into the lithe, young, svelte classification, well-turned out in brash understatement and closely coifed hair, sometimes tinted. Judging from the glossy mags and the ads for spas and bath houses, the Perfect Gay 10 is a well-developed and muscular hunk with sculpted pecs, bulging biceps, washboard abs and sinewy thighs and calves. Smooth all over, hair, if ever there, having been waxed, sugared, shaved, electrolysed or plucked



away, (ouch!) the head hair is moussed, sprayed, conditioned, gelled and prodded into a precise and perky do, often highlighted at the tips or streaked provocatively in sections. Clothes are generally tight fitting with appropriate bulges, often assisted by padding in the appropriate places. A perma-smile of immaculately white teeth and glistening eyes with a permanent "Come on" look complete the picture. What I am tempted to say to anyone like this is, "My phone number is (905) 526-9257." On the other hand, what I do say is, "Enjoy it while you can. It won't last forever. But take care of yourself and make it last as long as you can. At the same time, find other ways to fulfil yourself and find enjoyment. You'll stay vibrant and attractive and interesting for as long as you live." O.K., let's face it. Not all of us ever have or ever will fit into the dreamboat category as outlined above. So what about us? Is there a Mr. Right. A Perfect Gay 10. I think so. It begins with myself. If I am happy with who I am as a Gay Male, if I am comfortable and relaxed and at home with myself as myself, then I am obviously a prime candidate for Mr. Right in my own life. If I can't do that, then nothing else really matters. No one or nothing else will supply for what is a radical and serious lack of self-esteem and self-confidence. On the other hand, if I can see what is attractive in me as a Gay Male and begin to see the Perfect Gay 10 qualities that I

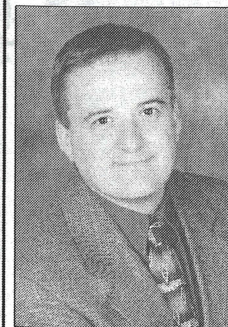
possess, maybe I can begin to connect with others who have similar qualities and attractions. For me, then, the other Mr. Right, the other Perfect Gay 10, becomes the person with whom I am most comfortable and most relaxed. What we look like or how we can strut doesn't matter. We are not in any kind of competition for attention; nor, do we have to be on the prowl continuously. Maybe, even, a long-term, trusting, caring, affectionate, loving and mutually respectful relationship can take root and grow. Soooo, Gay Guys, hang in there and stay cool. Stay healthy and take care of yourselves. Mr. Right is probably there for everyone; just, probably, not quite where they're looking at the time. Your own self-image will do much to help you find him and continue to help you grow in the way you relate. With it, you can have a wonderful and enjoyable and creative life, as every Gay Male deserves to be. Without it, you will never have either happiness, or real enjoyment or any sense of purpose or fulfilment, not even in the best of all possible worlds. Not even in South Central/Western Ontario. Not even in Hamilton.

Charles W. Westfall is a resident of Hamilton. This column is a Voice Exclusive.

HUMOUR

1. William's Law: There is no mechanical problem so difficult that it cannot be solved by brute strength and ignorance.
2. Schmidt's Observation: All things being equal, a fat person uses more soap than a thin person.
3. Nick the Greek's Law of Life: All things considered, life is 9 to 5 against.
4. Nowlan's Theory: He who hesitates is not only lost, but several miles from the next freeway exit.
5. Van Roy's Law: Honesty is the best policy - there's less competition.
6. Van Roy's Truism: Life is a whole series of circumstances beyond your control.
7. Agnes' Law: Almost everything in life is easier to get into than out of.
8. Clarke's Conclusion: Never let your sense of morals interfere with doing the right thing.
9. Goda's Truism: By the time you get to the point where you can make ends meet, somebody moves the ends.

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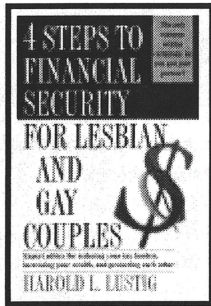
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"4 Steps to Financial Security for Lesbian and Gay Couples"

by Harold L. Lustig, Kelly Bonnevie

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Lesbianism Made Easy

by Helen Eisenbach



An insider's sophomoric paean to the lesbian way of life. Former QW editor and novelist Eisenbach (Loonglow, 1988) seems to have a lot going for her in her latest literary/comic endeavor. She has a firm grasp on the ins and outs of lesbianism--lesbian chic, lesbian sex, lesbian fantasy--and a subtle understanding of where truth and stereotype converge. Her subject she rightly if mockingly points out, is a source of fascination to the populace at large and heterosexual men in particular. She provides alternatives to the standard altar-boy/priest paradigm, such as "First Lady/ 'friendly' journalist," "Republican socialite/Whoopi Goldberg," or "Anyone (except Madonna)/Camille Paglia." There are also some poignant moments in her "Woman of Your Dreams" series, where Eisenbach imagines various scenarios of women meeting women. In one, the woman of your dreams, at whom you've been staring, actually comes over to you in the airport, smiling, and in a devastating European accent asks, "Could you be telling me, em, where is this Delta Airline? I am must meeting my husband." The mock-instructional tone quickly wears on the nerves. At best, some erotic/romantic moments and inside jokes for lesbian readers.

-A domestic partner agreement--why it is critical to your financial well-being

- **Avoiding the "gay penalty" on long-term health care and retirement plans**
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"The mandate to 'love your neighbour as yourself' is not just a moral mandate. It's a psychological mandate. Caring is biological. One thing you get from caring for others is you're not lonely. And the more connected you are to life the healthier you are."

-- James Lynch

"Love one another, but make no bond of love; Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. Fill each other's cup, but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread, but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone."

-- Kahlil Gibran

From: "My Precious Sweetness... An Anthology of Erotic Love Letters ~ Woman to Woman" by Oceanlady

O.
The Dinner
My Precious Sweetness,

Would you care to join me for dinner tonight? The occasion? Let's celebrate the wonder of you, or the contentment of me, or the supremeness of us. Or, if you'd like, we can further discuss the issue, exploring various topics until we agree upon one that is worthy of celebration.

I will stop on my way home and pick up a bottle of wine. I'm thinking of a red. Why a red? Maybe it's the color that compels me to select it; conjuring images of intensity, passion. Maybe it's the warmth that spreads from it as it flows, so velvety over lips, warming as if with rapid friction the top of the tongue before gliding and heating as it coats the throat. Even the thought of your fingers curved around the red liquid, calmly sitting as a patient lover inside the crystal glass, stirs me although I can't say why. Perhaps it's the way those same fingers absentmindedly play with the top of the glass when your mind is occupied; reminding me of when they play at other times, although when your mind is not so absent.

Red? Oh no, we can't have red tonight! It shall be white. For you see, I am stopping to visit

the old man. The one with the bad eye that has squinted closed on him for a nearly a decade now; the one who sells clams down off the docks. I know when he sees me coming, he'll smile and I'll laugh at the one tooth that he has left, always wondering when it will leave him. And he'll hold up his knobby-knuckled hands and say "Ol' Ernie's gonna pick out da besh ones for ya schweethard wit my magical hands". Then he'll fish around the bushel lovingly fondling each tiny prize, searching for the ones that give him "the feel" he calls it. Maybe there's something to it; I don't know. No clams are sweeter.

I can imagine now those petite bivalves as they slide from the box into the steamer pot, how they'll sit tight lipped, closed, as if with arms folded saying "go ahead and try to make us open for you". Ahh, but we both know, they won't even need to touch the source of the fire for them to cooperate; the heat from the steam is enough to stimulate their slow surrendering as their two shells begin to relax, drift apart and finally separate. Only a matter of moments and their lovely natural juices flow and the luscious treasure, which was once hidden from us, peeks shyly from inside. By the time they are done, they have completely given in and are totally at our mercy; open, exposed, vulnerable, ready to give themselves to us, eager to nourish our hunger.

STUDY OF VIOLENCE IN SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

I would like to interview interested men and women in Toronto and KW who have been in abusive same-sex relationships. I am willing to share my bibliography, community (mainly Toronto) resource list, and my final report. For more information please contact:
Jeffrey Aguinaldo, Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University,
Waterloo, ON N2L 3C5 519- [redacted] ext. [redacted]

I can't help but chuckle now at the thought of dipping one of the salty satisfiers into the tasty broth then swirling it in thick, melted, golden butter. As I lean closer to you, your eyes smile at me and dance along with the candle light, and I tenderly place this little succulent gem into your mouth. I suspect you will close your eyes in order that you may best taste the depth of the first and sweetest sensation. Of course, I know you'll forgive me if I cannot help myself and tease you just the tiniest bit by running the little mollusk along your lower lip, allowing a mixture of juice and butter to crawl down your chin. Then, I most probably will feel it my obligation to lean into you and remedy the situation.

A slippery kiss! Isn't it amazing how lips glide when lubricated? And yours, my love, are fervidly fevered and I wonder how such intense heat could emanate from two such delicate curves. The impassioned sensation is more than I can resist; ok, call me weak, and I quickly rise from my chair not caring that it tumbles loudly behind me, nor that forks and knives have been sent clinking across the floor. Luckily, your chair is sturdy enough for me to straddle your legs and I sit, facing you, upon your lap, which rises ever so slightly as if reaching up to greet me.

First I give attention to the thin line of tasty fluid which trails down your chin, wiping it as the tip of my tongue travels upward. When that's been tidied up, I can now give your lips the full focus of my quickly escalating eagerness and begin tenderly nibbling your extended bottom lip, pulling it into my mouth, tasting it, wanting to devour it. Oh how delightful you taste! The multiple sensations which frolic upon my tongue and lips are excruciatingly stimulating. Our tongues maneuver around each other's; sliding, tickling, circling in an erotic choreographed dance as the tempo rises to a furious pace.

Your eyes are closed, your head tilted backwards, the gracious curve of your neck lies completely exposed before me, as you sink into

the acceptance that we have abandoned the dinner on the table....

I will place this letter under the windshield wiper of your car and anxiously await your answer. I promise that the evening will be deliciously, deliciously and delightfully divine.

You can whisper to me in the morning, if I kept my promise.

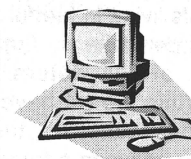
Ever yours,
O.

Oceanlady is a lesbian-writer who lives in Florida. This piece was submitted to The Voice by Oceanlady. Her work is on sale online as a downloadable file at:

<http://www.fatbrain.com>

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Involuntary Secrets

By Lyn McGinnis

"How can we feel secure or have self-respect if we are closeted from our friends and allies? How else do we change the stereotypes and the media image? How else do we get the respect we deserve if we are hiding from it? What does our community look like? We are the ones that must define it." * Loraine Hutchins and Lani Kaahumanu, editors of *Bi Any Other Name* ask us these questions. They highlight one of the more damaging aspects of being a sexual orientation minority — collective isolation. This is produced by individuals living in fearful secrecy. A secret can take on the aura of mystery, of still waters running deep. While we all have hidden dimensions within us, there is a difference between a treasure and a burden. Part of our collective definition as queer persons is we have, for part or most of our lives, lived with the burden of carrying a secret enforced by the entire community.

American writer and activist Judith Grahn described the closet as having "many points of discomfort. One is the sheer shame that life must be so secret, that one's citizenship is always dependent on how camouflaged as a heterosexual one appears. The necessary double life means the gay person can never simply stand flat-footed on the earth; there are always two people operating in one body; and one of them is a liar." An enforced silence casts a pall over everything it touches and creates lies both personal and social.

The personal lies lesbians, gays and bisexuals make with people whom they feel it is not safe to be candid with, can reek havoc in any form of relationship in many ways. For those passing this hurdle, even when the process has been very positive, there finally comes the problem of living with the great anonymous majority. Bisexuals have the unique perspective of knowing what it is like to live in fear of the majority and experiencing its privilege. I have seen both sides, having been in relationships with men and women. I can walk along the street with my wife and indulge in the rituals, the "special rights," of the privileged many. We have gone out with gay friends and seen the sudden gulf between us when in public. While we have the privilege, we also share in the deception. We are bisexuals appearing marginally straight and therefore "passing" as an acceptable couple.

In the bad old days some portions of the gay community used to argue against welcoming bisexuals because of this perceived privilege. For those willing to grant us the dignity of having a "legitimate" orientation of our own, there remained the political issue of how far we would march with the rest of the queer community into controversy and possibly danger. What was not understood was the price bisexuals pay for passing. Many of the same issues discussed here for lesbians and gay men resonate for bisexuals as well. We also can "pass," but are strangers

in the mainstream. We also develop personal strategies to deal with the constant bombardment of heterosexual culture.

All of these enforced individual lies create a large social lie. Private, happy relationships are generally invisible, while unhappy relationships often become public. Both perpetuate the myth of gay relationships never working and bisexual relationships being inherently unstable. Since coming out remains a personal and individual affair, there will be limits imposed by the frightened and uninformed. Everyone loses in this scenario. Even if your family and close friends greet your news with celebration and joy, eventually you will come across someone who does not appreciate the confidence. They will object to your publicizing what they think should be 'private.' There has been a much talk about privacy in any discussion of sexual orientation. While it is true that what we do in the bedroom is no one else's business, this misses the real point. Most gays, lesbians and bisexuals have no interest in going around telling everyone their sexual adventures, or lack of them. They do wish to have the dignity to be openly affectionate with to those they love in public, as heterosexuals do.

*Used with permission. From *Bi Any Other Name*, Bisexual People Speak Out, edited by Loraine Hutchins and Lani Kaahumanu, Alyson Pub. Inc. Boston

Lyn McGinnis is a resident of Kitchener-Waterloo who is the person behind our ads graphics and our web page! This column is a Voice Exclusive.

Now That Eggs Are Over by Holly Farris

Over Easy she yells greasily
down the line to Grill Girl.

It's our team against hers
in Christiansburg's
Waffle House.
Counterside, cupped in plastic
swivels,
K and I ruffle Sunday comics:
gray-hairs ogling teens.

Clapped against metal,
whisked into foam,
eggs are nature's cruelest joke.

What for me, when my own eggs
stop?
Will I flash red, standout defective
bulb?
Forget where I left reading
glasses,
how to be wet for K?

Over Easy she yells greasily.
That's easy for her to say.

Holly Farris is a writer who lives in Draper, Virginia, USA. This poem was submitted to *The Voice* by Holly Farris.

If you would like to submit an article or a poem please email us at:

[Redacted email address]

Parental Denial and other Truths Generation Why? Continued from page 25

it. Now I can't refer my uninformed parents to it. The real shocker came when Mom stated outright that, "Homosexuality is wrong and that is the Truth." It's difficult to communicate with someone who imposes his or her religious beliefs upon you. Apparently, if I could see the Truth like she sees it now then I would desire to become heterosexual enough that it would happen through therapy or religion. This particular communication caught me completely off guard. How does one argue with such strong religious conviction?

To my surprise, Mom spent more time lecturing me about the virtuous Truth than any other topic she or my father discussed that day. I respect Mom's opinion. She is, after all, my Mom. But to even consider the thought of trying to be heterosexual out of respect for the parents is completely outrageous. It's unfair to expect one's parents to understand immediately their kid's homosexuality. That is why I gave them so many years of extra digestion time. But it's unfair for parents to expect their gay kids to unravel all the self-searching and identification in years prior to coming-out.

For the time being, the conversation was over. Sure enough, after the snow fell and the temperatures dropped, my parents called to make sure I had enough food and warm clothing.

Perhaps such an important issue as coming-out to parents shouldn't

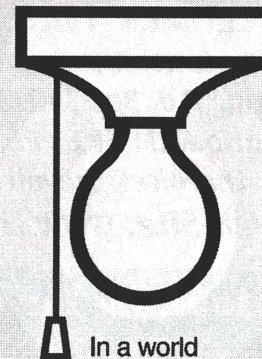
be left unresolved for long periods of time. It seems to build up large amounts of frustration despite apparently open communication channels. But at the same time, the long periods of time can be all that is required for other parents. The debate between parents and kid, in my case, remains open. It's not unreasonable to entertain the possibility that, in the end, no firm resolution will be reached. Coming-out is rarely simple. And parents are full of surprises.

Timothy Lee is a local university student originally from Toronto. Comments and feedback can be sent to him at The Voice or by e-mail at: [REDACTED] This column is a Voice Exclusive.

HUMOUR

1. Manly's Maxim: Logic is a systematic method of coming to the wrong conclusion with confidence.
2. Cann's Axiom: When all else fails, read the instructions.
3. Macaluso's Doctrine: You've never been as sick as just before you stop breathing.
4. Knebel's Law: It is now proved beyond doubt that smoking is one of the leading causes of statistics.
5. The Law of Selective Gravity, or the Buttered-Side Down Law: An object will fall so as to do the most damage.

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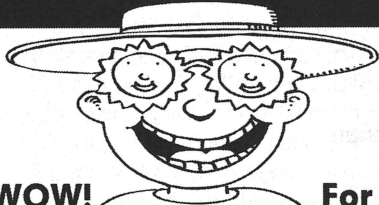
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Kitchener-Waterloo Record



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