

The Voice

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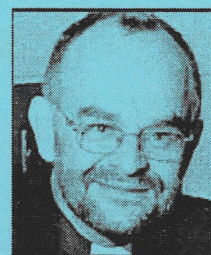
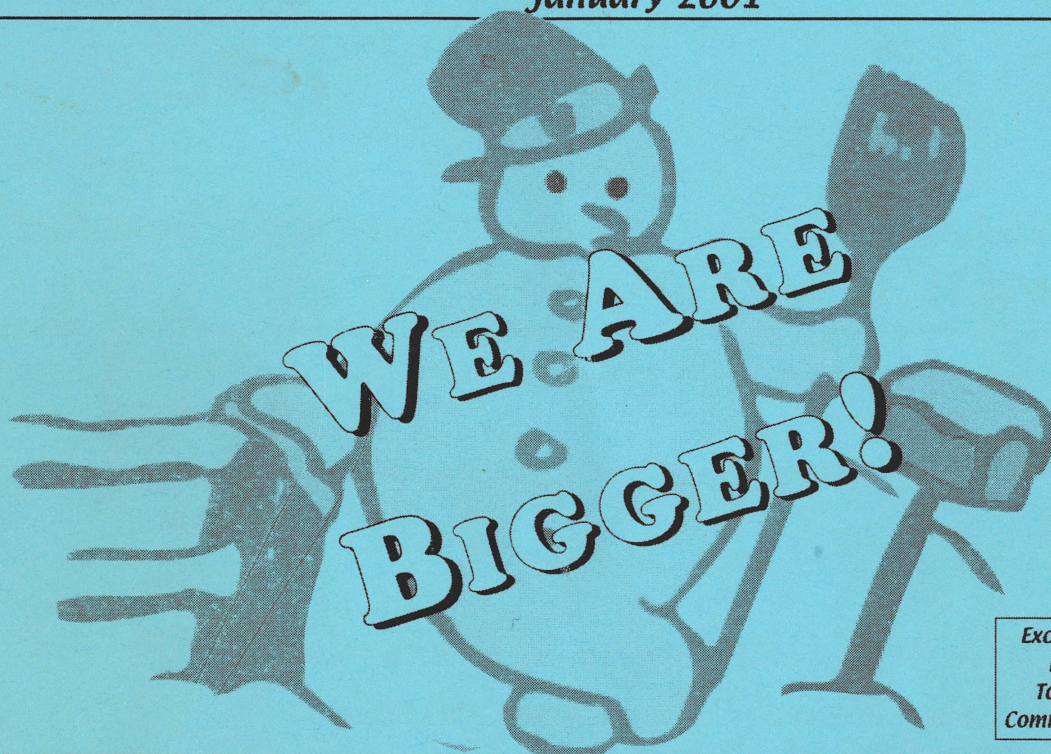
The Voice

Serving the
LGBT Communities of
South Central/Western Ontario

Volume Three

January 2001

Issue Four



Exclusive Interview With
Rev. Brent Hawkes,
Toronto Metropolitan
Community Church Page 14



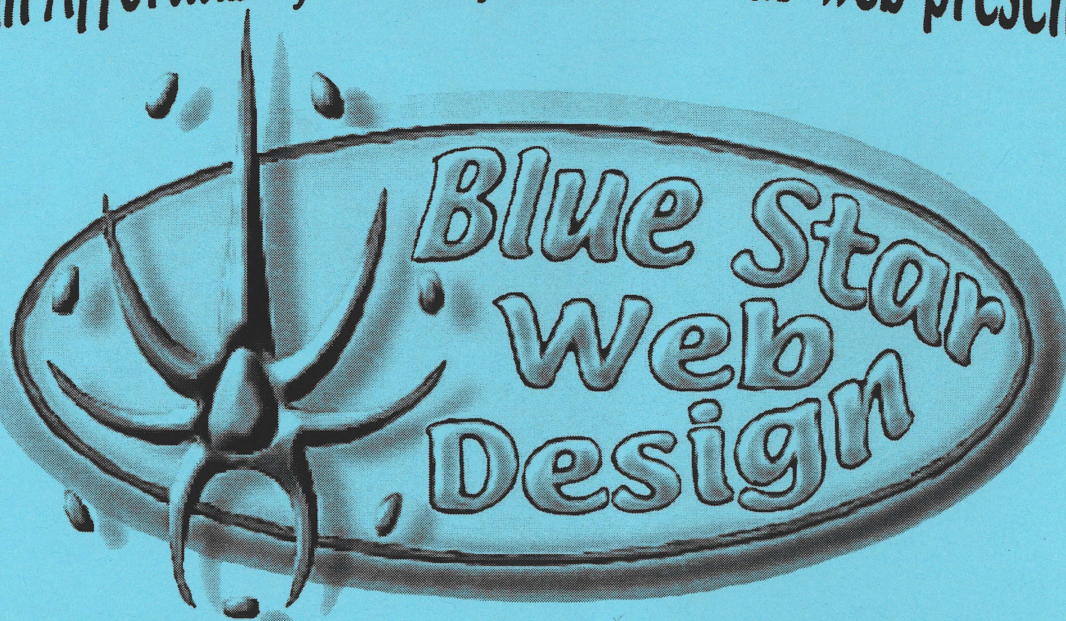
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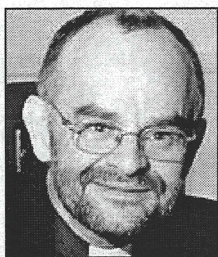
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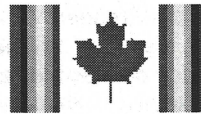
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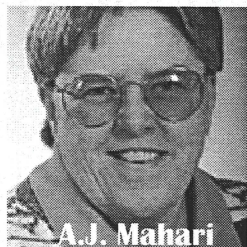
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FIRST WORDS



A.J. Mahari

We are bigger!

The world is a little older and with the *true beginning* of the New Millennium, The Voice, as you can see, has a new layout. We are bigger. We hope that our readers will enjoy the changes that we've made.

For our first two years and three months we had much smaller dimensions. There are many reasons *for going bigger*, not the least of which is that our advertisers can be seen much better!

We also think it will be helpful to our readers to not have to chase articles over too many pages as was sometimes the case with our smaller format.

Who knows perhaps The Voice will even sit on a few Book Store shelves. Our smaller, and thicker version, had a tendency to fall right off of the shelves. We hope you enjoy our new look!

Change brings with it new challenges. At The Voice we welcome both. With our layout change and expansion we have also re-structured our advertising rates. We invite you to contact to us if you are interested in advertising.

So watch your step as you begin to navigate your way through our larger pages.

Happy New Year and here's to much productivity and progress for all of us, as individuals and as a community.

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Filigree - Silver filigree work has been known since ancient Egypt. The silver filigree wire was made by drawing a wire through successively smaller holes until a very thin wire was formed. The wire was coiled, bent and soldered into designs with small silver balls. The filigree found today may be old or new, but the technique has remained the same.

Pinchbeck - In 1732, Christopher Pinchbeck, an English watchmaker, developed an alloy of copper and zinc that looked like gold. His new metal was used to make imitation gold jewelry and watches in England. The secret of "pinchbeck" died with him, but his name continued to be part of the English language. Many types of imitation gold metals are referred to as "pinchbeck"

Amber - Amber comes in many colours, ranging from a cloudy light yellow that was popular for beads to a clear brownish-red that has been the most desirable. Mix four teaspoons of salt in an eight-ounce glass of water. Amber will float in this mixture, and the imitation amber colored stones will sink. Amber beads were popular in the 1880's and are still in fashion.

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Randy Seigel
Mark MacDonald

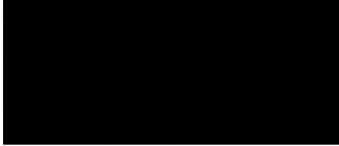
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HAVE YOUR SAY

In response to last month's editorial I think there is tons in every name and label that we use to identify ourselves and each other with. I just don't think that we will ever be able to agree on the names or labels and what they mean. For example I still feel offended by the word, "queer" and yet many in our community embrace this word as something very positive. I also wonder are we developing too many terms? Are we making things too complicated, too confusing?

I really like the editorial because it made me think a lot about this. That's a good thing.

John W - Waterloo, Ont.

I wanted to share that I really like the recent pride stuff updates that you've been including. Good idea! Even for those of us who just have no time to get involved it is really good to know that there are people out there dedicated enough and who care enough about our community to make sure that we have a pride day so thanks.

Donna Miller - Guelph, Ont.

Great magazine. Glad you are out there. Keep up the great work. I look so forward to reading each month. Thanks.

Lori Evans - Hamilton, Ont.

HAVE YOUR SAY



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

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

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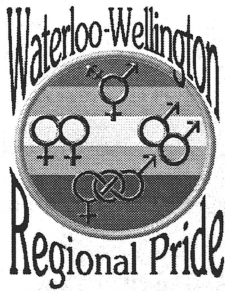
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Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride

An Up-Date
By Audrey Charbonneau

Name Change: Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride (WWRP) is our new name for the New Millennium. Identifying our area first reflects the examples set by other Pride Organizations like: Hamilton Pride, Toronto Pride, Halton-Peel Pride, London Pride. We believe that this name change is practical given the ever-changing environment in which we live. We are very excited by the "new pride".

What's In A Name: "Regional Pride Committee" (RPC) will continue to be the name of the working committee for the Pride Celebrations since this name is well-known in our area. We have worked with many gay-friendly businesses and community organizations in the past and will continue to do so in the future. The RPC is a valued asset that will be built on in years to come.

Website Up-date: The web site has been moved to a new server. Golden Triangle is graciously sponsoring us and we wish to thank them for their time and technical expertise in facilitating a smooth transition to our new web home. We appreciate the patience that everyone has shown in this transition period and hope those of you on line will take a moment to view our site at it's new location. You will find it on our familiar domain, at:

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

Check Out Our New Look: Lyn McGinnis, of BlueStar Web Design, has created our new web look with the addition of spectacular graphics. Lyn's vision of our Rainbow Community Centre has to be seen to be appreciated. Our web site is still under construction, a work in progress, watch for many new changes in the near future. Many thanks to Lyn for the great job and the time spent creating our fabulous new look.

We would also like to thank A.J. Mahari, our Chairperson, for her hard work and dedication in working with Lyn to rebuild our web site at its new location.

Email Lists: As part of our continued dedication to fulfill our mandate of community-building we have two new email lists. **Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride, (WWRP)** is an announce list. It is not interactive. On this list we will inform members of our up-coming meetings, post meeting agendas (members are welcome to have input here by emailing [redacted] and post the minutes from our meetings, pride planning, fundraising activities, and any other related WWRP business.

Waterloo-Wellington Rainbow Community (WWRC) is an interactive email list designed to facilitate

community-building and networking in a safe and respectful environment. This list expects its members to be respecting of gender, communicate responsibly, dialogue naturally in a non-flaming framework. For more information please read our Email List page on our web site. If you would like to join either of these lists please email [redacted]

New Email Address: As the result of our web site move we have a new email address. Please note: our new address is: [redacted]

Volunteers Needed: Make a New Year's Resolution to help your Pride Committee this year. Get involved, you can make a difference. We are looking for volunteers to help with fundraising, event planning, and we are still looking for a secretary. If you are interested in helping out get in touch with us. Not all volunteer positions require you to attend meetings. We need people to do a few hours work once in a while. Too busy? Then just money... and always needed and valuable commodity. Broke? How about getting some friends together to help organize and run a fundraiser? Have a car? How about helping with some deliveries. There are many ways that you can help. We appreciate fresh ideas. No experience necessary. Be a dreamer! Make it happen: join the winning team.

The Rainbow Directory: This year we are publishing and distributing the Rainbow Directory in early March. This directory will include gay-owned, gay-friendly business, community groups and organizations, community services in South Central/Western Ontario area. This directory will be available annually and will serve as handy reference throughout the year.

We are currently looking for sponsorship and or advertisers to increase the number that we can produce. If you are interested in sponsoring or advertising please contact us at [redacted] or snail mail us at:

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or call us at [redacted] *Deadline for ad copy and payment is February 15th, 2001.* Please make your cheques payable to Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride (WWRP).

Why not take out an ad and let our community know about your business or service. Be visible!

Gay-Related Golden Globe Nods (From Planetout)

Some of the big and the small screens' queerest offerings are as good as gold, including *Will & Grace*, *If These Walls Could Talk II*, *Billy Elliot*, and *Before Night Falls*.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association on December 21 announced the nominees for its 58th annual Golden Globe awards, and it was like the Emmy nominations all over again for NBC's gay-themed sitcom *Will & Grace*. The show was named for Best TV Comedy Series and all four of its regulars were nominated in the acting categories: Eric McCormack (gay "Will") for Best Actor - Comedy, Debra Messing (straight "Grace") for Best Actress - Comedy, Sean Hayes (gay "Jack") for Best Supporting Actor, and Megan Mullally (tipsy "Karen") for Best Supporting Actress. The Best TV Comedy Series competition is familiar too: *Ally McBeal*, *Frasier*, *Malcolm in the Middle*, and *Sex in the City*.


Gay icon Bette Midler also received a nod for Best Actress in a TV Series for her struggling first-year series *Bette*, while Vanessa Redgrave is shortlisted for Best Supporting Actress for her lesbian role in the lesbian trilogy *If These Walls Could Talk II*.

Showtime's *Dirty Pictures*, which recounts the 1990 censoring of a Cincinnati museum's exhibit of photos by the late gay Robert Mapplethorpe, is in the running for Best Movie Made for Television and earned James Woods a Best Actor nod in that category. Alfre Woodard is up for Best Actress in a Movie Made for Television for her role in *Holiday Heart*, whose lead character is a transgender cowboy.

The Golden Globes are unusual in honoring both television and film productions. Javier Bardem is in the running for Best Actor in a Drama for his role as the late gay Cuban poet Reinaldo Arenas in the biographical *Before Night Falls*. *Billy Elliot*, the tale of a working class boy who wants to be a ballet dancer — and who fends off homophobia himself as well as warmly accepting his gay best friend — is up for Best Picture - Drama, with Julie Walters a possible Best Supporting Actress as well. The very fey tale of dogs and their owners *Best in Show* is a nominee for Best Picture - Comedy. The story of the last days of the Marquis de Sade *Quills* brought nods to Geoffrey Rush for Best Actor and to Doug Wright for Best Screenplay. *Wonder Boys*, which has a significant gay character, won notice for Best Picture - Drama, Best Actor - Drama (Michael Douglas), Best Screenplay (Steve Kloves) and Best Original Song (Bob Dylan's *Things Have Changed*). Mel Gibson, protested in the past for homophobia, tries on women's clothes and cosmetics in *What Women Want* — and got a Best Actor - Comedy nomination for it.

The winners will be announced at a widely-watched televised gala on January 21.

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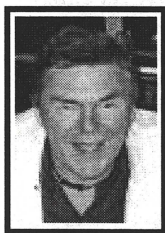
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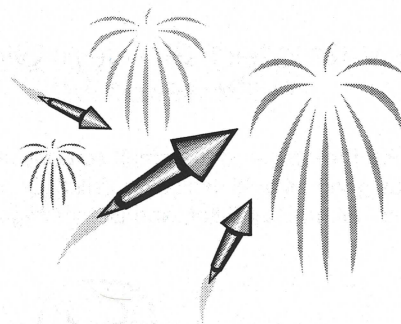
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HAMILTON LGBT



2001: A Gay Odyssey

By Charles W. Westfall



It's that time of year again. Time for renewed hopes and resolutions and maybe, just maybe, a few regrets.

In terms of the LGBT Community here, I have a lot of hopes, a few resolutions and not too many regrets.

For one thing, the vitality of the whole and wholly mixed group remains energetic. Somehow or other, those who move and shake the scene seem to be moving and shaking effectively and with widespread benefits.

As usual, fund raising is paramount in either the self-justification or honest desire to serve of many in the community. Thousands of dollars are poured into local charities and service organisations. Most of those dollars come from bar patrons and, as far as I can see, make little difference to the bar operating profits.

The Hamilton AIDS Network seems, finally, to be back on track. The staff is energetic, focused and, also finally, the doors are OPEN. After years of what has been called a "bunker" mentality, it is great to see a welcoming atmosphere. Not only that, I understand that there are usually great snacks and beverages available for anyone who cares to drop in.

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled in favour of The Little Sisters Book Store in Vancouver. That is good news for Bernie at Gomorrah's and Renee at The Women's Bookstop. They have both experienced hassles from Canadian Customs over literature that they were importing for their customers. When will authorities

begin to stick to legality and not try to legislate morality? Maybe the ruling doesn't go quite far enough; but, it is a beginning.

All of those things give me renewed hope. The LGBT community everywhere is pretty much a loose amalgam of people with common orientation, interests and goals. Every so often, it emerges in a positive and productive way.

So, for my resolutions. I don't have a lot. I hope that I can keep at least some of them.

I resolve: to continue to support and challenge the LGBT community wherever and whenever possible.

I resolve to encourage those whose positive efforts contribute not only to the betterment of the LGBT community but to the betterment of the community at large.

I resolve to continue my efforts at informing and forming the wider community about the realities of Gay life, in the hope of shattering stereotypes, biases and prejudices.

I resolve to continue my efforts to formulate a viable LGBT spirituality, which I believe is not only distinct from much of what is preached by organised religion but is in total harmony with our wholeness as human beings.

I resolve to promote and encourage not only Safe Sex but Loving Intimacy in the hope of changing what is all too often a kind of self-ish encounter into a very real expression of love and mutual affection.

I resolve to be good to myself, to continue to walk proud as a Gay man and to reach out to as many Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and

Transgendered individuals as possible in an effort to make their walk less onerous and less lonely.

Regrets? Aside from not winning the lottery, I don't have any.

Don't get me wrong. It was one hell of a year, half of which was spent in a hospital and on crutches. The pain is still there and you can add to that some serious economic problems.

Hey, I can't do anything about those things. I'll do what I can with what I have to work with. If that doesn't put me into orbit in 2001, too bad. And Stanley Kubrick, eat your heart out.

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

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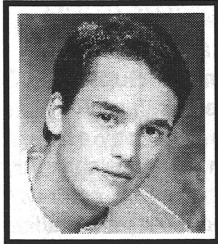
Judy Saltarelli, M.A.

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A Proud Supporter of Diversity

How to talk to a Republican



By Kirk Read

After three months of life in the boonies of Northern California, I finally broke down and got a TV. I've been writing my first book and reasoned that the last thing I needed was exposure to election craziness. But in the end, I couldn't resist. I figured I deserved the distraction, since my wild San Francisco sex life turned into Lake County near-chastity overnight.

I got cable just in time for the presidential election, which has dragged on like a lesbian breakup. At first I was mildly entertained by the fact that our country was electing the mentally disabled frat boy next door. I was entertained that America swallowed two former party boys running on staunch anti-drug platforms. Most of all, I was entertained that the media printed their oft-repeated rhetoric, which bore little to no resemblance to their actual voting records.

I voted for Ralph Nader and am at once amused and horrified that his voting bloc has thrown this entire election. My conservative friends told me I wasn't voting for a real candidate because he didn't have a chance at winning. My liberal friends shook their fingers at me in a string of long emails, blaming me in advance for the rollback of abortion rights, gay rights, affirmative action, and civilization in general.

I was just sick of voting for the smarter of two stooges, so I applied Molly Ivins' rule of voting with your heart where you can and your head where you must. Since California was going to Gore, it's not like I was voting in Florida, for God's sake.

My niece, however, did vote in Florida. A few days after the election, I called her to check in. Offhandedly, I made a joke about the election. She's a pro-choice feminist who's been very cool about gay issues, so I knew we could have a spirited chat about the war in her backyard.

"I think it's disgusting how this elec-

tion is being stolen," she said.

"I totally agree!" I said.

"I think he should just admit that he lost," she said.

"I'm with you!" I said, then added "Bush is such a yee haw fascist."

"I like him," she said. "I voted for Bush."

I froze.

"You what?"

"I hate Gore" was her only explanation.

"I do too," I offered, "but that's no reason to vote for Junior." When I pressed her about the Supreme Court, she regurgitated the exact line of reasoning that Bush's press office had devised: A president isn't the final say on a matter like abortion.

"I like him," she said. "I think he's nice."

That's when I understood the single woman demographic that had been bandied about in the press. My niece was part of that statistic. An entire group of women, voting for daddy. Lck!

That set me off on a sanctimonious lecture about a return to Reagan's Nazi years.

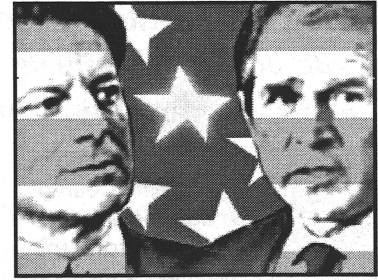
"I don't think Reagan was a Nazi," she said.

I fumed, spouting off statistics about AIDS and how many people died before Reagan even said the word in public. I added that Bush had never said the word in public, either.

She actually used the phrase "liberal media" and said that Bush had been misunderstood.

"I need to end this conversation," I said, then hung up. I was shaking because I was so furious. How could a member of my own family vote against me? How could a pro-choice feminist vote for someone who was poised to water down every one of her hard-won civil rights victories?

I came to several conclusions based on that phone call. A. I'm terrible at discussing politics with someone who doesn't agree with me. B. Most of my family members don't agree with me.



C. I should probably avoid politics when I talk to family members.

The three youngest members of my extended family voted for Nader, which was heartening. We're the kids who'd wriggled out from under our military upbringing to embrace the occasional joint and castile soap. We were the ones most likely to "avoid materialism at Christmas" and wear lefty liberal tee shirts. We're the minority. A few family members voted for Gore, including my mother. But the overwhelming majority voted for Bush. I mean, forget gay rights. These folks are anti-abortion corporate Republicans who believe in school vouchers. I wrote several long emails to my niece, detailing the horrors of the Reagan/Bush years and pointing her to a number of websites where she could Learn the Truth.

I was being thoroughly obnoxious, and after a few days, I relented and sent her an effusive apology. I dread going home for Christmas, because I know that the election will be a natural topic of discussion. I haven't quite figured out how to approach a conversation about politics with family members without boiling it all down to gay rights. How do you talk about politics without making it a personal attack? How do you make your point without alienating your entire family?

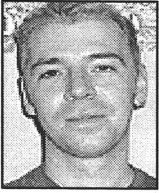
How, in the name of God, do you talk to a Republican? I've decided that when I go home, I'm going to try my hand at bipartisan humor. After all, what heterosexual came up with the phrase pregnant chads? If it had been up to a queer, we would have called them dingleberries.

Kirk Read lives in San Francisco and can be reached at [redacted]. This article was submitted to The Voice by Kirk Read.

What the Little Sister's trial is really about

BC Book Store versus the Supreme Court of Canada

By Mark MacDonald



I had been sitting in the Supreme Court of Canada for a full 15 minutes before the reality of the situation began to sink in. Here I was, with the owners and manager of Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium, watching the climactic final scenes unfold in a drama that has lasted 14 years.

I remembered the 1994 trial, when Little Sister's appeared in the Supreme Court of British Columbia, when I first became involved with the bookstore, the trial, and the people behind the scenes. I watched as Pierre Berton, Nino Ricci, Jane Rule, and scores of other prominent thinkers, artists, and academics came to the defence of the little Vancouver bookstore and the books chosen for its shelves. That trial took 40 days in court to complete.

This time, the Supreme Court of Canada was going to allow only one day for the arguments to be heard, both from our lawyer and six intervenors, and the opposing side. Aside from our main lawyer, spoken submissions were made by lawyers representing PEN Canada, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian AIDS Society, the Canadian Council for the Arts, LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund), and EGALÉ (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere). Their arguments were passionate and logical, and the judges seemed wholly engaged throughout the morning. By lunchtime, Janine Fuller, the manager of Little Sister's, was preoccupied with interviews and press conferences in the foyer of the courthouse. These interviews would continue until late into the night.

Dealing with the press has always been a delicate situation for the store. Sometimes a story will be printed or shown on the evening news that is completely informed, unbiased, and even generous. Other times, a reporter will represent Little Sister's as a smut shop, whose modus operandi is to import child pornography and to expose Canadians to images of incest and

bestiality. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Since the store opened in 1983, we have expanded our stock of books, magazines, movies, clothing, and music. Less shelf space is dedicated to erotica than to our women's fiction section. We have never stocked child pornography!

In my role as the book buyer for the store, I spend a lot more of my time writing reading lists for libraries, schools, parents, and book clubs than I do ordering dubious pornography. I

sell important books to people with very specific needs, like young people who want to come out to their parents, or parents who want to understand their child better. I sell travel books to men and

women going on holiday and mysteries that they can read on the beach. I sell academic texts to students of literature and social sciences, and nutrition guides to people with HIV and AIDS.

Little Sister's also carries erotica and sex-positive fiction, and for that we will never apologize. Gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people grow up and live day-to-day with a difference from the rest of society. That difference is sex and gender. For a large part of our community, sex-positive imagery and ideas are liberating, edifying, and celebratory. Keeping that in mind, erotica is still a small portion of what is stocked and sold at Little Sister's.

Little Sister's has been placed in a double bind by Canada Customs. On the one side, in every box of books that gets seized, searched, detained, banned, or otherwise delayed en route to the store, there are non-sexual books that are clearly not obscene. On the other side, when we do try to import quality sex-positive literature, the delicate process of deciding what is acceptable for Canadian readers is often being carried out by uninformed, ill-prepared, and biased people enforcing a law that has been shown to discriminate against some of those Canadians. This dilemma was summed up very well by Judge Lance Finch, in the B.C.

When it comes to defending books, we all must act

Court of Appeals:

"A statutory scheme which imperils the distribution of morally unimpeachable material cannot be justified by the lame excuse that obscenity was the real target."

The Customs regime puts unwanted pressure on other Canadians too. One afternoon in 1994, in the Supreme Court of B.C., I watched as Jane Rule took the stand to give testimony as a writer in Canada. From her wheelchair, she spoke with her trademark confidence and certainty about her personal experience:

"Now there are quite a number of people in Canada who do know that *The Young in One Another's Arms* won the Canadian Authors' Association Award for the best novel of 1978. There are a great many more people in Canada who know that *The Young in One Another's Arms* was detained by Customs. And that is what I have to carry. I have to carry a reputation created by this charge from which I have no way of defending myself. ... And I bitterly resent the attempt to marginalize, trivialize and even criminalize what I have to say because I happen to be a lesbian, I happen to be a novelist, I happen to have bookstores and publishers who are dedicated to producing my work. The assumption is, therefore, that there must be something pornographic because of my sexual orientation, and I think that is a shocking way to deal with my community."

There are many lessons to be learned by the court challenge by Little Sister's against Canada Customs. As Jane Rule's testimony attests, words can be very powerful. As well, it's clear that when dealing with issues around erotica/pornography, "community standards," and what kind of discrimination is "justifiable," there are no easy, objective answers.

Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium and the B.C. Civil Liberties Association have spent well over half a million dollars engaged in this struggle. The politics, idealism, and tenacity of the independent bookseller did not disappear with the advent of the big-box stores. We must all remember that we can be activists.

Mark MacDonald is the book buyer for Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium.

Originally published on the [Quille And Quire](#) web site - April 2000.

Top court closes chapter in gay bookstore feud

OTTAWA - A small Vancouver bookstore held a big celebration Friday night, after the country's highest court agreed the shop had been treated unfairly in a row over imported merchandise labelled obscene.

Little Sister's Book and Art Emporium has been battling with Canada Customs since it began seizing material in 1984. The store, which specializes in gay and lesbian books, magazines and videos, argued that customs officers unfairly targeted its mail orders. The owners said the authorities were making decisions about whether merchandise was obscene based on "heterosexual values."

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the obscenity laws can stand. But it struck down a provision of the Canada Customs Act.

In a 6-3 decision, the court said the onus belongs to the government to prove that material seized by Canada Customs is obscene, and that it should not be up to the importer to prove it is not obscene.

The judgment condemns the way gay erotica has been targeted at the border. But experts say its legal impact isn't as strong as its wording, because customs officers still have the power to detain material.

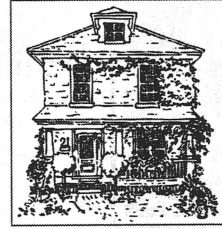
The three dissenting justices wanted to go further and strike down the entire customs legislation. The Supreme Court found that Little Sister's suffered "excessive and prejudicial treatment" at the hands of Canada Customs officers. Canada Customs has confiscated 262 items destined for Little Sister's since 1984. The court pointed out some of the books in question were imported by other mainstream bookstores without any problem. Janine Fuller, manager of Little Sister's, called the ruling a victory for freedom of expression. She said the case is an "incredible indictment" against Canada Customs' "unscrutinized tyranny at the border." Fuller added: "Our community celebrates . . . yet again a victory that really announces that our community is



moving way, way away from the marginalization that has so historically been part of who we are." The case first went before a judge in 1994. After several appeals, it finally landed before the Supreme Court.

The justices had to look at whether the seizures were subjective and arbitrary, and if they contravened the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They also had to decide if Canada Customs agents are properly equipped to be making those kinds of determinations in the first place.

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JANUARY EVENTS

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WEDNESDAY JANUARY 17

Alternative Youth Centre Fundraiser - 8:00 pm at Club Renaissance, 24 Charles St. W in Kitchener. Cost is \$20 a ticket. DJ, dancing, food and fun. For more information, contact Laura at [redacted]

SATURDAY JANUARY 20

Rainbow Chorus Concert - 8:00 pm at Chalmers United Church, 50 Quebec St in downtown Guelph. Adults - \$10.00, Students - \$8.00 for more information call (519) [redacted]

PFlag (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meets once a month PFLAG is a support group for those with an LGBT family member. Call Evie at [redacted] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [redacted] or email: [redacted]

SATURDAY JANUARY 27

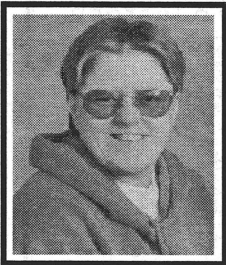
Interfaith's Couple Communication Group - Part One - for same-sex couples. For information call Debbie or Theresa at [redacted] (Interfaith). FYI see classified ad page 28.

HYPE Presents: Masquerade - a masquerade ball at Fed Hall, University of Waterloo. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 at door. For more information call Alan Fraser at [redacted] or email him at [redacted] www.hypcanada.com

Do you have an event that you'd like to publicize? Get the word out by letting us know about it so we can include your event in our events section.



SHADES OF GREY



Being Out Isn't Enough

By Ms. A.J. Mahari

So, you have come out, it's over now right? Not likely! Why?

There are so many reasons why coming out is not a one-time deal. As you meet new people those you choose to get to know better will have to be told (or will likely find out) at some point in time.

Then there are those experiences that seem, at times, to be everywhere. You know what I mean right? At social gatherings or office-place water-cooler chats spewing forth forcefully come those homophobic statements.

Statements like, "I'd kill myself if my son or daughter was gay." Or, "Gays may think they deserve equality, but let's face it they are perverted and in need of help, they're all sick."

These are just two examples of what I have heard recently. These statements were made with the assumption that everyone in the room was straight, and therefore the type of person that this homophobic-person felt it was okay to associate with.

What would you do if you were standing there, as I was, hearing this?

Would you come out yet again, or would you fall victim to shame or fear and remain silent?

Being out is a constant battle between heroism and cowardice. Every day carries the potential of losing relationships, income, status or friendships if you risk telling people about your orientation. I've been out, and repeatedly coming out for years, and the one thing I know is that being heroic in one situation doesn't mean you'll be heroic in the next.

If you choose, for whatever reasons, to remain silent in the face of such ugliness and hate those kind of remarks will pale in comparison to the immorality of your silence.

The Matthew Shepards, Brandon Teenas, and the Billy Jack Gaithers, of the world, died, in part, because too many people sit in silence, too fearful to defuse hate-filled remarks before they explode into full-fledged violence. We have to think about each other. We have to think about others. We cannot just come out or be out

when it is perfectly comfortable to do so.

Being out without calling people on their homophobic-hatred keeps us all closeted in the narrow-minded bigotry of what have been the loudest voices, up until

now.

Even in the face of some potential loss, is that loss likely to be greater than our collective loss in the face of such hate and oppression? We cannot be truly out and free of the multitude of closets that we can be trapped in until we learn how to be heroic everytime we are confronted with such verbal violence. Verbal violence, left unchecked, has the potential to translate into physical violence at some point. Being out and vocal is important. Just being out is not enough.

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



Exploring What Makes Us Male or Female

A CONVERSATION WITH

Anne Fausto-Sterling

By CLAUDIA DREIFUS

January 2, 2001 - NY Times

PROVIDENCE, R.I. On a recent frozen winter evening, Dr. Anne Fausto-Sterling, 56, a professor of biology and women's studies at Brown, sat in a restaurant here, nibbling on a light snack and talking about her favorite subject: the application of ideas about gender roles to the formal study of biology.

In the academic world, Dr. Fausto-Sterling is known as a developmental biologist who offers interesting counterpoints to the view that the role division between men and women is largely predetermined by evolution.

"When people say 'it's nurture' or 'it's nature' in making us male or female, I take the middle ground and say that it's a combination of both," she said. "That's not a popular position to take in today's academic environment, but it is the one that makes the most sense."

Her 1985 book, "Myths of Gender: Biological Theories About Women and Men," is used in women's studies courses throughout the country. Dr. Fausto-Sterling's newest work, "Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality," is a look at societal ideas about gender as seen through the eyes of human beings defined as neither male or female hermaphrodites.

Until 1980, she studied the role of genes in the embryological development of fruit flies. More recently, she has investigated the developmental ecology of flatworms.

Q. What can we learn about gender from examining how the medical profession treats infants born with ambiguous genitalia? These are children who were once called "hermaphrodites," and whom you would prefer we term "intersexuals."

A. From them, we can literally see how society's ideas about male and female are constructed. When infants with ambiguous genitalia are born, everyone parents, doctors are very upset and the physicians often suggest drastic surgeries to assign a specific gender to the child. The regimen usually involves the doctors' deciding what sex the child ought to be. Then, they surgically reconstruct the patient to conform to that diagnosis: body parts are taken out, others are added, hormones are given, or taken away. In the end, the doctors take a body that was clearly neither male or female and turn it into one they can represent to the world as "male" or "female."

Q. How did the fate of intersexual children become your passion?

A. In the early 1990's, I began looking into this because I was interested in a theoretical question

that was circulating around feminist studies at that time; I wanted to know, What is meant when we say, "the body is a social construction"? At the time, social scientists were looking into how our ideas about the human body were shaped by politics and culture. That inquiry led me to a lot of the medical literature on intersexuality.

Q. How many people do you estimate are born intersexuals?

A. It depends on how you count. Working with Brown undergraduates, I did some research and we found

that maybe 1 1/2 to 2 percent of all births do not fall strictly within the tight definition of all-male or all-female, even if the child looks that way. Beyond having a mixed set of genitals, you could have an individual with an extra Y chromosome.

He'd still look like a standard male, but he'd have this extra chromosome. Or you could have someone who was XO, a female with underdeveloped ovaries, known medically as having Turner's syndrome.

My point is that there's greater human variation than supposed. My political point is that we can

afford to lighten up about what it means to be male or female. We should definitely lighten up on those who fall in between because there are a lot of them.

Q. You want a halt to sexual assignment surgeries on infants. Why?

A. People deserve to have a choice about something as important as that. Infants can't make choices. And the doctors often guess wrong. They might say, "We think this infant should be a female because the sexual organ it has is small." Then, they go and remove the penis and the testes. Years later, the kid says, "I'm a boy, and that's what I want to be, and I don't want to take estrogen, and by the way, give me back my penis."

I feel we should let the kids tell us what they think is right once they are old enough to know. Till then, parents can talk to the kids in a way that gives them permission to be different, they can give the child a gender-neutral name, they can do a provisional gender assignment. Of course, there are some cases where infants are born with life-threatening malformations. In those rare situations, surgery is called for.

Q. In "Sexing the Body," you suggest that estrogen and testosterone should not be termed sex hormones. You'd prefer we called them growth hormones. Why?

A. The molecules we call sex hormones affect our liver, our muscles, our bones, virtually every tissue in the body. In addition to their roles in our reproductive system, they affect growth and development throughout life. So to think of them as growth hormones, which they are, is to stop worrying that men have a lot of testosterone and women, estrogen.

Q. Among gay people, there is a tendency to embrace a genetic explanation of homosexuality. Why is that?

A. It's popular idea with gay men. Less so with gay women. That may be because the genesis of homosexuality appears to be different for men than women. I think gay men also face a particularly difficult psychological situation because they are seen as embracing something hated in our culture the feminine and so they'd better come up with a good reason for what they are doing.

Gay women, on the other hand, are seen as, rightly or wrongly, embracing something our culture values highly masculinity. Now that whole analysis that gay men are feminine and gay women are masculine is itself open to big question, but it provides a cop-out and an area of relief. You know, "It's not my fault, you have to love me anyway."

It provides the disapproving relatives with an excuse: "It's not my fault, I didn't raise 'em wrong." It provides a legal argument that is, at the moment, actually having some sway in court. For me, it's a very shaky place. It's bad science and bad politics. It seems to me that the way we consider homosexuality in our culture is an ethical and a moral question.

The biology here is poorly understood. The best

Continued on page 19

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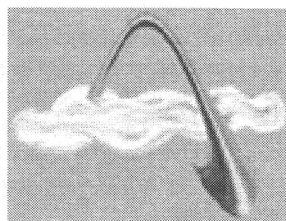
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Spiritual Life: The Quest for Freedom

It Is Your Life, After All

By Noel Springwood



I once had the privilege of seeing the great star of Stage and Screen, Mary Martin, in the role of Hello Dolly. Not only that, but she made a short speech during the curtain call, closing it with wonderful words of wisdom and hope: "A bell is no bell till you ring it. A song is no song till you sing it. And love isn't love till you give it away. And life isn't life till you live it."

O.K. It's just a lyrical paraphrase of the quip so often tossed at couch potatoes, "Get a life."

In either case, there is great wisdom. Life can't be lived without effort. The "no pain, no gain" philosophy falls a bit short here. Certainly growth and development can take a degree of effort that at times is painful. Sometimes the pain just comes, unbidden and unexpected. Sometimes it is inflicted out of cruelty, hatred or disgust.

The association of pain with spirituality is also nothing new. The horror stories of flagellation and self-mutilation and basic self-deprivation that have gone on for years should never be forgotten. To forget them is to risk falling into the same trap.

Pain and spirituality become bed fellows because of a philosophy/theology that sees everything spiritual as good and everything material as bad. It's a kind of justification of the principle, "If it feels good, it's either immoral or illegal."

To quote a phrase often heard at this time of year, "Bah! Humbug!"

Browning said it best when he wrote, "This world means intensely and it means good. To find it's meaning is my meat and drink."

We've just come through our annual marathon of wishes for Peace and Joy. We've probably over indulged a bit. We've undoubtedly made someone

happy and made someone else unhappy. Now, we're wallowing, not just in a mountain of credit card bills, but in a big pool of either pity or guilt.

Climb out, if that's the case. Save yourself. Get a life. Live it. Live it all year. Learn to enjoy the wonders of the world around you and the wonderful personalities who people it and walk in and out of your life. We are, after all, angels for one another and can do much to lighten burdens, to heighten spirits and to ease pain. We can do it for others and we can do it for ourselves.

One of the ways is to discover and learn new things. To explore and risk.

All too often, it is the fear of failure that prevents such action. Remember that most of the great discoveries of history were the result of a mistake. And if something doesn't turn out for you, either give up or start over. There's no shame in either course of action. One thing about hitting your head against a wall is that it feels so good when you stop.

If it feels good, enjoy it. If it doesn't, count the cost. But live a full, integrated life. Body and spirit are one and have to walk in harmony and peace if there is to be any degree of happiness at all.

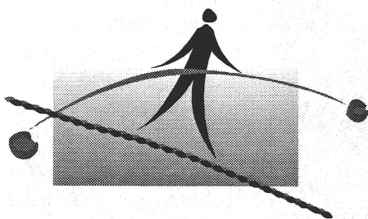
In the words of Mame Dennis, of Broadway musical fame, talking to her young nephew "Open a new window, open a new door. Travel a new highway you've never been down, before you find you're a dull fellow."

Remember that people are interesting if they are interested. You are interesting if you are involved.

So, do yourself a favour at this time of making all kinds of resolutions that get forgotten or tossed aside. Before it's too late, get a life. That's the spirit!

NOEL SPRINGWOOD (a pen-name - "Out of respect for his former associates") served most of his life as a Roman Catholic Priest. You can contact him through THE VOICE or email him at

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First-Ever Same-Sex Banns Read on Inter-national Human Rights Day

by Bruce Weese

On Sunday December 10, 2000, it was International Human Rights Day and MCC Toronto made history. It was the first time banns of marriage were read for a same-sex couple. For the gay and lesbian community, it has brought hope around the world.

They were read for Elaine and Anne Vautour, to demonstrate to the entire world that they were dedicating their love and lives to each other, Anne took Elaine's last name. Since they were not considered married in the eyes of the law, Anne had to take the legal route to change her name. Their marriage will be legal. The wedding will take place on January 14, 2001.

Kevin Bourassa and Joe Varnell also had their banns read. The reading of the banns goes like this: "I publish the banns of marriage between Kevin Bourassa and Joe Varnell. If any of you know any legal cause why these two persons should not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, you are now to declare it. This is the first time of asking."

It all stems from an old law on the books that opens the door to holy matrimony for same-sex couples.

Reverend Hawkes said, "*The battle is not over, but today we have taken another step.*" Speaking to the supporters more than to the media that was present, he also quoted an editorial from the Toronto Star that said, "*...it is hard to see how a union of two loving, committed gay people would degrade the institution of legal matrimony.*"

"*Toronto's Christian gay community has taken a bold and provocative step. It will make a lot of people feel uncomfortable. But that is often how progress begins.*"

<http://www.mcctoronto.com/>

MCC Toronto to Marry Same-Sex Couples

The Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto will perform legal same-sex marriages beginning in January 2001. At the service on December 3, 2000, Senior Pastor Rev. Brent Hawkes made the following announcement:

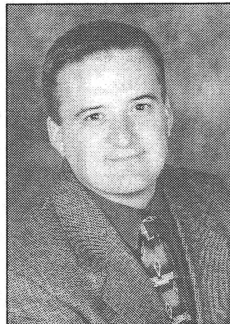
"MCC Toronto is proud to announce that beginning in January 2001 we will be issuing marriage licences for same-sex weddings. Until now, we felt restricted from acting on our beliefs by what we thought was a legal impediment regarding same-sex weddings. Being called by God to marry same-sex couples we recently sought legal advice. As a result, we have changed our position on the legality of same-sex marriages. In keeping with the ancient Christian tradition of banns of marriage we will now be issuing marriage licences for same-sex weddings. We believe we will be the first to issue these licences anywhere in the world. As you may know, the issue of same-sex marriage is currently before the courts. We are seeking to participate in those court proceedings. We have retained Douglas Elliott, of Elliott and Kim to act on our behalf."

Mr. Elliott has advised the church that pursuant to Section 5 of the Ontario Marriage Act, the church has the authority to follow the ancient Christian tradition of publication of banns of marriage instead of requiring couples to obtain a marriage licence. Under Ontario law, couples who wish to marry can either obtain a licence from a local municipal clerk or can have banns published in a church they regularly attend. The municipal clerks in Ontario have declined to issue marriage licences to same-sex couples. This refusal is the subject of a current court case in the Ontario Divisional Court.

Until now, no church in Ontario has offered to marry same-sex couples by publishing banns of marriage. Banns of marriage consist of an oral announcement of the intention to marry at a church service in accordance with that church's practice. The announcement is usually made on each of the three Sundays preceding the wedding. It is the church that issues the marriage certificate following the wedding ceremony.

Exclusive Interview with Rev. Brent Hawkes on page 14

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH REV. BRENT HAWKES

By A.J. Mahari



Rev. Brent Hawkes is a man on a passion-filled mission. His determination and the strength of his faith, as he describes his belief in the rights of same-sex couples to be legally married like opposite-sex couples, is quite evident. He is energetic. He is an activist. He is a spiritual leader with a pragmatic understanding of the crossroads at which religion must intersect with politics in the interest of ending long-standing discrimination.

At the Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto, Rev. Hawkes has initiated a process known as, **the reading of the banns**, in order to legally marry both a lesbian couple and a gay couple.

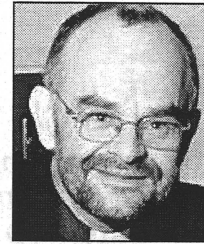
Rev. Hawkes pointed out that the Church used to be responsible for all marriages. He went on to say, "The publication of the banns has always been a way for people to have a full-church wedding. Where the banns would be published in the church. The service would happen in the church.

The licence would be issued in the church. It was sort of a complete church package."

Marriages have become more complicated, having ever-increasing legal consequences, which have resulted in government getting involved in drafting and up-holding laws regarding them. Those laws as they stand today, in Canada, do not allow same-sex couples to legally marry.

Rev. Hawkes described the process of the reading of the banns, which is another way to get married in Ontario, this way, "A couple need to go to their local pastor in the church that they attend. It is required that at least one of them has to have attended the church regularly. They express their desire to get married. The pastor says yes. They pick a date and then usually three Sundays before, the pastor in the worship service, would stand up and say that so and so and so and so are going to get married. Does anyone have any **lawful cause** why they should not?"

Rev. Brent Hawkes



What constitutes lawful cause includes if one or both of the people wanting to get married are under-age, already married, or brother or sister, or close relative.

Rev. Hawkes pointed out that, "Lawful cause is not someone opposing because it is an inter-racial marriage or because they are same-sex. It is then up to the local pastor to determine if any objections fits within the criteria of lawful cause or not."


If any objection raised is determined to not be lawful cause then the ceremony goes ahead. During the ceremony, itself, when the couple signs the documents the marriage licence is issued then and there by the pastor. This means that the couple is then fully married upon the signing of those documents during the service.

Within two days the pastor then has to send documentation to the Registrar General notifying him/her of the dates upon which the banns were read and a copy of the documents that were signed at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony. The couple would be fully married. The Registrar General's job is to simply register the documents.

"It is our legal opinion that the Registrar General has no legal authority to deny registration if the forms are completed and the person signing them is clergy person licensed to do weddings, which I am," added Rev. Hawkes.


When Attorney-General Runciman said that he is not going to register the documents he will be presented from the two-upcoming same-sex marriages, which will take place on Sunday January 14, 2001, Rev. Hawkes, said, "We think that is a violation of the law."

In the Ontario Marriage Act, under the publication of the banns section, it says, "**any two persons**" can get married. It does not reference the sex of the persons getting married. It is the same thing in Federal law as well. It is Rev. Hawkes position that there is nothing in law that clearly states that lesbi-



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ans and gays cannot marry.

Rev. Hawkes believes that "The City Hall folks are violating the Charter by not issuing the licence. In this case I am going to issue the licence. I have the authority to do that under law. On January 14th when we have the service and those couples exchange their vows I will sign the documents and I will give them their marriage licences and they will officially be married."

"They will be the first same-sex couples in modern history to be officially fully married under the law anywhere in the world."

The Netherlands has passed legislation (see page 25) but it doesn't go into effect until February 1, 2001. And according to Rev. Hawkes, he has heard news that now Germany has passed this legislation as well.

Hawkes added, "So, countries are starting to do this. It is time that the politicians get caught up to the courts. The Supreme Court has already ruled in one case, by a 5-4 vote that it is wrong in Canada to discriminate against gay and lesbian couples."

Rev. Hawkes also noted that as these cases go through the courts we are winning our rights under the Charter and that the government should not be spending hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars fighting these cases. One has to wonder if the money being spent to defend the long-standing discrimination against same-sex couples is being spent merely in an attempt to save face and to pass the buck. It would seem that most politicians would rather that these kinds of decisions be made in our courts so that they do not have to justify themselves to their constituents. Even though in recent polls, more and more Canadians are in favour of ending this discriminatory practice against same-sex couples.

When asked why lesbian couples and gay couples should be allowed to marry, Rev. Hawkes, replied, "Because it is a right in our society. Same-sex couples deserve the same privileges that are given to opposite-sex couples."

Rev. Hawkes talked about the example of lesbian and gay couples who have been together for years and yet when one gets ill and has to be hospitalized there is no legal provision (unless legally married) to know that one can get into the hospital not only to visit and comfort a partner but also to make any necessary decisions about their treatment. He knows of horror stories from couples who have faced this situation. As it stands right now families and or hospitals can deny access to a loved one. When same-sex marriage is legally recognized this will no longer be the case.

Some people would argue that same-sex couples having the same common-law rights now should be good enough. Is it good enough? Not according to Rev. Hawkes, "No it isn't good enough legally or symbolically. It's not good enough legally because common-law couples have to wait two years to get their rights. And the second reason just common-law rights are not enough is that we want full-equality. No special rights, nothing more and nothing less. **Separate but equal is not good enough. It is time for full equality.**"

When asked why he and his church are undertaking this action now, Rev. Hawkes said, "The cases currently being fought in court [to be able to attain marriage licences at city hall] are important because the marriage banns section [as a way to get married] only applies where one of a couple regularly attends a local church. There are lots of gays and lesbians who don't attend church or who live in cities where there is no church that would support them so we need those other cases to be won."

As these other court cases have been proceeding, Rev. Hawkes, and the lawyers he works with decided to intervene on their behalf. "We don't want the Religious Right to try to make this out as a gays versus God thing. We want to show that these cases have a lot of

religious support for them. In the process of a few lawyers working together and examining all the marriage laws, etc, one of the lawyers, I think from Queen's University, found the section on the banns and asked our lawyer, Douglas Elliot, if the church would be interested in marrying people under the publication of the banns. We are and our board supports us and that is why we are proceeding."

On the second Sunday that the banns were read in the MCC Toronto

Church two right-wing leaders stood up to object. Rev. Hawkes found their objections were not valid in terms of anything unlawful regarding the couples that are going to be married and dismissed them. One objector was Rev. Ken Campell, who stated publicly that same-sex marriage would destroy the institution of marriage and that he believes we are trying to make the world our closet.

When I asked Rev. Hawkes what his reaction

to Campell's statements was he replied, "He is very inflammatory in his rhetoric. It is unfortunate that he misinterprets and distorts scripture to try to condemn gays and lesbians. We strongly disagree with him in terms of his interpretation of scripture. **They are trying to turn this into a scriptural or theological issue and it isn't.**"

"The way Canada works is that if one segment of our community has a religious belief we don't allow them to legislate that to the detriment of other sections of society who want to practice their religion. For us this is not just a sexual orientation issue it is a freedom of religion issue. We want the right to marry whomever we want within the law." concluded Rev. Hawkes.

The marriage ceremonies will take place at the MCC in Toronto, Sunday January 14th at 2pm. They will mark the official arrival of the issue of same-sex marriage on the political agenda of this country. It seems only to be a matter of time now before same-sex couples fully attain these rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"There is nothing in Federal Law that bars two gay people from getting married. What we have is the preamble to Bill C-23, when it was passed giving gay and lesbian couples equality with heterosexual common-law couples. The Federal Liberals knuckled under the Religious Right and added in a phrase that nothing in Bill C-23 affects marriage, that marriage is between a man and a woman only. This is not law it is only a preamble to a bill."

-- Rev. Hawkes



GAY MONEY

by Bonnie J. Babin,
Investment Planning Counsel of Canada



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1. Invest in yourself. Invest in your education, your health, and in your relationships with family and friends. Having a lot of money isn't worth much if you don't have your health and people with whom to share your life.
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3. Never buy items that depreciate on credit. Items that depreciate include cars, clothing, vacations, etc. Use debt only to acquire financial assets that are likely to appreciate, such as education, real estate, or a business.
4. Save and invest at least 5-10 percent of your income. To be financially independent in the future you will need to save and invest as early in life as possible.
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6. Invest the majority of your long-term money in ownership vehicles that have appreciation potential, such as stocks, real estate, and your own business.
7. Avoid making emotionally-based financial decisions. Take your time making important financial decision after a major life change, such as divorce, job loss, or death in your family.
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11. Be patient. Start working towards your financial goals. Focus on your accomplishments and learn from your mistakes.

Investment Planning Counsel
of Canada

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A Voice Exclusive.

TORONTO COUNCILOR: POPE BETTER NOT SLAM HOMOSEXUALITY HERE

TORONTO, Dec, 2000 (LSN.ca) - Toronto City Councilor Kyle Rae hopes to warn Pope John Paul II that he had better not speak about homosexuality in Toronto during his upcoming World Youth Day (WYD) visit in 2002. In September, Rae, who describes himself as "openly gay", told Toronto's controversial NOW magazine that he hopes to meet with Father Thomas Rosica, WYD coordinator in Toronto. Contacted by LifeSite, Rae said the pope's often-repeated statements about homosexuality are "hateful". He said that voicing such "hateful and hurtful" opinions "is not permissible in our society." He commented, "I don't think religion should be used as a shield against hate."

Rae said the delegation from the city of Toronto that went to discuss WYD raised the matter. "They discussed that in recent times the pope has made very controversial and hurtful comments about the gay and lesbian community and that it would be a problem given that Toronto is not a monotheistic city .. with the pope coming here, his continuing negative comments about gay and lesbian people would make it very difficult come WYD 2002." When informed that the pope's comments are about behaviour, not people themselves, Rae said he could not accept the distinction between criticism of homosexual acts and homosexual inclinations. "I can't separate out what I do and who I am," he said. Rae told LifeSite he would be meeting with Fr. Rosica to sort out the situation.

Toronto is the Gay Pride capital of

Canada where the annual parade attracts over 500,000 participants, including for the past few years Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman. Toronto city council is also forcing taxpayers to pay for a challenge to the marriage law, in order to allow homosexual "marriage". In May, LifeSite reported that the city clerk referred a case of a homosexual couple requesting a marriage licence to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice rather than simply rejecting the request as law would suggest. Moreover, Canada is a world leader in the promotion of special protection and privileges for those living the homosexual lifestyle. Federal and provincial governments have forced through laws allowing basically all the rights of marriage (including adoption) for homosexual couples. Canadian courts have often been notoriously biased in favour of gay legal activism and have usurped the responsibility of elected representatives by writing significant gay friendly rulings into law.

Canada's promotion of homosexuality goes beyond its own borders. Secretary of State for the Status of Women, Hedy Fry was quoted last year in the country's leading homosexual newspaper Xtra! as saying that Canada is the foremost supporter of homosexuality at the UN. Speaking to lesbian activists, she said, "All I can tell you is that Canada went to the wall on this issue, and it's the only country that goes to the wall on this issue every single time."

<http://www.nowtoronto.com/>

VATICAN PROTEST BY U.S. ACTIVISTS BANNED BY POLICE IN ROME

(Laguna Beach, CA) - Shortly after a bloody confrontation between police and several thousand Italians protesting the Vatican visit of a right-wing Austrian extremist, a Soulforce advance team met with police officials in Rome to obtain permits for a nonviolent protest. According to Italian police, no demonstration of any kind is allowed in or near the Vatican City-state. Soulforce - Dignity/USA delegation is scheduled to bring their STOP SPIRITUAL VIOLENCE Campaign to the Vatican to protest the anti-homosexual teachings and actions of the Roman Catholic Church.

"Although all of our protests are done in the spirit of non-violence as taught by Gandhi and King, we decided not to stage our demonstrations in the Vatican City-state," explained Dr. Mel White, Soulforce Executive Director. "After meeting with Vatican officials and police, and taking our goals of spiritual renewal, non-violence, and reconciliation into account, we will conduct a very different kind of action, initially staying outside the barriers in hopes that the Vatican will recognize us there."

We are asking the Church to take one small step towards reconciliation." Current Roman Catholic teachings describe homosexual orientation as "objectively disordered" and homosexual acts as "intrinsically evil." In recent months, Vatican statements have reaffirmed the Church's views that homosexuals should not be allowed to adopt, teach, coach, be married, ordained, or serve in the military.

Soulforce (www.soulforce.org) is an interfaith network committed to applying the principles of nonviolent resistance as taught by Gandhi and King to the liberation of sexual and gender minorities. Dignity/USA (www.DignityUSA.org) is the oldest and largest independent national lay movement of GLBT Catholics, their families, & friends.

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LUCIE BLUE TREMBLAY

will be performing in Waterloo on Saturday February 3, 2001, at 8pm (see ad bottom of page)

French-Canadian singer/songwriter Lucie Blue Tremblay has been writing and performing her music in the U.S. and Canada since 1986. She is one of Canada's finest vocalists, yet she has remained an independent artist for the past 14 years. It is not surprising that her first self-titled CD was on the Boston Globe's top ten list in 1986.

Discovering Lucie's music is a joy for the heart, bringing new audiences a most wonderful surprise. One frequently finds new concert attendees buying all her music at once when they finally hear her.

Lucie's music is intensely personal, at times sweet and clear, or earthy and unrestrained, or wistful and yearning, but always reaching out to her audience with great warmth and enthusiasm, as she shares the passion and wonder and joy that love has brought to her life.

In 1997, Lucie Blue joined Daniel Loyer, her very talented pianist and friend and formed Maggie & Shanti Musique Inc., reissuing her past recordings and assuring the future of her newest accomplishments with "I'm Ready."

Lucie's new CD, "Because of You" is a collection of the most beautifully crafted songs she has yet written. The listener is constantly lavished with one stunning song after another. Her music speaks of the breadth of emotions common to us all as we seek to be in touch with our spirit and at home in our world. It inspires us with the strength of her belief in the transforming power of openness and love.

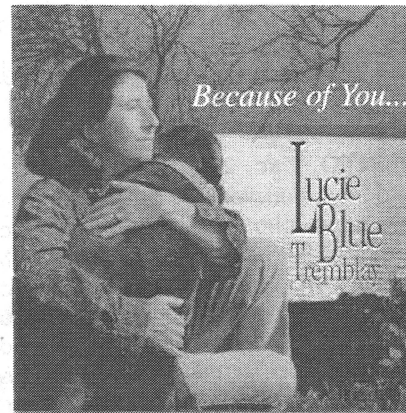
You should that that this woman not only writes great music, but she's also a powerful, funny, gutsy, romantic, sexy performer. She comes onstage relaxed, at ease, and ready for fun. Seeing her in concert is a MUST!

<http://www.sentex.net/~mja>

Lucie's concerts are intimate exchanges between friends. She moves easily between songs and conversation. Her transitions from guitar to piano to the electric keyboard are equally as effortless. She serenades her audiences with a rich, warm voice that can soar from a throaty purr to strong, crystal tones.

Lucie Blue's music has an intensity that soothes rather than threatens. As an artist, this has made it possible for her to address a wide range of subjects, singing tenderly of love and home, drawing the audience into her world as she deals with intriguing, difficult issues like growing old and incest (from the child's perspective), and recounting amusing anecdotes about border crossing complications. More than anything, she combines a soft melodic essence with a depth of feeling that is riveting, particularly in her love songs.

Tremblay is from Quebec and has an interesting mix of both French and Eng-




lish lyrics on all of her CDs. Another trademark of Tremblay's is her whistling. Haunting and ethereal, it complements her rich, confident singing voice and her skillful use of the instruments that she plays.

Tremblay established her career largely with ballads. However in recent CD's she has added many love songs and songs that are political in nature. She is a lesbian balladeer who is also well-known for her single release, a coming out song, called, "I Want You To Know Who I Am".

Tremblay is a must see. Her music is an experience. She continues to add tremendously to our cultural herstory.

*From
Quebec:
Lucie Blue
Tremblay in
Concert!*



*Because
of You -
The New
CD!*

Saturday, February 3, (8:00 p.m.)
Emmanuel United Church
22 Bridgeport Road West, Waterloo

General Admission Tickets: \$17 (adv); \$20 (door).
On sale in Waterloo at Words Worth Books (100 King Street South).
Phone Orders: [REDACTED] (Sanderson Centre Box Office)
Note: Lucie Blue Tremblay will also performing Friday, November 2, in Toronto.

Concert Web Site: www.sentex.net/mja/lbt/

Lesbian Character on ABC Soap, All My Children

Sarah told Bianca that her mother forced her to move up her wedding date and admitted that she still loved Bianca. After hearing Brooke's theory that Bianca pushed Laura off the yacht because she was jealous of Laura kissing Leo, Jack suggested to Erica that Bianca had romantic feelings for Laura. Upset by his implication, Erica slapped Jack in front of the reporters. Erica returned home to find Bianca and Sarah in an embrace. Bianca began to remove her clothing.



"Mother, look at me. I'm exactly who you always knew. I'm still your baby and I still love you."



- Bianca to Erica

Dressed in her slip, Bianca asked her mother to look at her for who she really was. Bianca questioned if Erica loved her, and after Erica replied that she did, Bianca told Erica that she was gay.

Erica has tried to be supportive of Bianca but thinks that Bianca can get over being a lesbian if she would just go to a psychiatrist that Erica has arranged for her to see. Bianca has refused to go to therapy saying that it will not change her.



Queer as Folk

The provocative television series about gay life is back as Showcase presents the Canadian network premiere of the North American Queer as Folk on Monday, January 22 at 10 p.m. ET/PT. Based on the successful British series of the same name, this groundbreaking 22-hour series will kick off with a three-hour pilot episode and air weekly on Mondays at 10 p.m. ET/PT. Queer as Folk is commissioned by Showtime Networks and produced by Temple Street Productions in Toronto. Like the British version, the new Queer as Folk series offers a compelling, realistic and graphic depiction of gay life. In the North American version, the series focuses on the relationships, careers, loves and ambitions of a group of gay men and lesbians living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Members of the lead cast include Gale Harold, Randy Harrison, Hal Sparks, Scott Lowell, Peter Paige, Michelle Clunie, Sharon Gless and Canadians Chris Potter and Thea Gill.



<http://www.showcase.ca>

Exploring What Makes Us Male or Female

Continued From Page 11

controlled studies performed to measure genetic contributions to homosexuality say that 50 percent of what goes into making a person homosexual is genetic. That means 50 percent is not. And while everyone is very excited about genes, we are clueless about the equally important nongenetic contributions.

Q. Why do you suppose lesbians have been less accepting than gay men about genetics as the explanation for homosexuality?

A. *I think most lesbians have more of a sense of the cultural component in making us who we are. If you look at many lesbians' life histories, you will often find extensive heterosexual experiences. They often feel they've made a choice. I also think lesbians face something that males don't: at the end of the day, they still have to be women in a world run by men. All of that makes them very conscious of complexity.*

Q. How much of your thinking about sexual plasticity comes from your own life? You've been married. You are now in a committed relationship with the playwright Paula Vogel.

A. *My interest in gender issues preceded my own life changes. When I first got involved in feminism, I*

was married. The gender issues did to me what they did to lots of women in the 1970's: they infuriated me. My poor husband, who was a very decent guy, tried as hard as he could to be sympathetic. But he was shut out of what I was doing. The women's movement opened up the feminine in a way that was new to me, and so my involvement made possible my becoming a lesbian. My ex and I are still friends. He's remarried.

Q. So the antifeminists are right: women's liberation is the first step toward lesbianism?

A. *(Laughs) It's true. I call myself a lesbian now because that is the life I am living, and I think it is something you should own up to. At the moment, I am in a happy relationship and I don't ever imagine changing it. Still, I don't think loving a man is unimaginable.*

Q. What do you think nature is telling us by making intersexuals?

A. *That nature is not an ideal state. It is filled with imperfections and developmental variation. We have all these Aristotelian categories of male and female. Nature doesn't have them. Nature creates a whole lot of different forms.*

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HERSTORY

Fat.

Such a small word, to have such power. The mere mention of it can make grown women cringe. Oh, yes, we've read all about "The Beauty Myth", and noted the impossibility of the mass media's "ideal female form" as portrayed in countless movies, t.v. programs and advertisements. Sometimes we try to come up with less uncomfortable descriptions: "I'm Rubenesque. I'm softig. I'm famine-advantaged." But semantics don't help, because the words are not really the problem. The problem is our attitude about the reality the words describe. That attitude persists, and attaches itself to whatever words we chose to use to describe the concept of exceeding the "ideal female form" in any dimension.

Where did this "thin ideal" that so dictates our lives come from? The Renaissance painter Peter Paul Rubens loved the ample form of women we would call fat today, and glorified that form in his paintings. Even Marilyn Monroe, celebrated as the "ideal female form" only 40 years ago, would be called fat today. Obviously, the definition of the "ideal female form" is transitory. It is merely the image currently presented as "beautiful" by the media of the day.

Now the question becomes, where does the mass media get these images they present as "ideal" today? I look around my home town, and I see women who mostly look like me. A couple of extra bulges here, a little sag there, a little extra girth all around. And my home town is not unusual. Not more than 10% of the population look like the models we see on runways and in ads. A higher percentage, but still far less than half, might look like the t.v. stars we invite into our homes nightly. Where are all these thin people that populate

The "F" Word: FAT

By Karen J. Gould

movieland and t.v. land?

I have a theory. There is a city somewhere in this country where all those thin people live. In this city, the streets are filled with thin people. Their personal trainers and shoppers and makeup artists hover about, ready to dash in and do battle with a shiny nose or an untucked blouse at a moment's notice. They do allow a few token non-thin people to live there: Camyrn Manheim, Kathy Najimy, S. Epatha Merkerson, and the like — but only if they don't loiter about in broad daylight. And that's not all. In this city, all the houses are freshly painted, all the lawns impeccably manicured, all the shrubs exquisitely sculpted. At night, roving gangs of interior decorators break into homes, rearranging the furniture and scattering tastefully coordinated throw pillows around, painting the walls in the latest colors and hanging tastefully coordinated art on them. The media, in a vast conspiracy to sell more diet foods, lawn fertilizer and designer furniture, use this city for all their movie and t.v. sets, and pretend that it's "normal."

Or maybe not....

Oh, alright. Perhaps the idea of a vast media conspiracy is a little silly. I don't really think there is a "media conspiracy" to make women feel bad about having perfectly normal bodies. But, it has been shown that this media "ideal" directly affects women's body satisfaction. A compilation of "body image and media" studies by Liz Dittrich, Ph.D., shows that several studies have indicated a direct

correlation between women's exposure to media's "idealized images" and lowered satisfaction with their bodies.

It's important to acknowledge that the media are not the only players in this "conspiracy" of body-image distortion. Society, friends and family members

In short, the attitude about "fat" that so terrorizes us has many sources: It comes from inside our own heads, from the media message we internalize; it comes from comments from friends and family; it comes from the general lack of societal acceptance of overweight people.



play their role in our attitudes about "fat" as well. After all, the media presents us with all kinds of "idealized images," like the aforementioned perfect lawns, yards and houses. But none of those other idealized images are as widely accepted, or as rigorously reinforced, by our society as the image of the "ideal female form." Therefore, those of us who exceed that form are affected not only directly - by exposure to the media's images - but also indirectly, by the acceptance of that image by society at large, and especially by the acceptance of that image by our loved ones.

Our society projects its acceptance of that image in ways both subtle and unsubtle. Mothers tell their daughters, "you could be so pretty if you would just lose a few pounds." Thin children taunt non-thin children, secure in the knowledge that "society" agrees with them. Retailers hide "plus-size" clothing in obscure corners of their stores, apparently out of a concern that "normal people" might see "large people" shopping at the same store. Other retailers go a step further, and don't carry "plus sizes" at all.

In short, the attitude about "fat" that so terrorizes us has many sources: It comes from inside our own heads, from the media message we internalize; it comes from comments from friends and family; it comes from the general lack of societal acceptance of overweight people. It is sometimes disheartening to think about fighting that attitude on all fronts. Luckily, we don't have to take 'em all on at once, because the most important "source" of that attitude is also the most accessible - ourselves. We can't change the images the media show - at least, not overnight - but we can counter-program our psyche with images of beautiful big women.

So, go to a photography studio and get a few "glamor shots" of yourself done, frame them, and put them on your dresser. Get a catalog that includes plus-sized women modeling plus-sized women's clothing, or visit a websites. You may be amazed at how gorgeous some of these women are. And while you're at it, order some of those clothes. Don't shop at stores that don't carry your size. Nothing is more uncomfortable (or makes us feel worse about our bodies) than squeezing into clothing two sizes too small - except perhaps, not being able to find anything we can squeeze into at all. Why give your money to a company that deliberately makes you feel that way? Subscribe to a "big and beautiful" magazine, like Mode or Extra Hip. Cut out pictures of successful, beautiful bigger women, like the three actresses mentioned above, and paste them on your wall. All of this will remind you that big beautiful women deserve a place in the sun - and in our psyche - right alongside small beautiful women.

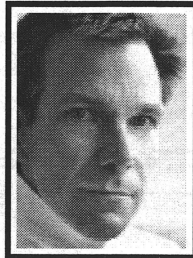
Of course, it's hard to feel good about ourselves when we don't feel good, period. So, by all means, we should eat a healthy diet and put some exercise into our lives. Those of us who have been living on junk food and leading a sedentary life (guilty!), might even lose a few pounds or inches by doing so, but that's not the point. The point is to feel fit and healthy, confident that we can meet life's little challenges, like running to catch the bus, or dashing upstairs to see why the kids are making that awful racket, or shoveling the sidewalk, or fighting off a negative body-comment from a friend or loved one.

When we feel confident in the normalcy of our own bodies, when we stop asking for acceptance and start demanding the respect that we are due, our message to the media will be loud, clear and forceful. I think that, when our society is full of confident women of all sizes, women who expect society to accept them just the way they are, the "media problem" will solve itself. After all, media's goal is to deliver a market to their advertisers. If we no longer accept the "message" they send, they will have to change their message, or die. And if they're not willing to change their message, good riddance!

HIS-STORY

Saying Goodbye to Super Bowl Sunday

By Randy Siegel



When I was married, Super Bowl Sunday was the most dreaded day of the year. Despite my public disdain for football, my wife and I were sure to be invited to at least

one Super Bowl party each year.

Upon opening the predictable, preprinted invitations, my stomach would knot, bringing back haunted memories of high school PE classes and after-school sports.

"Men to the den, and women to the kitchen," our hostess would cheerily chirp upon entering her house. After some hesitation, I would limp off to the den "to bond with the boys."

Wanting desperately to fit in, I would fake some passing interest in the game. The truth was I did not know who was playing, much less how the game was played.

Despite playing third-string right guard in junior high and five years at the University of Georgia, I still did not understand the rules. I only knew the game took forever to play, and when the clock said five minutes to half-time it really meant 15.

Commercial breaks aided by frequent trips to the kitchen for beer offered some relief from testosterone and Budweiser-induced high-fives. In the safety of the kitchen, I could converse with the girls on subjects of real interest such as fashion and food.

The food and decorations at these events were enough to send Martha Stewart screaming out of K-Mart. Trail mix, deviled eggs, potato salad, spiral-sliced ham and velvet cakes were

laid out on plastic table cloths. A round mound of red, white and blue carnations made up the pitiful center piece, and guests ate off of brightly colored paper plates. Super Bowl Sunday has to be the straightest time of the year.

When I came out and was divorced six years ago, the invitations to Super Bowl Sunday parties abruptly ceased. Instead, I was invited to a flock of gay-hosted events.

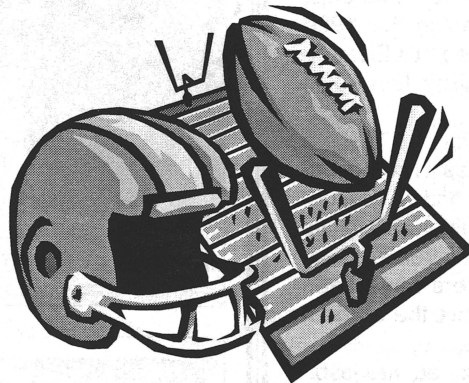
Not only were the food and flowers beautiful, conversation flowed like smooth red wine. Almost always, there was someone to talk about, and on those rare occasions when conversations became strained, I found gay men were quick to amuse themselves.

When the conversation began to lag at a small gathering in South Beach, our host produced a perfect pair of size 11 red pumps from underneath the sofa. We entertained ourselves for hours.

At a house party in Seaside, Florida, this summer, one guest unpacked a "Barbie Goes to the Prom" game and a set of cardboard tiaras. Six adult men gathered around the game board and made up the rules as they went.

When "dark, uncut Ken" asked "blonde and smooth Ken" to dance, the room exploded in laughter. "Say goodbye to football, velvet cakes and keg beer forever," I said to myself. "You aren't in Kansas anymore."

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



Conservatives Blast White House Screening of 'Family Diversity' Film

By David Thibault
CNS Managing Editor

(CNSNews.com) - A 35-minute film, hailed by comedian Robin Williams as "extraordinary" — one "that teaches a poignant lesson about love and family" — is being criticized by conservative groups, who see it as an effort to feed "gay propaganda of a one-sided variety" to schoolchildren.

The Clinton White House endorsed the film Tuesday by hosting a screening for it.

The film's director, Debra Chasoff, is well-known for a 1984 film, "Choosing Children," which focused on the efforts of lesbians to become parents. She also was involved in the 1996 award-winning film called "It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues in School."

Chasoff's latest effort is "That's a Family!," which features children between the ages of eight and 13 describing what their nontraditional families are like. Some of the children are from divorced parents, others have been adopted, and several are the children of homosexual couples.

"My Moms, Angie and Lee, are lesbians," says one young girl in the film. "That means they only like men for friends and they want to be in a relationship with other women."

Another girl stares into the camera and says, "My Dads are gay and gay means when two men or two women love each other. It's sort of just like having a Mom and Dad who love each other. It's just that it's a man and a man or a woman and a woman."

"That's a Family!" has not appeared on national television yet, although Chasoff says that may happen in the future. It has been shown at film festivals, but Chasoff's main goal is to distribute the film to "grassroots educational networks".

"We want to make sure that as many children see this film as possible and hopefully see it in a context where an adult who is teaching them or caring for them can facilitate a meaningful conversation afterwards," she said.

"There is an enormous amount of education that needs to be done with kids so that they come to understand that

gay is not a bad word but is actually an adjective that describes how real people live and how real people in their school communities live," Chasoff said.




Peter LaBarbera, senior analyst with the Family Research Council, blasted the White House effort to promote "That's a Family!" He called the film, "very insidious, in that it inserts homosexual-led families into these other

types of families."

"This is the last gasp ... of trying to squeeze in every last bit of gay activism that they can in this administration because certainly, the homosexual activists know the fun times are about to end for them," LaBarbera said. "Even if George W. Bush doesn't do everything we'd like, he's not going to push homosexual activism like Clinton did.

"I think what I'm most afraid of is that

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(between Bridgeport and Erb)

these are impressionable kids and that they're being fed gay propaganda of a one-sided variety ... in the classroom, which is the authority where they are led to believe that everything they are taught is true," LaBarbera said.

While acknowledging the existence of homosexual-led families, LaBarbera added, "I think that most people would recognize that there is a difference, and I think one of the key differences is that the homosexual-led families are intentionally putting children in mother-less or father-less homes."

Charlene Haar, president of the Education Policy Institute, also criticizes the new film. "There certainly are all kinds of families, but not ones that we need to celebrate, nor do we need to suggest that young people emulate them," she said.

"I think it's an indication of the power and influence of the special interest groups that have had this extraordinary influence over the Clinton-Gore Administration, and this is just another example of that," Haar said.

The Education Policy Institute, which supports school choice, is sharply at odds with the national teacher unions and the national Parent Teacher Association, whose president, Ginny Markell, was one of the speakers at Tuesday's White House ceremony.

"They're (PTA) concerned about flagging membership and I certainly don't think that once parents get word of this, that it's going to improve their chances for increasing their membership," Haar said.

"With all of the problems that we have in education these days, certainly this is a diversion, I think, away from the real issues - and that is - we need to do a better job of working on student achievement," Haar said. "And students who are taught the basics, whose teachers are responsible and attentive and parents who are engaged in the process is a far more critical issue ... than this issue, of whether or not to celebrate homosexuality."

Victoria Duran, program director for the national PTA, refused to comment about the Chasnoff film but said her group "is opposed to all discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, language, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation.

YOUR BODY

By Becky and Angela

Your body is a miracle. It is your ticket to being on the earth and it allows you to navigate the planet. Through it you feel and express joy, pain, pleasure, love, sadness - the full range of emotions. It is the vessel that contains your soul. It is the very foundation of self. Your relationship to your body is the first relationship you have and perhaps the most important relationship of your life. Yet it seems to be an uneasy one for most women.

Most women in this society are doing an active battle with their bodies, trying to conform to an elusive cultural ideal. To most women the body is a hated antagonist they disown, or an albatross they lug around. It is the norm for women to feel they should be thinner, prettier, younger, firmer, in all ways better. They deprive themselves of food and drag themselves to the gym all the while resenting it. They try to do everything right to make their bodies better, everything but actually live in their bodies.

What if you were to give in to your "ego" talk? Give in to all the negative messages in your mind. Walk around your house spewing this garbage in all its glory. Let it out. Only then can you do something about it. Only then can you change your mind about it. Take a look at where it comes from. Where did you learn that your body is not a "perfect" one? Trace all these beliefs back to the beginning. Look at all the messages you received as a child around your body. Were you praised? Teased? Criticized? Ignored? What details do you remember? How do you remember feeling about your body at different ages?

When you reach the place of the split (where your mind chose to believe what is not true) you can heal these beliefs. Forgive yourself for disowning your body. Forgive your family for telling you, you weren't perfect. Forgive your friends for teasing you. Forgive your self for believing them. Love them and love yourself.

After you have gotten the negative out, try to get in touch with your body. Take a minute

to actually FEEL your body. Start at the top of your head and work your way down to the tip of your toes. Become aware of each part and how it feels. Appreciate your body.

One of the harshest things we do to ourselves is the act of comparison. By engaging in the comparative-competitive posture, you are always looking at what sets you apart from others and measuring yourself as one-up or one-down. Instead, focus on the ways that we are all alike. "I am like her in that we, both....".

Another thing to take into account is how you are treating your body. What kind of home is your body to you? Are you supporting your body as it supports you? Do you listen to it and honour its signals to you? What messages are you giving your body by the way you care for it or fail to care for it? Think about these things and try turning it around to the positive. Love and respect your body. This does not mean

go out and exercise until your body is thin. This simply means accept your body the way it is in all its beautiful glory. Start being present in your body.

These things are not 'easy' to do, but it is about honesty. Are you ready to be honest with yourself? Are you ready to move forward on this issue? It is also important to note that these steps are not 'the cure'. They are a beginning, a place to start to change your negative beliefs. These negative beliefs will come back again, maybe when you are trying on a pair of pants or craving a piece of cake. The important thing is that you learn what to do when they do come back.

Remember that we are NOT our bodies. They are just the form, the vehicle through which we function. If we took away the form, we would all be the same.

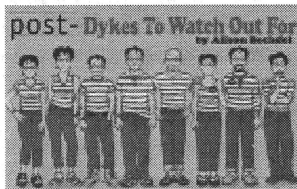
Becky and Angela, of Kitchener, are a mother and daughter team. They have both completed counselor training focusing on the principles of A Course in Miracles. They run a weekly processing group and offer individual sessions. A Voice Exclusive.



BOOKS



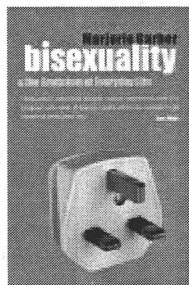
Post-Dykes to Watch Out For



by Alison Bechdel

The further adventures of Mo, her tenure-bound girlfriend, Sydney, and their much-loved friends unfold against a shifting gender landscape: lesbians sleeping with men, lesbians becoming men, Ginger sleeping with lesbians who've become men. As with her eight previous collections, Alison Bechdel covers a host of pressing issues, from the Monica Lewinsky scandal to the decline of the independent bookstore, and pauses to consider whether an online affair qualifies as cheating. "Of course it's cheating!" says Mo, "It would be a diversion of emotional energy." Sydney demurs: "It's more like remote, interactive masturbation." True love survives the gender wars, but monogamy may be on the wane. Don't miss the thrilling details, in the last volume of Bechdel's work to be published by the now-defunct Firebrand Press

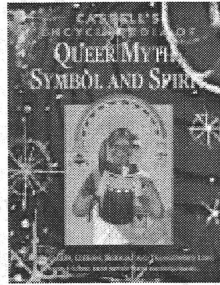
Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life



By Marjorie Garber

The world is flat. The sun revolves around the earth. Human beings are either heterosexual or homosexual. The first two myths have long been abandoned, but the third has awaited its Columbus or Copernicus. Until now. In this witty, learned, and scrupulously researched book, Marjorie Garber examines bisexuality and its many modes through a dazzling variety of critical lenses: cultural, literary, and psychological. Bisexuality is a monumental inquiry into what "normal" might mean, and just how difficult it is to make claims about sexuality—someone else's or one's own. Whether you're curious or seriously interested, a lay reader or a student of sexuality or gender, *Bisexuality* is a book you will have to have.

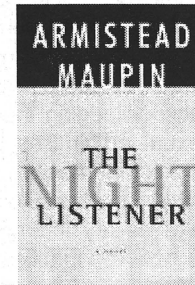
Cassell's Encyclopedia of Queer Myth, Symbol and Spirit : Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Lore (Cassell Sexual Politics Series)



by Randy Connor, Mariya Sparks, Randy P. Conner, David Hatfield Sparks, Rand000 Conner (Creator)

Did you know that in medieval folklore a person might change sex by passing under a rainbow? Or that same-sex unions have been celebrated by many of the world's peoples? Or that Sappho, Mishima, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, and Boy George number among those who have explored the spiritual dimension of gender and sexuality in their works? The Encyclopedia contains over 1500 entries, with a comprehensive index and bibliography, and a foreword by Gloria E. Anzaldúa (editor of *This Bridge Called My Back*). Randy P. Conner is the author of *Blossom of Bone: Reclaiming the Connections Between Homoeroticism and the Sacred* (1993). David H. Sparks is a writer and ethnomusicologist whose work has been published in the *Afro-Hispanic Review* and elsewhere. Mariya Sparks, their daughter, is an actor and writer, whose play *Primas* premiered as a film in the 1995 San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.

The Night Listener



by Armistead Maupin

Gay novelist Gabriel Noone is blue since his spouse, Jess, decamped to pursue his bliss among San Francisco's leather men. Indeed, Gabriel has writer's block, necessitating reruns of his weekly NPR storytelling feature. Then he gets the manuscript of a book to blurb. Written by a 13-year-old boy, Pete, it is the story of his long sexual abuse by his parents, who also peddled him to other pedophiles, and his eventual escape and adoption by a psychologist, only to fall ill with ever severer bouts of AIDS-related pneumonia. Impressed by the book, Gabriel is enchanted when his expressed interest in contacting Pete reaps a series of nighttime phone calls from the boy and his adoptive mother, Donna. Moreover, Gabriel falls like the proverbial ton of bricks when Pete starts calling him Dad. Gabriel must meet Pete in person, and Donna holds out hope that he will, but attempts to do so are thwarted. Gabriel has to find out the truth, which, isn't necessarily what it seems and even flip-flops, seeming one thing and then another and yet another. Maupin's squeaky clean style, seductive sentimentality, and gift for disarming patter make for a most appealing read, a kind of, not magic realism, but pretty, magical melodrama.

Same-Sex Dutch Couples Gain Marriage and Adoption Rights



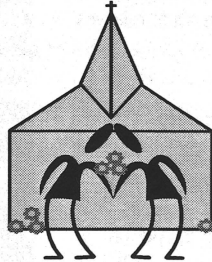
THE HAGUE, Dec. 19 (Reuters) The Netherlands, a pacesetter for gay rights, gave final approval today to groundbreaking laws allowing same-sex couples to marry and adopt children.

Activists were jubilant about the legislation, which will take effect in April.

"This is a historic event, it's fantastic," said Onno Hoes, a spokesperson for a homosexual rights group. "We're the first country in the world where there is no distinction made on the basis of gender."

The upper house of Parliament

passed the two bills strongly opposed by Christian parties after approval by the lower house in September. The marriage law was adopted by a 49-to-26 vote, while the adoption rights law passed 47 to 28. All 20 senators from the opposition Christian Democrats voted against the law.



"As far as possible, homosexual marriage will have the same consequences as heterosexual marriage," the Senate said in a statement. That meant, for example, that normal rules on maintenance obligations would apply to

same-sex unions.

Dutch law has recognized registered partnership of gay couples since 1998, but those couples did not have the same rights with regard to adopting children. Only one partner had full parental rights.

"A child that is looked after and raised in a lasting relationship of two men or two women is entitled to protection, including legal protection, within that relationship," the upper house statement said. "This is why the bill provides for the possibility of adoption by partners of the same sex."

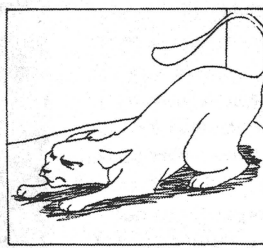
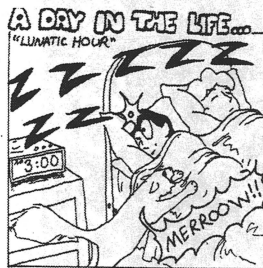
The partners need not be married or registered partners to adopt, but they must have lived together for at least three years, which is in line with the conditions for heterosexual couples.

The new laws do not allow Dutch couples to adopt children from abroad. Nor do they permit "marriage tourism," where people not residents of the Netherlands travel there to wed.

The Senate warned that married Dutch gays should not assume that their unions would be recognized abroad, since the notion of marriage is usually interpreted in international treaties as uniting a man and a woman.

"A marriage between persons of the same sex thus has little chance of being recognized abroad," it said, though it added that countries like Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland which have a system of registered partnership similar to that of the Netherlands might recognize same-sex marriages.

Children born of Dutch gay marriages will not be related by law to both spouses, the Senate said. A full legal family relationship could only arise if the courts permitted the adoption of such a child by the spouses.



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<http://www.nytimes.com>

COMMUNITY GROUPS

SUNDAYS

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

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

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

MONDAYS

The Lesbian Discussion Group returns in February. For more information call [REDACTED] or email: [REDACTED] www.thevoice.on.ca **Lesbian Groups**

TUESDAYS

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

The Rainbow Community Conversation Group

Now meets on Tuesdays, beginning again Tuesday January 9 in the Modern Languages Building (UoW) room 104 at 7pm. Topics for January - to be announced.

WEDNESDAYS

Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group meets every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Call us for more details: [REDACTED] toll-free [REDACTED]

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

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

GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Groups explore issues in sexual orientation; Modern Languages Rm 104, University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Information: [REDACTED] **A social gathering follows the discussion groups weekly from 9pm to 11pm.**

THE COMING OUT DISCUSSION GROUP

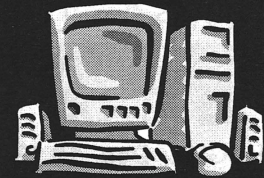
Wed Jan 3 What I did - Holidays
Wed Jan 10 Coming Out - to self
Wed Jan 17 Coming Out to others
Wed Jan 24 Coming out to relatives
Wed Jan 31 TBA

Women For Sobriety - Create a New Life, a drug & alcohol addiction support group for gay women, meets Wednesdays, 7pm to 8:30pm, Oasis Club, 146 Wyndham St., Guelph. For more info, call Marilyn at [REDACTED]

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

THURSDAYS

Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group (FTM - MTF) If you are post-op or pre-op transsexual or are dealing with gender dysphoria, come join this bi-weekly peer support group. 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Hamilton AIDS Network, 512 James St. N. For further details, please call (905) [REDACTED] ext.43, or e-mail: [REDACTED] <http://home.golden.net/~kcr/htspsg/htspsg.html>



editor@thevoice.on.ca

THE VOICE ONLINE

www.thevoice.on.ca

ads@thevoice.on.ca

I am a Sociology Student, King's college, UWO, currently researching the effects of anti-gay violence and harassment on the individual for my senior thesis. I am doing this through:

- 1) Interviews with men who have experienced this hate motivated crime.
- 2) Free Support Group for men who have experienced this hate motivated crime. The group will run one night per week for 8-10 weeks with an experienced counsellor (in London, ON).

To participate in a confidential interview or for more information, please e-mail me, Cindy, at [REDACTED] or phone (519) [REDACTED]

The purpose of this project is to contribute to a growing field in research and advocacy dealing with hate related crime against gays, lesbians, bisexual, transgendered individuals. I look forward to hearing your experiences. At this time, my research is based on the 'male' experience. My next research project will include all members of the LGBT community.

COMMUNITY LISTINGS

KITCHENER-WATERLOO

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

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

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

Coffee Club - Attention: Lesbian and Gays - If you like to drink coffee and just chat but you don't feel like there is anyplace to go where you can just be yourself, now there is. For more information call - Peter at [REDACTED]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Want to add a resource?
Contact The Voice today!

GUELPH

ACGWC (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 2 Quebec St, Suite 206, Guelph Ont., (519) [REDACTED]

GUELPH QUEER EQUALITY (GQE) University of Guelph - [REDACTED]

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

OUTline: A support and resource phone line for people dealing with LGBT issues at the University of Guelph. **Phone lines are closed Wednesdays and Saturdays (for the summer)** Open 7 to 10 pm other evenings. Call (519) [REDACTED]

www.uoguelph.ca/~outline

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

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

HAMILTON

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

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

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

Community Education [REDACTED] to book a presentation or consultation

Emmanuel House Palliative Care Good Shepherd Centres [REDACTED]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Street Health Centre-- Wesley Centre [REDACTED]

The Golden Horseshoe Leather Association (Hamilton) Monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month & there is a bar night on the second Saturday of each month. Men interested in the Leather/ Denim lifestyle are invited to attend both. For more information email Secretary - Ron at [REDACTED] or phone (905) [REDACTED]

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

BRANTFORD

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

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

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

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

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

To find out more information about anything else happening in Brantford email: [REDACTED]

CAMBRIDGE

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

Classifieds

FOR SALE

If you have something to sell your ad could be here.

PERSONALS

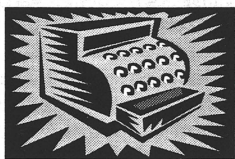
Looking to find a friend, start a group, or find love? Your ad could be here.

COUNSELLING

Interfaith Counselling Centre will be offering a **Couple's Communication Group for same-sex couples**. This is a day long program for couples interested in changing patterns and styles of communication in their relationships. Couples will learn how to evaluate their communication dance and will be given concrete steps for enhancing it. The group will be experiential in nature and stress confidentiality. For more information call Debbie or Theresa at Interfaith at [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

or [REDACTED]

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The Voice Magazine is On Line at:

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

Community Listings

If you have a group or event that you would like to have listed in our Community Listings please let us know! Likewise if you have any new information for your group or event contact us so we can keep things right up to date.

Alternative Youth Centre

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

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

If you'd like to place a classified ad our deadline is the 20th of each month.

(519) [REDACTED]

Mailing address is at top of page

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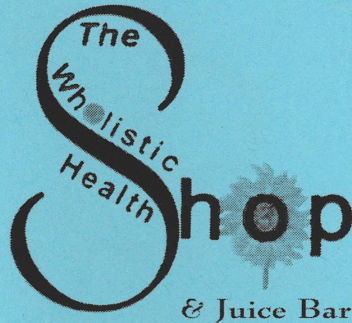
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This year marks the real beginning of the New Millennium.

Your Pride Committee wishes everyone a very Happy New Year as we continue to build community into the next century.

We have great plans for Pride weekend on June 8, 9, 10. Volunteers are always welcome to join us.

If you would like to be involved in this celebration of our community, please e-mail us at:

wwrp@rainbow.on.ca

or phone: 519-743-5015.

Visit our website at:

www.rainbow.on.ca/

Waterloo-Wellington Regional Pride

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