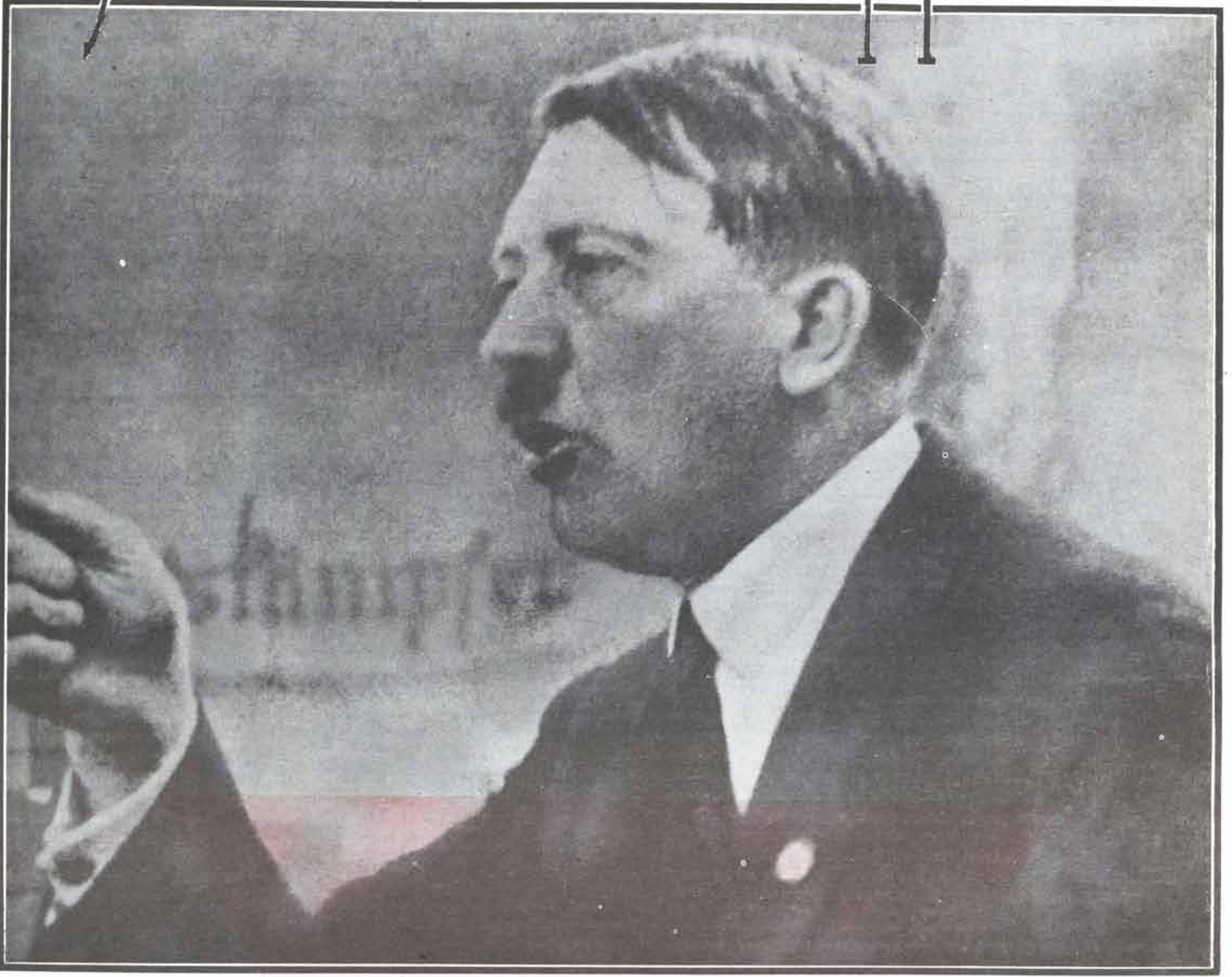


THE CORD

Gay and Lesbian Supplement



Do you recognize this man? This man was the source of one of the horrifying stories of modern history that will hopefully haunt humanity to its end. Even today no one is exactly sure how many hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people were sent to this man's conception of the 'Final Solution'. The 'Final Solution' was simple: the organized killing of people who were identified as being contrary to his 'vision' for the glory of the Germanic people. It started out as a 'simple' purification of the Germanic people. Persons with disabilities and mental or sensory impairments were the first to die. But then it worsened.

This man's distorted and misplaced hatred and his treacherous image building targeted visible minority groups as useful scapegoats for his own problems and the problems of his country. The Jews were among the targeted groups. The Jews died in numbers that have been estimated in the millions. But the Jews were not alone in this genocide. Gypsies, political opponents, racial groups, and religious persons were treated as badly as the Jews were. Then again, so were homosexuals the target of organized killings.

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Special Four Page Pull-Out Section

Continued from page one

Hitler's witchhunt against the homosexuals is one of the most poignant images of the Holocaust. Unlike most of the other groups Hitler identified as being 'un-German', or contragenic, the status of being homosexual was used as a weapon to bring down people, including one of Hitler's closest allies and early supporters, Ernst Roehm, the leader of the SA or "Brown Shirts", the predecessor of the SS. From the moment Hitler gained control of the government, homosexuals were persecuted. The anti-homosexual laws were even passed before the anti-Jewish laws. But no one was able to read the signs of impending doom, no one was suspecting the worst.

A strong gay liberation movement had existed in Germany before Hitler gained control. This was the starting point for Hitler's hunt. The leaders of this movement were almost immediately arrested and sent to the first concentration camps. Only one escaped and that was through the intervention of highly placed people. The liberation movement also had the misfortune of having membership lists which were confiscated and used as evidence against the almost 30,000 names such lists contained. The Nazis too had been keeping their own lists of suspected and known homosexuals, information that would be used to bring down political opponents if necessary. But when the name lists were exhausted, the hunt eventually widened out and became a terror to even his own people.

This atmosphere of fear was very powerful. With the government structured as it was, giving unlimited power to Hitler, anyone could fall to the hunters. The prized weapons of the Nazi party, the SS, were the instruments of terror. The SS were expected to be the paragons of German manhood. Homosexuality, if it was detected among them, was punishable by death. As the Reich continued, Heinrich Himmler, leader of the SS and renown homophobe, managed in time to get the death penalty extended to all Germans. A number of homosexuals were forced into becoming informants in order to preserve their lives. All people were encouraged to report homosexual behaviour, even on the slightest pretext (such as a suggestive look). The courts were interpreting what constituted homosexuality very broadly: it was not actions that condemned people, it was intent. The numbers of homosexuals arrested steadily increased and it appeared that no one was immune.

The pursuit of the homosexual strengthened when the war began. Homosexual purges of the armed forces were not unusual. From 1940-1943 over 5,000 members of the armed forces were charged with homosexually related crimes. Numbers for the civilian population would eventually reach almost 10,000. It is estimated that over 25,000 juveniles were arrested, of which almost 4,000 were actually convicted of same-sex crimes and sentenced to punishments up to the concentration camps. After 1943 however, even though homosexuals were 'contragenics', they too were needed to fight and the hunt died down but did not end until the Reich collapsed two years later. The SS were still arresting men even as the Russians were surrounding Berlin.

But until the collapse of the Reich, the homosexuals were prey of the Nazis. Like the other 'contragenics', the homosexuals were either immediately shot and killed or else went to the concentration camps. In the camps, each prisoner was visibly coded to represent the reason why the person was there. The Jews had yellow stars; the gays had pink triangles, the very symbol that modern gay liberationists have accepted as a symbol of pride and unity.

Some of the other prisoners were also assigned pink triangles but as extra punishment for being labelled gay placed the individual at the bottom of the camp's pecking order

Hitler's Homophobia: Has Nothing Changed?

and the gays usually died first and the fastest. No one, even family, dared to contact them for fear of their own safety and almost all homosexuals were very much alone. Any death detail, like working in the cement works, were filled with homosexuals first. Even the other prisoners used the gays as body fillers, so that they themselves would not have to go. Needless to say, few gays survived the camps long. Those that did, like most of the survivors, are scarred.

But why do I bring this up now? The past is behind us now, why bring back these memories? Can we not just forget it ever happened? To these questions I must say an emphatic "NO!". Dare we think that such treatment of homosexuals is over? It is not. But like the concentration camps, we chose to ignore the situation. Men and women are abused daily, verbally and physically. It is not that rare that someone dies because of it. But does the world care? The whole AIDS epidemic was ignored by everyone except those it involved until AIDS was found to be able to affect all people.

Perhaps drawing the parallel to Hitler's regime is a little extreme. We acknowledge the fact that a lot of others died there too, far more than a few thousands of gays. But at least the persecution for the others has been officially ended. Not so for the millions of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in the West. The purpose of this supplement is to inform people of the problems that still exist and to give support to those of us who are finding it particularly difficult to acknowledge the reality of our emotional and physical needs. Not that shock is the preferred weapon. Only here is it intended. Rather than forcing the issue, perhaps it is best we enter into dialogue with those who might hurt us. This softer approach is not to indicate that we apologize for our existences. We are here and you cannot change that. Hitler tried, would you?

Instead of fighting each other, could it not be possible to live side by side without discord? We only want to end the hurt and the pain. The hurt and the pain for us as gays, lesbians, and bisexuals is real, very real. But until it is recognized by those who cause it (whether they know it or not), it will continue. Please read on and enter into aspects of our world as some of us have written of them. Try to understand that we mean no harm and just wish to live undisturbed. Try to understand that, with the difference of sexual orientation, we are no different than you.

By Cary Van Lingen



Out of the Closet

And Into Your Life

Gays and Lesbians constitute more than ten per cent of the population. So, if you know more than ten people, which we sincerely hope you do, some simple statistics should tell you that at least one of them is bound to be homosexual. In fact, if you have parental inclinations, keep this in mind: if you have three children, the odds of one of them being gay is about four in ten.

If you think you don't know any homosexuals, be prepared to be shocked. It's only a matter of time before someone pops the big surprise on you.

What not to say....

- "Are you sure?" or "How do you know?" Coming out is often a very traumatic experience. If someone tells you they're gay or lesbian, trust them; it takes an incredible amount of courage to make that pronouncement and it's not something they would say if they weren't certain.
- "Have you thought about seeing a psychiatrist?" Homosexuality is not a mental aberration. Apart from their sexual orientation and the discrimination resulting from bigoted attitudes, the lives of gays and lesbians are indistinguishable from those of others who pursue similar interests or careers.

What you should do....

- If your religious beliefs tell you homosexuality is a sin, try to keep that to yourself. Being a gay or lesbian is not a choice which they made; homosexuality is a fundamental part of their person, and cannot be changed. Telling them they're a sinner will only make the situation worse and may lose you a friend who has put a lot of trust in you.
- Be supportive and try to empathize with their feelings. Chances are good that for some time they've been working their courage up to tell you; keep in mind that they have put a lot of trust in you by making that declaration. Don't let them down by brushing the issue aside or, worse still, rejecting them. Let them know that it doesn't change anything, that you'll still be friends and that you're still there for them. Try to judge how comfortable they feel talking about it; if you are the first person they have ever told, be prepared for an emotional outpouring -- often the process of coming out releases feelings that have been held back for many years. Have a shoulder ready to be cried upon.

By Alison MacFarlane and Todd Veldhuizen
Reprinted from Imprint

I Hate Straights

An Anonymous But Not Innocuous Essay

I have friends. Some of them are straight. Year after year, I see my straight friends. I want to see them, to see how they are doing, to add newness to our long and complicated histories, to experience some continuity.

Year after year I continue to realize that the facts of my life are irrelevant to them and that I am only half listened to, that I am an appendage to the doings of a greater world, a world of power and privilege, of the laws of installation, a world of exclusion.

"That's not true," argue my straight friends. There is one certainty in the politics of power: those left out beg for inclusion, while the insiders claim that they already are. Men do it to women, whites do it to blacks, and everyone does it to queers.

The main dividing line, both conscious and unconscious, is procreation...and that magic word: Family. Frequently, the ones we are born into disown us when they find out who we really are, and to make matters worse, we are prevented from having our own. We are punished, insulted, cut off and treated like seditionaries in terms of child rearing, both damned if we try and damned if we abstain. It's as if the propagation of the species is such a fragile directive that without enforcing it as if it were an agenda, humankind would melt back into the primeval ooze.

I hate having to convince straight people that lesbians and gays live in a war zone, that we're surrounded by bomb blasts only we seem to hear, that our bodies and souls are heaped high, dead from fright or bashed or raped, dying from grief or disease, stripped of our personhood.

I hate straight people who can't listen to queer anger without saying, "Hey, all straight people aren't like that. I'm straight too, you know," as if their egos don't get

enough stroking or protection in this arrogant, heterosexual world. Why must we take care of them, in the midst of our just anger brought on by their fucked up society?! Why add the reassurance of "Of course, I don't mean you. You don't act that way." Let them figure out for themselves whether they deserve to be included in our anger.

But of course that would mean listening to our anger, which they almost never do. They deflect it, by saying "I'm not like that," or "You'll catch more flies with honey..." or "If you focus on the negative, you just give out more power," or "You're not the only one in the world who's suffering." They say "Don't yell at me, I'm on your side," or "I think you're overreacting," or "BOY, YOU'RE BITTER."

They've taught us that good queers don't get mad. They've taught us so well that we not only hide our anger from them we hide it in each other. WE EVEN HIDE IT FROM OURSELVES. We hide it with substance abuse and suicide and overachieving in the hope of proving our worth. They bash us and stab us and shoot us and bomb us in ever increasing numbers and still we freak out when angry queers carry banners or signs that say "BASH BACK". For the last decade they let us die in droves and still we thank President Bush for planting a fucking tree, applaud him for likening PWA's to car accident victims who refuse to wear seatbelts. LET YOURSELF BE ANGRY. Let yourself be angry that the price of our visibility is the constant threat of violence, anti-queer violence to which practically every segment of our society contributes. Let yourself feel angry that THERE IS NO PLACE IN THIS COUNTRY WHERE WE ARE SAFE, no place where we are not targeted for hatred and attack. The self-hatred, the suicide -- of the closet. The next time some straight person comes down on you for

being angry, tell them that until things change, you don't need any more evidence that the world turns at your expense. You don't need to see only hetero couples grocery shopping on your TV...You don't want any more baby pictures shoved in your face until you can have or keep your own. No more weddings, showers, anniversaries, please, unless they are our own brother and sisters celebrating. And tell them not to dismiss you by saying "You have rights," "You have privileges," "You're overreacting," or "You have a victim's mentality." Tell them "GO AWAY FROM ME until YOU can change." GO away and try on a world without the brave, strong queers that are its backbone, that are its guts and brains and souls. Go tell them go away until they have spent a month walking hand in hand with someone of the same sex. After they survive that, then you'll hear what they have to say about queer anger.

Reprinted from a New York City gay and lesbian pamphlet called "Queers Read This", this anonymous essay was the concluding entry.

Religious Tolerance

For gays and lesbians struggling with who they are and what their Church says they should be, there is help available.

Despite official and unofficial disapproval of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in most mainstream denominations, there are support groups for members of these churches. They are, by and large, located in Toronto, with the exception of the Metropolitan Community Church (the MCC). Many people are unaware of MCC's existence. It is a non-denominational Christian Church that has as its mission target the gays, lesbians, and bisexuals that would not otherwise be allowed to participate in Christian worship. For more information, phone 884-GLOW (884-4569) for more information on MCC in Kitchener-Waterloo.

There are also support groups for other faiths as well. Best represented is groups that help Jewish gays, lesbians, and bisexuals as well as groups for the parents of the same.

Support Groups located in Toronto and their affiliations:

Affirm: United Church of Canada

Aware: Christian Reform Church of Canada

Chutzpah: Jewish

Covenant Circles: Roman Catholic

Ex-Jehovah's Witness Gay and Lesbian Support Group

Holy Blossom Temple: a support group for men and women who are infected with HIV and those close to them

Jewish Support Groups for Families of Gays and Lesbians

Saga: Presbyterian

Numbers and contact names, meeting places and times, are available from GLOW at 884-4569.

DONELAN



Look at it this way, Ma! You'll have two doctors in the family, now.

You're Not Alone

National Coming Out Day is an occasion celebrated across North America by those who realize the need for gays and lesbians to assume a more visible profile. In Canada the date set for National Coming Out Day this year is October 15.

Homosexuals have traditionally been one of the most persecuted minorities in western societies; it was only with the advent of the Gay Liberation struggle that legislated oppression began to be repealed. The cornerstone of this movement is 'Coming Out' -- the act in which lesbians and gays declare their homosexuality to someone else. It is affirmations of these types which have raised homosexuals from a faceless minority to a politically active community. National Coming Out Day (NCOD) is observed each year to encourage gays and lesbians to take that step of declaring themselves homosexual, whether it be telling family and friends that they are homosexual or assuming a more active role in the struggle for their rights.

Many closeted gays and lesbians have an intense fear of coming out. They envision themselves being disowned by their parents, losing all of their friends, experiencing discrimination from superiors or professors, and being subjected to harassment from their peers. Unfortunately, these fears are sometimes justified. Why then do people risk these consequences and admit their homosexuality? Often it is because life in the closet can be quite painful. Unlike gays and lesbians who are out, those in the closet have to always censor their speech, thoughts, and actions. Their lives are one of deception: they must maintain a constant pretense of heterosexuality, often to the extent of dating members of

the opposite sex to avoid arousing the suspicions of their peers. There is also a feeling of isolation -- of being the "only" gay or lesbian in one's world. In particular, lesbian and gay youths face traumatic experiences before they can accept their sexuality; the only standards by which they can judge their self-worth are the prejudices and stereotypes held by those around them. Studies of gay and lesbian young adults place their attempted suicide rate at two to four times that of heterosexuals.

One of the primary objectives of NCOD is to encourage visibility thereby countering negative stereotypes and reducing the sense of isolation and low self worth. For many lesbian and gay people meeting their first openly gay person is the turning point at which they begin to accept their own sexuality.

NCOD also helps to remove barriers by providing greater personal contact between gays and straights thus causing straights to realize that homosexuals do exist, that they have faces, and that they are people with whom they may be acquainted. Nothing can compare with the effect of meeting a gay or lesbian, as such contact forces heterosexuals to bring their concept of homosexuality out of the abstract realm and into the personal. It is difficult for an individual to justify the repression of homosexuals when they themselves have a friend or child who is a gay or lesbian.

These are some of the reasons for coming out. However, life out of the closet, while certainly less restricted, is not untouched by the frequently negative attitudes of society towards homosexuality. Publicly declaring one's homosexuality can make the individual the target of gay bashers; every year people are verbally abused, physically injured or killed by those who loathe homosexuals and act out their feelings in violence. Despite anti-discriminatory legislation, openly homosexual people can face harassment by colleagues, discriminatory actions by superiors, and possible even loss of employment.

The hardships and discrimination endured by both closeted and openly homosexual people indicate the need to come out: as gays and lesbians assume a more visible profile in society, the level of ignorance and disinformation, and therefore intolerance, will decrease.

By Alison MacFarlane and Todd Veldhuizen

Reprinted from Imprint

Gays on Television

Something wonderful has happened. This previous decade has, like no other before it, set the trend for popularizing mentalities that employ education, understanding, and tolerance. Nowhere has this trend been more apparent than in television media.

Since its North American introduction, television has functioned as a reflection of society's greatest ideals -- TV shows us what we were, what we are, and what we can and possibly should be.

In the last decade, homosexuality is getting more and more representation on television. Most depictions of gays and lesbians on TV are very positive, if perhaps, for comic reasons, extreme. To illustrate the extent to which this is true, the following list represents a few of the shows I've watched this past week that have gay representation. Since I watch comparatively little television, I surmise that there are many more programs out there with gay content that I don't get a chance to see.

ROC (on Fox): In this program, one character plays a garbage man, and another a leeching musician. The last episode's topic was the same sex public declaration of commitment (marriage as far as the laws will let it go in America). The two conflicts in this episode were Uncle Phil telling his family he's gay, and Uncle Phil being in love with a white man (Uncle Phil is not white). Eventually his homosexuality is accepted, but the inter-racial relationship is left on tenuous terms.

In Living Colour (on Fox): This rather extreme comedy left us last season with a rather extreme season finale where one of the two rather hysterical high-camp hosts of the pseudo-programs 'Men on Art', 'Men on Film', 'Men on Books', etc... (all from a male point of view), had a sand-bag dropped on his head. Naturally, this knocked his mind

back on the 'straight' and narrow and he was no longer worth watching. This last episode had Blain (or is it Twan?) knock the other back to his sensibilities; big parties begin, and verily, everyone runs into camera view, rejoicing, and verily, being rather sexually deviant.

Roseanne (Channel 7): On this program, her frequently appearing boss is admittedly gay. This never causes any comic problems worth mentioning. Even when he's invited to the 'guys' poker game, and mentions his homosexuality, after a brief pause to consider things, the players of the game get back to normal. At the end of the program, Roseanne's husband asks, "Honey, how come you never told me your boss is gay?", to which she responds, "What does it matter? You're all pigs anyway!" In real life, Roseanne's brother is gay.

Thirtysomething (not on Fox): Apparently there are some gay characters here. It caused a big stink with advertisers, who pulled much of their support from the program, and the network. The show is just too dull to watch faithfully, so I'll leave it at that.

Kids in the Hall (CBC and HBO): Interestingly enough, the CBS has little problem running programs that just wouldn't appear on American TV in any sense. The Kids in the Hall are just such an example. With blatant faggery, with and without moral tales, hilarious high camp, and rather esoteric sense of comedy, the troupe has been giving the public what it wants. Recorded in Toronto, this semi-local production is about the most progressive, attitude wise, mass-marketed television show out there.

Codco (CBC): For those who can make sense of it, this surreal comedy show from the east brings us a fair bit of gay content. Most of the time though, one can't tell exactly what is happening through all the yelling going on.

Good and Evil (CKCO): This program is like many that, without expressly having gay characters, use a lot of gay humour seamlessly and transparently to achieve an effect. A funny joke they told last week:

"There were too many girls at that school after your money."

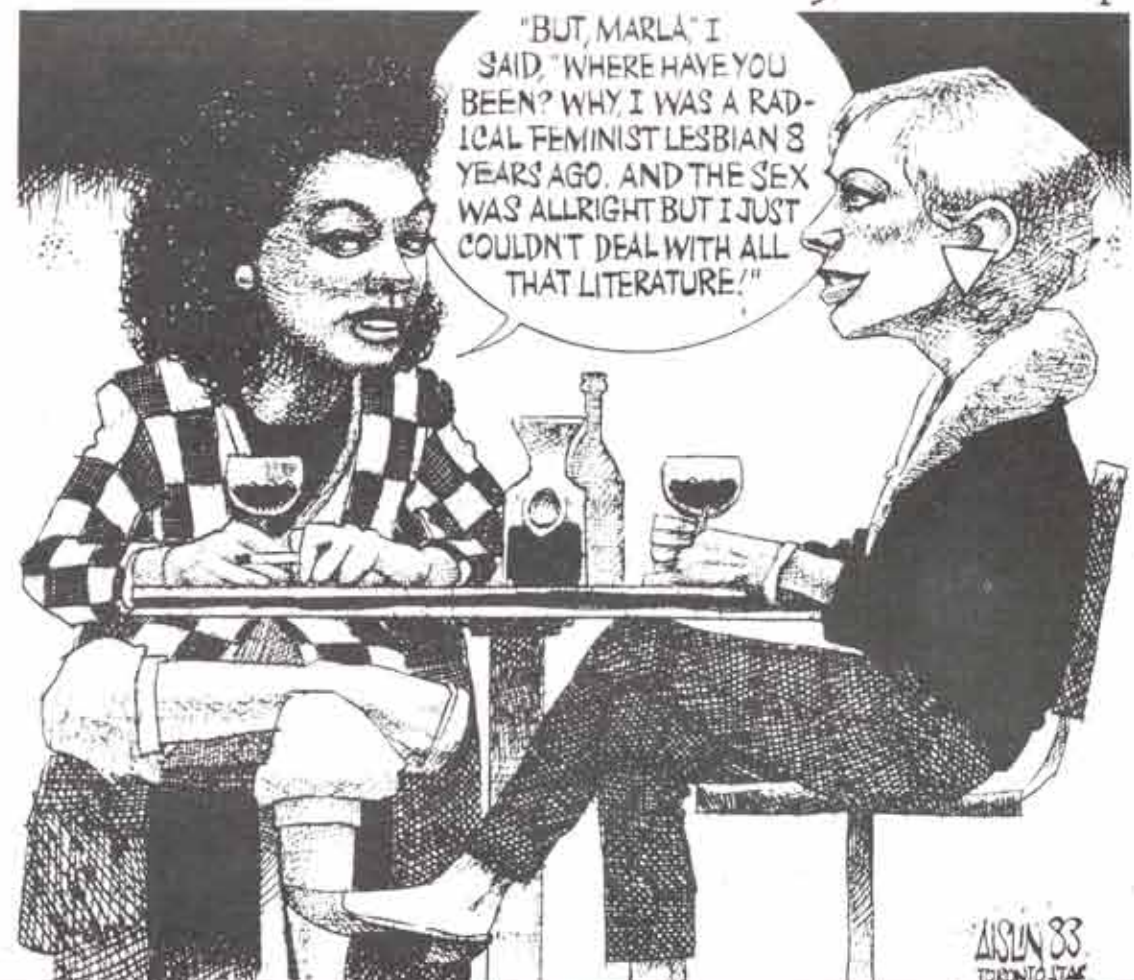
"Well, we solved that one. Now there'll be boys after me for my money."

Married With Children (Fox): Surely everyone remembers the episode where Al, the father figure of America's new Bunker family, feels deeply for a gay man who comes to him because Al's wife is seeing his husband. After the initial hysterics, Al gets all sensitive for this man, the man of his dreams. Not only does Al's man cook for him, but they enjoy watching sports together. (Apparently, Al's life doesn't revolve around much else.) The episode is full of Al's continued astonishment that the man's husband left him for Al's wife Peg -- more so that he left a working man who could make serious food.

In retrospect, while television media has, largely, done its best to make the viewing public 'comfortable' with expressed homosexuality, they have been forced to wash down any admirable character traits that the gay characters may possess and replace them with comic camp. The public must realize that a television comedy is an exaggerated production. What is presented for your viewing is not a clear cut reflection of reality. You can not take 'Blain' and 'Twan' (In Living Colour) as being representative in any capacity of homosexuals in general. Television sets can only take mindsets so far. Eventually you will have to look at homosexuality from a realistic point of view. Then, and only then, will you notice that there is no campy stereotypes. People are what people are, and their suffering is rarely comic.

It is wonderful that people are laughing transparently at homosexual humour, and we owe television for most of this. Eventually people will have to stop laughing, and look at people in clear sunlight, and not through picture-tube phosphors. While television is providing the viewing public with seeds and aspects of knowledge, only through thought can any of those seeds grow into a mature understanding worthy of our progressive generation.

By Paul Sop



Homosexual Harassment

We have all seen it before: the pointing of fingers, the less than innocent whispers, the ridicule, the verbal abuse, and, in some cases, physical abuse. These things happen both on and off campus. They occur between complete strangers and between former friends. These actions are usually unwanted and uncalled for and yet they occur anyway. Such actions are usually targeted against one particular group in society: the gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.

GLLOW



1971-1991

Homosexuals and bisexuals are targeted for no other reason except for the fact that the person(s), whether male or female, are not heterosexual and therefore different from the majority. This behaviour is inappropriate, and has been recognized as such at Laurier.

The university and student administrations in recent years have developed a

code of conduct by which members of both groups will live by. This commitment to fairness and equality is stated in the university's Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures:

Wilfrid Laurier University is committed to providing an environment for study, teaching, research work, and recreation for all members of the university community that is supportive of professional and personal development and free from sexual harassment.

The Policy continues, defining sexual harassment so that it includes, but is not limited to:

"sexual assault, verbal abuse of threats, unwelcome sexual invitations or requests, demands for sexual favours, or unwelcome and repeated innuendoes or taunting about a person's body, appearance or sexual orientation."

The key to making this policy work, however, is through the complaints of those feeling the pressure of sexual harassment. The onus is on the victim.

The Sexual Harassment Officer at WLU is Rose Blackmore, who can be contacted through the university, 884-1970, extension 6967, or at room 132K in the university facility on 202 Regina Street. Advice and assistance is available for those who need it.

The university has placed at everyone's disposal a weapon against sexual abuse, a weapon that has a great deal of potential. That, however, will not be used unless people who suffer undue abuse are willing to come forward and make a stand for themselves and their rights.



Bulbul, LNS NEWS SERVICE, 1978. (USA)

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