

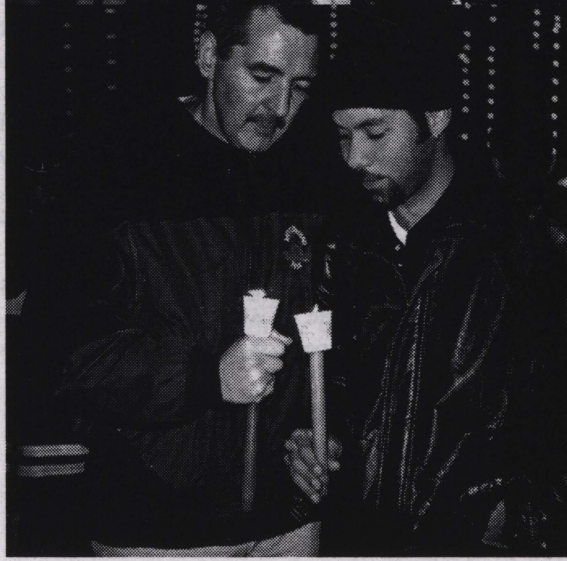
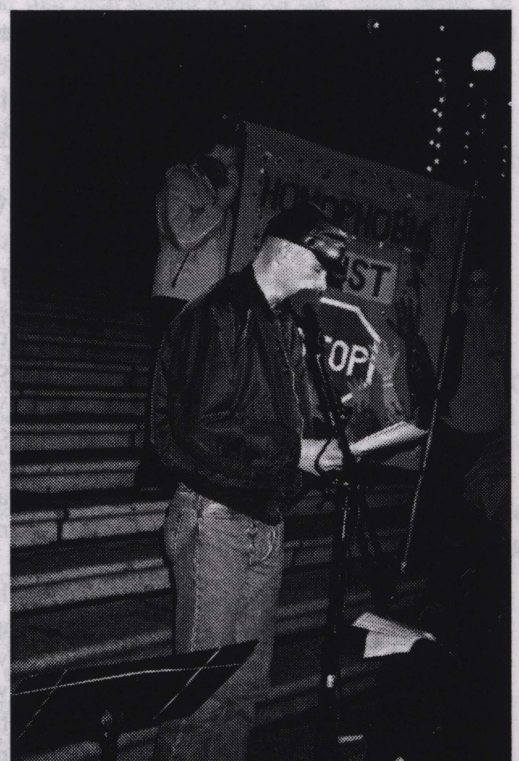
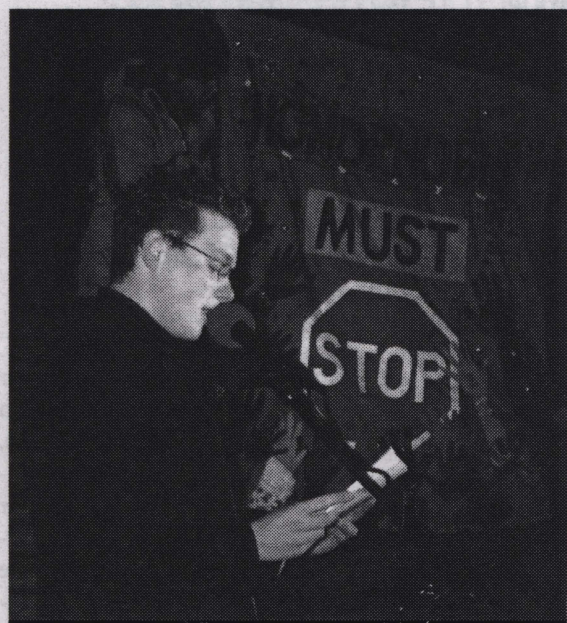
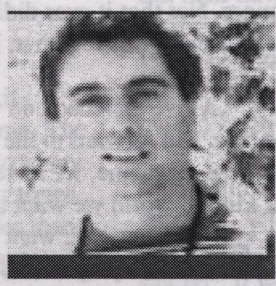
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LAVENDER RHINOCEROS

Vancouver Island's Premiere Queer Magazine
Volume Three, Number Nine
December, 2001 \$3.00

It
Can
Happen
Here

Aaron Webster
1960-2001



What's Inside

Queer Spirit
Personal Reflections by:
Jim Oliver &
James Beresford

Out on the Table
Queen's Rant
Growing Good Children
Life as a Tropical Fruit

UP FRONT

I thought writing this editorial would be easy. A hate crime was committed against us, so I knew what I would be talking about. We should all know by now that these things are never that easy. You would not believe how many times I have tried to write this editorial and failed. I have not been able to find a focus. I start by feeling my sadness but by the time I put pen to paper all I am able to find is anger. So much anger.

I am angry, like most of you, that people who had been taught that to hate him, and even harm him, was okay, murdered Aaron Webster in such brutal fashion. I am angry at an education system that still insists that gay history is irrelevant and tolerance need not be taught about sexual orientation because it offends a personal sensibility. But most of all I am angry with the gay community.

Angry with the gay community? Yes. I am angry because we have allowed silence to rule the day for far too long. I am angry that when we hear "fag" or "dyke" yelled from a passing car we think it is ok because we are so used to it. It is never ok. I am angry that we have allowed those words to become a common insult on playgrounds and schoolyards. And make no mistake; we allowed it by being silent. Would things have been different had we not been silent? We'll never know.

Most of all I am angry that anyone could sit back and witness a brutal act being committed and out of fear, or whatever other emotion was being felt, do nothing. Angry that we have allowed homophobia, which is sanctioned by the government and taught in so many ways, to become so internalized that we don't even realize how it makes us act.

So what do we do about it? The vigil was a start. Almost 300 queers and allies gathered on the steps of the legislature to say enough is enough, but it should have been 3000. We have to

stand up and be counted. We have to work on our fear. Most of all we have to stop being silent. Not just in big ways but in small ways too. Tell that co-worker that the gay joke wasn't funny. Don't eat at the fast food place whose owner is homophobic. Don't sit in the back of the bus or hide in a closet. Get involved, be part of something bigger than yourself.

Be proud of who you are.

It has been a tumultuous year. We have seen the world as we know it disappear with flight path of several planes. We have seen our complacency shattered with the swing of a bat. Our petty infighting and fracturing of our community into men vs. women, youth vs. adult, kinky vs. vanilla, single vs. coupled etc., isn't going to cut it anymore. Not that it ever did. We have always been in this together, like it or not.

As we look back on where we have been and forward to the new year and a new magazine, we have to decide what kind of world we want to live in, what kind of legacy we want to leave and how much we are prepared to help. We need to claim our rightful places in society. We can do it. We should do it. The time is now.

Next month...Outviews

We hope you are as excited as we are about the upcoming year and all it holds we hope to have a launch party for the magazine at the start of its second issue. We want to be your magazine so please do not hesitate to contact us. you are going to see small and large changes so bear with us as we move forward.

There will be some small administrative changes. all articles must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. there will be no exceptions. If the article is not received by the deadline it will not be published. All submissions should have name and e-mail address or phone number included so we can contact you.

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While the Lavender Rhinoceros is a queer publication it should not be assumed that all advertisers, contributors, letter writers are queer. All may be assumed to be allies.

Deadline for articles & advertising is the 1st of the month prior to the month of publication.

Our mandate is to provide a forum that celebrates all aspects of queer lives, to promote a healthy, visible community by giving voice to and honoring diverse and common interests and to promote healthy dialogue on such issues as sex/sexuality, class, culture, diversity, gender and community as a whole.

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bleedingrose_april@telus.net

Q/A Columns:

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Letters to the Editor

re: ageism

I was asked recently if I was "OLD" by a younger man who wanted to do a paper for a college course he was taking. He interviewed me. Was I "OLD" was the first question. My response was that one becomes old when one is constantly looking back at the good times that used to be. One is still young if one is looking forward to new projects. In my case I was looking forward to the reconstruction of my commercial building, to finishing my back tattoo and to getting out to windsurf the next season. I am 61.

I have encountered 40 and 50 year olds who talk about the good old days, before AIDS etc. To me THEY are the oldsters. Then there are the 20 year olds that do not have a clue about where they are going. No plans. Twenty is not young. By then one should have some clear idea about just how the bills are to be paid and should have stopped blaming the state for being so capitalist. It is interesting to me that so many 20-year-olds see themselves as victims. Being gay, there is a high chance that they truly are. But surely one of the best ways out of victimhood is to get out there and get a career.

I mention the above because, in my experience it usually directly impacts upon how "younger" men treat me. The younger men who are snide and dismissive are reacting to many bad past experiences with adults, usually their parents. At times at BJ's I feel positively invisible. There is nothing an older man can do about this except simply wait for the younger man to approach if and when he feels he can. To assume that an underemployed 20-year-old is stupid or lazy is a terrible mistake. Ageism can work both ways as The Queen said in her last article.

I consider it very poor taste for a man as old as I am to hit on a younger man. Some younger men badly want sex with old men but they are few and far between. In my experience the younger men who want sex with me are right up front in asking for it. I always wait for the younger man to make the first move. Thus, I have many, many younger friends who are able to laugh, drink and have fun with me without the fear and discomfort that I will put them in the embarrassing position of having to say — NO.

Very often my younger friends treat me like a parent. They borrow money; they do their laundry at my place; they have Sunday dinners etc. They are warm and considerate and loving and most of all they are ruthless in their jibing humour. They keep me intellectually honest. Also, my life is filled with new projects and new ideas. I am not sitting like a lump at the bar with nothing interesting to say. I take risks. Life is far from a predictable event. I am out there making life happen as an aggressive queer. I am not passively sitting, in reaction to life's problems. Because of this I rarely experience Ageism.

As one ages youth become more and more beautiful. Magic. Pain free. Truly, there is nothing wrong with celebrating youth and beauty but there are very few really magnificent physical specimens. The rest of us are left with our warts, our skinny bodies, our fat, our big noses, our colour, our baldness, little cocks — whatever. But men are sexually stimulated through their EYES. This is the way we ARE. It is all very well to be PC and say that men should look for the "inner being" of a date. Give me one break!!! Sexual fantasy in almost all cases is about a visual image. The unconscious thinks in pictures - donchaknow. The inner quality of the date is something to be explored AFTER you fuck him, not before. So ageism, racism, cripism, fatism will be with us always. Fortunately this fact only comes into play in the desire for sex. In the bar culture it is the big thing.

As we age each one of us has to step back from the youth and beauty culture. It is time to develop depth, warmth and understanding. The real ageism is that inner kind of self-loathing that some men experience because they reach 30 or 40 or 60. This is the ageism within oneself. This is the ageism that old men have when they claw indiscriminately after youthful tricks. Small wonder then those younger men, who seem to intuitively know how to avoid a bad date, rebuff them. This is a problem just as big as the 20-year-old's problem of establishing career. Each decade has its unique problems.

In the end all one can say is, "Let's be a little kinder to one another." What the Queen said is right, "If you don't want to sleep with the guy then just thank him for the compliment and say no." It works both ways. I have said NO to younger men several times and found that they were insulted and angry in spite of the fact that I thanked them for the compliment. Hmmmmmmm???

Jim Kirk

Letters to the Editor continued on next page...



Letters to the Editor continued

Tears

re: Out on the Table

Dear Dating Goddess,

I am just writing this letter to tell you how much I have enjoyed your column. Your past three articles have made me smile not to mention they come in handy. I found the questions you suggested in the last one I read especially humorous. (are they poly? Does their partner know? Etc.) My suggestion for a future column is the pros and cons of a standard date, dinner or movie, and your thoughts on alternatives to the ordinary. Maybe you could suggest to your readers, both male and female, ways to prepare for a first date. There are still some people out there who don't do the basics like bath, brush teeth and put on clean clothes. Never mind clean sheets and trimmed nails. What about the question of flowers? Or what happens when a date goes bad? Do you stay and complete it or...do you check your messages and pretend there is an emergency? I am sure that whatever your next column is a smile will form on my face as I am reading it.

Linzy P. Starr

I have never felt like I had to write to a magazine or business before but I think now is the time. I came into your store just after moving to Victoria a few months ago. I had been told about your place at the bar even though one guy said that men don't go there I decided to see for myself. What I found was a friendly store and wonderful women who did everything they could to make me feel at home. I was given menus of local gay restaurants, the pink pages, information about local groups and events as well as this interesting little magazine. I have found it a good read for the last few months and it gets better and more interesting each time I pick it up. I have also found that if I leave it out at my house friends will read it as well. It has created some heated conversations, I'll tell you. I have also found that the man who told me that men don't go to The Bleeding Rose was wrong as most of the men I have met and who I consider friends have at least been there and most consider themselves repeat customers or friends of the ladies. I hope I have that chance as well.

Bob



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We will move forward

And we will say no, this is not ok

more than That, we say we will Fight

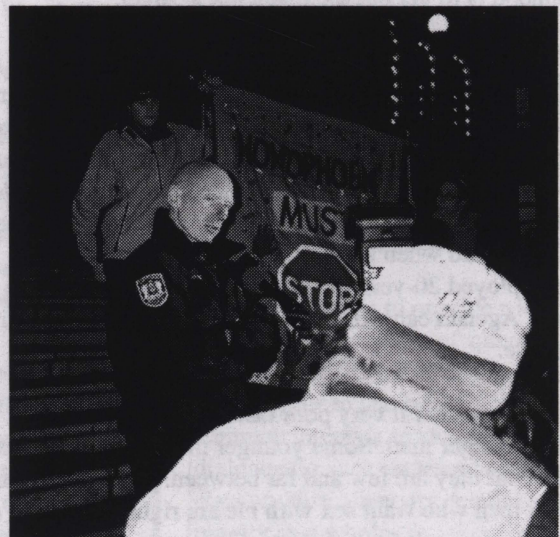
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Gay man murdered in Vancouver's Stanley Park

by: Matt Nagle

(re-printed with permission)

In what is believed by police to be British Columbia's first fatal Gay bashing, a 42-year-old Gay man was beaten unconscious and later died from injuries received in a vicious attack in Stanley Park. Vancouver's Gay community is angry and wary over the murder of their community friend, Aaron Webster.

"People are outraged," Murray Bilida told the Toronto Globe and Mail. Bilida helped organize a memorial service, march and rally for Webster that drew upwards of 1,500 people. "It shows we're still not immune to this type of violence, even though we're in the jurisdiction with the strongest laws and strongest protections possibly in the world."

Vancouver Police Inspector Dave Jones spoke at the memorial service and said the city's police will "do everything in our power to find those people and bring them to justice."

A longtime friend of Webster's found Aaron's body at 2:30 a.m. Saturday in an area of Stanley Park frequented by Gay strollers. Webster was lying in the road next to his car, beaten severely with a baseball bat or other blunt instrument, naked and unconscious, wearing nothing but hiking boots. Webster died from his injuries.

Ontario's National Post reports that two witnesses interviewed by police said they saw the killing, which involved three men. The witnesses described one as the attacker, a white man in his early 20s, wearing a baseball cap backwards. The attacker beat Webster with either a baseball bat or a pool cue, the witnesses said. The two other men with the attacker stood and watched, and police have issued a public plea for these two men to come forward.

Hunt For Aaron's Killers Grows Cold

by: Rich Peters

Newscenter, Vancouver

Aaron Webster's killer may never be found. Webster is the gay man found naked and near death in a cruising area of Vancouver's Stanley Park two weeks ago. Police said he had been beaten to death with a baseball bat or pool cue.

Officially labeled a hate-crime, the Vancouver Police Department followed up a number of leads but are no closer to finding the murderer of the popular 41 year old man. Based on accounts of other men in the park at the time, as many as four people were involved in the slaying.

Police say that unless one of the accomplices comes forward the only way they will catch the killer is if he strikes again. Emergency dispatchers have been told to pass all 911 calls regarding suspected gay bashing directly to police.

At a public meeting a week ago, members of the gay community expressed concern that police were too slow to respond. Insp. David Jones of the Vancouver Police Department said on the weekend: "We need to reassure the [gay] community that we're doing everything we can to keep them safe."

Jones also encouraged people to call the gay bashing line 604-899-6203 and report any homophobic incidents. He said even verbal abuse shouted from cars on Davie Street in the Gay Village should be reported and the license numbers of the cars recorded. That list will become a reference for police and those on it can expect to be contacted, Jones said.

A gay community fund set up to get money to offer a reward has grown to \$2,000. Community leaders are hoping to raise \$10,000. The Justice for Aaron Webster Fund has an account at VanCity Credit Union and donations can be made at any branch.



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**What is the definition of a slut?
Someone that has slept with one more person
than I have.**

The gay community, particularly the gay male community, has always been associated with promiscuous sexuality. Defining gay people as wholly involved with their crotches was a way to undermine our credibility as a community and to justify denying our basic human rights. If we as a community are so entirely mesmerized by our sexuality, how come we aren't having any fun? That's right, you heard me. Where the hell are all these mythical nymphs and satyrs? I don't know about you, but for all my efforts, I can't seem to get into the wrong crowd...

Granted I am new to Victoria and so I don't know that many people but there were gays in Nanaimo and they weren't having any fun either. I can't claim to be an expert on sexuality in the men's community but in the lesbian community things are about as carnal as a Baptist Church picnic. Except with my gay male friends, I haven't had a decent lewd conversation in years. Come on all you dashing dykes and flamboyant femmes, come out come out wherever you are.

We don't even talk about sex – never mind practice it. When was the last time any of you had a discussion about matters below the neck? Or above it, for that matter. I wouldn't mind being condemned for being obsessed with sex if there were any truth to it. Take sluts for example (your line is "sure, anytime anywhere") How many real sluts are there in the world? I have worked hard to sully my reputation (do you have any idea how many bathroom walls I've written my name and number on?)

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**Linda
Fraser**

Pucker Up: Advice on Sex and Sexual Health

The mind simply boggles. Not to mention all the money I have spent getting people to start rumours about me; and what do I get? Nothing. I mean I've tried to find someone to swing from the chandelier with but nobody even has a chandelier anymore never mind the energy to swing from it. Reading Joanne Loulan or Pat Califia a person could get the impression that all lesbians were having a good time. I'm here to tell you that that is not so. Or if it is, no one has invited me to the party...

What's wrong with us? Is it the weather? Are we getting old? What? There are no baths for lesbians; there aren't even any regular live sex shows that feature women. There are a few movies I guess, but I have always preferred first hand experience to spectator sports...

Take this column, for instance. I haven't said one single word that is actually sexual, except slut of course but that's hardly a how-to manual. Let's try to fix this. Go out and have a conversation with your friend or friends about sex. You know, after dinner and before the Rummoli game, ask someone to define cunnilingus or sixty-nine. Play truth or dare for points instead of bridge. Try a foursome group grope instead of a golf game. You can do it. I know you can. After all, we have a reputation to keep up...



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OUT ON THE TABLE: DATING TIPS FOR THE NAÏVE AND THE JADED

By: *Monica Kendel*

Tell me what you want, what you really really want, what you really really really really really want.

So you're trying to be original. You want to impress the hell out of your main squeeze. My advice is... Find out what she wants, and give it to her! Here's the catch. Go big; go really, really big!

Try any or all of the following:

- a) The group sex thing – this can be entertaining, if not a nightmare to coordinate – you know, all those body fluids and all that. If you're going to try this, you definitely need to be a top... if you're a top, you already know this! If you're not a top, then go to the next suggestion.
- b) Try a new position - Tired of the same old swing? Get creative. Try back to back. Trust me, this is a good one! Foot to crotch (not necessarily dainty – I didn't promise dainty) Go to the library and do some research – in fact, try out the sample positions right there in the library! Advise a close friend of your plan and ensure that you have saved up for bail.
- c) Learn to seduce in another language. Need I say more mon petit chou? Make sure you mean cabbage when you say cabbage.
- d) Rent a few videos from the XXX section. Remember, we have a lot to learn from our pig friends (see a few issues back!) Dress up as one of the porn stars (which assumes that clothing is involved) and adopt the personae. Tip – if you choose to act like a macho shit head, you probably will not make a favourable impression.
- e) Polish all their boots. I mean all their boots, and I mean polish! Buff until your little heart is racing, til sweat is rolling down between your breasts, til your thighs are lathered – got the idea? To really impress, one could buff in the buff. And as Martha would agree, it's always nice to have a theme – so, perhaps you might serve a beverage in a new pair of stilettos.
- f) Switch. If you're the bottom, scare the pants off your lover with a dramatic topping. If you're the top, tie yourself to your flame's bed and leave the rest to fate. Make sure it's not the day the cleaning person comes around... or, make sure it is the day the cleaning person comes around. Whatever turns your crank.

g) Speaking of crank, try venturing where no man has gone before—the final frontier! La Bamba. Really, don't knock it til you've tried it. And if you've tried it, and you don't like it, then may I suggest another practitioner might be just what it takes?

h) Bunny down the hole. You with me?

So who needs a lot of money to dazzle your honey this holiday season! A little trip to the hardware store can do wonders for your dating repertoire. Who knows, you might even get a reputation! If you're lucky!

PS: Linzy P. Starr is due for a big spanking for not religiously reading previous OUT ON THE TABLE – her indiscretion is evident from the sweet but silly questions in her recent letter to the editor. But don't be shy folks, write in! I dare you.

PSS: Call to all perverts who write and perform readings... in February OUT ON THE TABLE and Bleeding Rose are hosting a BOOT POLISHING fundraising event for PEERS. This event will feature boot polishing and readings related to boots, shoe fetishes, polishing, feet etc. So if you have something to read on this theme or would like to volunteer as a polisher, contact the Bleeding Rose.



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THE QUEEN'S RANT

When I was a little girl, or shall I say when I was a young nelly boy, I remember when Christmas time was exciting! It was a time of year I looked forward to. And it was always at the end of December. Now that I've grown into a sophisticated and lovely um... lady ☺, Christmas seems to start before we even have a chance to put our Halloween costumes away! And then early November arrives with all those cheery merry ho-ho commercials. Subtly, so no one would notice right away, our fine city has evergreen crap decorated all over our buildings and street lights. Just as Scorpio passes the party torch to Sagittarius, BANG! Twinkling lights and pastel ribbons are added to the crappy evergreens and the malls play those oh so enjoyable Christmas carols. Before I know it, by the first of December, I think I am going to be sick! Since when did a couple of holidays turn into a three month long circus?

There's the pressure of purchasing the perfect personal present! Was it nice enough? Will they like it? Did I get everyone? I turn to my mother for moral support, but instead, I've turned into- 'GEENA- LICKER OF STAMPS' Because this year Mom has decided to mail out two hundred and fifty-two all sort Merry Christmas/Happy New Years cards. "Well last year so and so accidentally sent a card to so and so now she has to send him one through me and now this year it's my turn." Says Mom while I wince from another paper cut.

When did Christmas turn into a chain mail nightmare? Will you get bad luck if you forget your dentist's secretary? And don't get me started on Grandma's indestructible fruitcake that I swear gets recycled from one person to another over the years.

I then, take a deep breath, and realize this doesn't have to get so hectic. I'm not trying to say that gift giving is bad. It can be fun, an expression of your feelings for another person. Just please don't let it be the be all and end all of your holidays. Don't let it put you in the poor house!

Julian Young Ph.D. (cand)
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When I was little Christmas was all about what did Santa give me this year. Later it was about giving presents with my new disposable income. Now my favorite gift is time well spent with those I love and care about. With the turmoil in the world today, after Aaron Webster's murder and Sept. 11th, my thoughts about the ideal Christmas have changed.

My ideal Christmas this year will be one week, just one, of visiting friends and relatives. Enjoying a hearty home cooked meal, short bread, rum and eggnog, my Mom's homemade wine, and even though I am in my mid-twenties, Santa still finds away to fill my stocking under the tree (only when I visit Mom). Every one brings a little something to the table and we all leave a little constipated and gassy. Then look forward to the coming new year.

I lift my glass of rum and eggnog and wish all of you a merry little non-stressful Christmas and or holiday and or Hanukkah ☺

Love
Your Reigning Miss Gay Vancouver Island

Geena Smirnoff



Brooke Miller

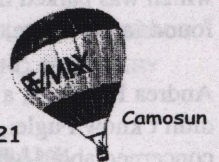
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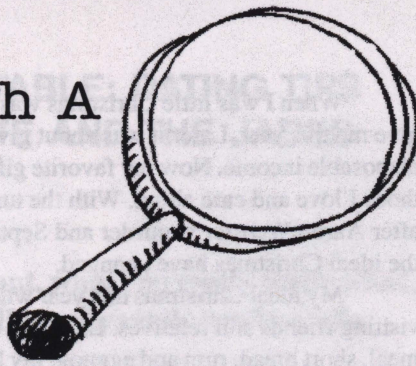
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Through A



Queer Lens

Park Sex a Good Thing?

British police are searching for a masked man who viciously beats gay men in a cruising park in Manchester. Known locally as Alkrington Woods it has been featured as a hot spot for park sex on Internet sites around the world. Over the last few months, 24 men have been attacked in the woods.

The area was the scene of the unsolved murder of a gay man in March 1997. Health care worker Trevor Candlin, 41, was found stabbed to death. Despite a huge publicity drive, his killer has never been found. Police say they are not yet ready to make a connection between the murder and the recent attacks.

Class Action Suit Brought against Canadian Govt.

Lawyers in four Canadian cities announced a \$400 million class action suit against the government of Canada seeking survivor benefits for about 10,000 gays and lesbians. The suit names the Attorney General of Canada and accuses the government of arbitrarily excluding a vast number of gays and lesbians who lost their partners between 1985 and 1998.

Gay Community Left Asking why Once Again

Brad Matthew Fuglei, a 19-year-old who organized gay rights rallies at his high school in Omaha, Neb., died in an apparent suicide late November, according to the Omaha World-Herald. Family, friends and members of the community were reportedly "bewildered" as to why the talented, upbeat 2001 graduate of North High School, who came out at the age of 14 and worked with several GSAs, would take his life. Omaha police report that Fuglei was found by his mother in the driver's seat of his car, which was parked in the garage and running. A suicide note was found in the house, but details were not released.

Andrea Flanagan, a Creighton University law student who didn't know Fuglei, wrote: "We should all be extremely concerned about what we have lost here. We as individuals, we as strangers, we as a community. We have lost a bright soul, a shining star, someone who made such a difference in his short lifetime yet has left us wondering ... what could have been?"

Tolerance is up, but we're still afraid.

A large majority of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in cities are feeling better about their place in society, but that hasn't stopped many from worrying about being beaten up on the street, according to a survey released today.

Nearly 4 out of every 10 gays polled said they fear anti-gay violence will be directed against them personally, and 32 percent said they've been physically attacked because they're homosexual. The gay survey was limited to 15 major metropolitan areas across North America.

Gay Trial in Egypt and Aftermath

On Nov. 14, 2001, Egypt sentenced 23 men to prison terms because they were found guilty of practicing "sexual immorality," a euphemism for homosexuality. A total of 52 men were on trial and detained for four months; 29 were acquitted. The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission also reported that Egypt has arrested more men for alleged homosexuality. The 52 men had been arrested in May while attending a party on a floating nightclub on the Nile River, and the subsequent months of trial hearings generated sensational local media coverage and outcries from international human rights groups.

Pee Wee in trouble again

Pee Wee Herman is in trouble with the law again. Los Angeles police searched Pee Wee's home for several hours caring off what witnesses said were several boxes of his belongings. Sources say it all has to do with a kiddie porn investigation. His spokesperson says that his client is not involved in any illegal activity.



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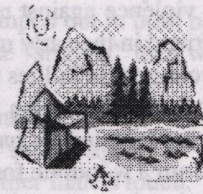


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The Victoria Pride Society, in conjunction with several community groups, is proud to announce that it will be co-producing the very first Mr. and Ms. Vancouver Island Leather Contests. This will be an official event in preparation for the 2003 Mr. BC Leather competition. We are seeking volunteers to help in planning and execution of this fun, weekend long event. The weekend will consist of meet-and-greets, vendor areas, the contest, a brunch and play parties. If you would like to get involved, compete, or for more information, please e-mail bleedingrose@telus.net or call 385-3099. We are having our next meeting soon...**GET INVOLVED!!**

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Personal Reflection Vigil Speech by Jim Oliver Men's Wellness Program, AVI

The say life begins at 40. Not so for Aaron Webster. His life was snuffed out in brutal violence just a year after his fortieth birthday. I am sickened thinking about the extent of fear and hatred that his killers must have had to watch Aaron's face as they literally bashed his brains out. So full of rage, so hateful so lost to their humanity. It's hard to comprehend. But the violence that led to Aaron's death is all around us as gay and lesbian people. Yes, here in Victoria.

I recall the day that I could have been an Aaron, a statistic in the historical violence against us. Walking through James Bay with a male friend in the early morning hours a few years ago, a car full of young male bullies taunting, intimidating, circling, blocking our path. Terrorism. I remember the fear, the sick, sick dread of being targeted for hatred. I recall going into a yard to get sticks from a woodpile for defense, my heart racing. Fear. I can't imagine the extent of Aaron's fear and suffering. I recall the hate attack on two gay men this past June on Broad Street, singled out because they dared to hug goodnight on the street. Seriously injured. Pain, fear, dread.

Being attacked because you are gay, or because of your colour, or as any minority, is not like being robbed, which is awful enough. It is being attacked and targeted for Who We Are. Well I am here to say that we are not going to retreat. We are not going to go back into the closet. We are not going to be silent. We are going to be proud of the beautiful people that we are, and we are going to proclaim it out loud. Because if we are silent, if we retreat, the fear mongers, the ignorant, the intolerant, the thugs and murderers ... will win. We have been fighting this battle for a long time. Attacks on our community have always existed and come from many angles – and they will continue.

The battle for equality is not over, and it will not end until we are ALL equal. Equal in law, equal in status, equal in respect, equal in treatment, equal in access, equal in acceptance. Equal. Not sort of equal, not mostly equal, not 'equal enough'. Equal in every respect. An equality with no moral divider, where love is love and hate is hate. For a safe world for gays and lesbians there can be no distinction made in the moral consciousness between heterosexual and homosexual. It is to love another – that is all.

Some will say that because Aaron was in a known gay cruising area, we shouldn't be surprised this happened. That he shouldn't have been there in the first place. Blame the victim. No way. Aaron was singled out and attacked because of what he represented to others, because of who he was as a human being.

To brutalize another human being you must first stop seeing them as human. This is the extreme consequence of a heterosexist society that values heterosexuality and devalues homosexuality, at all levels of our culture, from the family to the schools, to the church - to the State.

This hatred was taught. It was taught in homes, taught in schools, taught on the playgrounds, taught in churches. It was taught and it can be untaught, if there is a will to do so. But there is no comprehensive anti-homophobia education program or curriculum in BC schools and there must be.

To those who oppose teaching the value of respect for human diversity, a diversity that unapologetically includes homosexuality, I say you are perpetuating this violence. To those in the system who know that effective homophobia education is a glaring need but say and do nothing, I say you are perpetuating this violence. To the school administrators and parents groups who actively put up roadblocks to queer youth organizing in the schools, I say you are perpetuating this violence. To the Minister of Education and the Premier, as long as there is no comprehensive anti-homophobia education in the schools, and as long as queer youth remain unsupported – I say you are perpetuating this violence. To those who use religion to spread intolerance toward gays and lesbians, I say you too are perpetuating this violence.

YouthQuest, queer youth for queer youth with its wonderful education and support programs, is right now being shut out of many schools by intolerant administrations and parent groups. You see, it is not enough to say "we work hard to see that all students are treated with respect". Schools must actively support queer youth. FAGGOT is THE slur in schools today. Queer youth live in fear of verbal and physical attacks on a daily basis. And they deal with it in isolation. If they are not out they can't get support anywhere including at home. If they do come out, many queer youth are kicked out of their homes. Their school grades suffer. They are more likely to drop out and much more likely to attempt or complete suicide than heterosexual youth.

Gay-Straight Alliances are often discouraged, not encouraged. Active, deliberate roadblocks are put up to their formation.

There are exceptions and you know who you are. Some of you are here tonight. Thank you.

But gay is still a dirty word; anti-gay slurs go unchallenged in the classroom, in the hallway, in the gym and on the field. School is often a nasty, violent, fearful place for far too many. And it has to stop. Or the violence will continue to happen through the generations.

(Continued on next page...)

(Continued from last page...)

I want to say to the queer youth out there in every school in this city, on this island, in this province and in this country ... DEMAND safe spaces in your schools. Organize. Demand the rights and privileges afforded any other school group, club, athletic or otherwise. DEMAND the right to form a gay-straight alliance or gay club in your school. DEMAND the same right to post, advertise and be in the announcements like every other school club. CHALLENGE the homophobic culture. And remember, rights have never been given to anyone! They have been fought for, sacrificed for, and won. If you are targeted for harassment because you are gay or lesbian or perceived to be, DEMAND that your school act to stop it! Accept no less.

To the teachers and counselors, administrators, parents and all of us in the gay and lesbian community who are supportive of the efforts and needs of these youth, stand up and be counted - they need you.

To the youth organizing queer youth groups in schools and elsewhere and refusing to hide away who you are, do not despair at the resistance you encounter. Forge ahead - you are the future of the gay rights movement.

So what can we do about all of this tonight, here as individuals? We can all live our lives as out, visible and proud gay and lesbian people without apology. If Aaron's life can be the glue that moves us forward aggressively toward our complete civil rights, then his life has not been given in vain.

Remember ... this is about being OUT, being STRONG and being VISIBLE. And it's about refusing to apologize to anyone for who we are.

Personal Reflection Gordon de Frane Coast Salish (Chemainus/Penelakut Nations)

The day the news broke, I lit five candles. It was 10 November 2001. I lit one for each of the attackers and one for Aaron Webster. I began praying for all five people. Five suffered, one no longer suffers, and the other four will be forever haunted by their actions; their ancestors will see them as polluted, untouchable when it's their time.

I prayed for Aaron's ancestors to welcome him, guide him and help him understand what had happened to him. In Salish teachings, we are taught that when someone is taken; it's because the ancestors had need of them in the other world.

In this world, I see Aaron Webster as a HMS Titanic issue: we did not know there were not enough life boats aboard; we didn't know there was a problem in progress until the great ship went down. The issue or problem in this case is our own sense of comfortableness. In BC, being Gay is okay legislatively speaking. It is a crime to discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation.

Elsewhere in the country small and large victories have been won or are being fought in the courts at all levels, concerning Gay rights. Gay people are human. Gay rights are human rights.

Organized labour has written same-sex benefits into many of their collective agreements. Every year Pride Parades and Festivals are celebrated across the country. They keep getting bigger and more prominent than ever before. We were really getting comfortable.

I got comfortable. I used to go to the Faery Forest. I remember when I was first introduced to Beacon Hill Park, back when God was a kid, and the free anonymous sex everywhere. I was strolling through the park one day. I used to stroll quite regularly.

I have known the trails of the Faery Forest in Victoria as well as the well-worn weathered paths of Bowen Park in Nanaimo. I have camped out in both parks waiting for the bars to close and all those "straight" men who some how got lost going home.

I wanted companionship.

I wanted to ease my skin hunger.

I wanted to feel another male's touch.

Too often, I came out so filled with self-hate and self-loathing that I had seriously contemplated suicide. The madness that drove me into the park was eclipsed by the madness that I uncovered inside those hidden alcoves and mystic grottoes of male sexuality.

Well, change does happen. I rediscovered my indigenous spirituality. I rediscovered the sacred men and women in many indigenous cultures. My teachings in the way of my people resumed.

I learned that trying to feed my being on sex and sexuality alone, not that I was ever the promiscuous-type, was not enough. At that time, I was not doing things in a good way. It was not balanced. I was not in a good way.

My days in the park are captured in history. They are reflected memories cast against a backdrop of self-realization and self-actualization. Today, I am defined by my community, my teachings and myself.

Aaron Webster will not get the chance for self-realization and self-actualization in this world. He was strolling in the park one day. It is quite possible that he was seeking just as I used to search. I strolled out of the park. He will never stroll again in this world. He will receive instruction in spirituality from his ancestors and the teachings that will guide him there. His need to fulfil his skin hunger has to come to an end.

It was a hate crime, of that there's no doubt. But it wasn't a hate crime just against Aaron. What those four young people did was only a symptom. The cause is hidden in Canadian Society, any society really, that does not value its people, its humans. And his murderers, who waged war on him, walk free, in the immediate, believing that they have somehow helped rid the world of one of society's evil ones.

I lit five candles. I prayed for me, for the world, for Aaron and especially for Aaron's murderers.

Life as a Tropical Fruit

By Ignacio Rodríguez

No Toleration of Intolerance

"We are not afraid to be queer and different. If that means hell – well, hell we'll take the chance. They are so straight uptight upright and rigid, they march in lockstep, we prefer to dance"
(M. Spoliansky & K. Schwabach: *Lavender Song*).

This column is supposed to gather in a "light" way my impressions of the Victoria gay community as seen by a young foreign gay journalist. It is hard to be "light" after Aaron Webster's murder. In this edition, I wanted to talk about gay stereotypes - not only gay stereotypes according to straight people, but also ones we apply to ourselves within the gay community. Right now all I can think about is all the violence that we are victims of simply because we are queer. And we all know that being queer means being different.

I've tried to give some order to my thoughts and write this down quite a few times, but it's been difficult because hate crimes don't make any sense. However, I'll try to put down on the paper the things that keep going through my mind. It may be liberating for me and – hopefully – for you too.

At this moment, I feel angry. I feel sad. Also, a bit confused. Pieces of songs and quotes pop into my head, as well as different situations and different victims of hate crimes. I keep asking myself how many more Aaron Webster's are needed for things to change? How many more Matthew Sheppard's? How many more gay bashings? How many more teen suicides?

"Nothing brings people together like being afraid together" (Marguerite Yourcenar: *Alexis*). It was extremely cathartic to attend the vigil honoring Webster's life and to make noise for once. Break the silence. If fear – and the anger that being afraid produces in us - brought us together, let's do something productive with it.

"Better to light a candle than curse darkness" (Chinese Proverb). Rights are the muscles of Freedom: if we don't exercise them they become limp and numb, and one fine day when you want to use them, you realize that you can't. During moments of crisis is when we have to be more proactive. Let's get matches and candles!

It's been said many times that we live in violent times. Violence against the gay community comes from all kind of sources: governments which almost at the beat of Whitney Houston's *"It's not right but it's okay"* say that banning gay marriage is discriminatory, but that's alright; religions condemning homosexuality without realizing that it was God who made

us gays and lesbians - it wasn't our choice; strangers in the streets mocking us, beating us. Rights are not given. They must be taken. *"People like us: we get through the day surviving the city way better than most"* (Michael John LaChiusa: *The Wild Party*)

Christians Say Hate Crime Exaggerated

Family rights campaigners from the religious right are saying that reports of hate crime against homosexuals have been greatly exaggerated.

Bob Knight of the Culture and Family Institute said that gay rights advocates use the expression "hate crime" as "a convenient political tool to further their agenda."

Knight said: "We have never had an epidemic of hate crimes against homosexuals. We've had some isolated incidents, and they have all been prosecuted. There is no record that homosexuals are receiving any less treatment from the law than anyone else has received, and yet homosexual activist organisations try to inflate hate crime statistics in order to pass very ill-advised laws that will eventually lead to suppression of speech regarding homosexuality."

Knight's comments follow figures released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation which state that hate crime has risen by 2% over the last year.


The bureau said that 8062 incidents were reported during 2000, a rise of 187 from the previous year. The rise is significant because the information has been reported from 432 fewer police agencies.

The figures include 19 people who were murdered as a result of a hate crime.

The FBI classifies hate crime as that which is triggered by the victim's race, religion, disability, national origin or sexual orientation.

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Queer Spirit

By: Jenny Laing

"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine..."

The desultory tones of a few cold people clutching guttering candles, mournfully sounding an ironic cry while we waited in the drizzle for Jannit Rabinovitch to start the proceedings. The voices of a few, caught by news-hungry cameras, singing of light in the darkness, speaking of a light extinguished.

I listened, and I felt afraid. Not for my personal safety, but for the children. I am afraid for the straight children who are growing up in a world torn by violence and pain, who see their only response as being one of violence. I am afraid for the parents who are so bound by their own fear that they won't talk to their children about all the possibilities that lie before them. And I am afraid for the faith communities that ignore the fact of a queer community, and teach "one man, one woman, 2.5 children" as the only possibility for family.

Where do we find the places where we can begin to wipe out the fear and start the healing? Not in the churches, synagogues or mosques, that's for sure. It is a rare faith community indeed that speaks of gay youth, of transgendered parents, or of aging lesbians. Most of the time, in the most liberal of congregations, queer members are paraded out during June as poster children for desegregation, to be admired and murmured over and then shuffled to the back of the bus once again. There are a few exceptional congregations, but they are few indeed.

Last year I overheard some men speaking of a prominent member of their congregation who had been honoured for her many good works. This woman has been instrumental in starting literally dozens of projects that bring people together in a healing way, and her congregation was pleased to fete her with words and food. Were these men talking about her accomplishments? Her witty thank-you speech? Even her clothes? No. They were complaining that she brought her female partner to the affair, that she was "too lesbian" for their tastes. It was a fine thing to honour a woman who had done so much for the community, provided she didn't get all uppity and show off her queerness. A tired refrain and one I'm tired of hearing.

It's time the faith communities - be they Ba'hai or Wiccan, Quaker or Catholic, Sikh or Muslim or Jewish - open their voices and say, "We have queer children. We need to teach them, and to teach their peers. We MUST include a picture of a

two-spirited wedding in a book about native rites. We MUST show two proud fathers-of-the-bridle in a film about Catholic life-cycle events. We MUST teach the children that 'Heather Has Two Mommies' is a book for them. We MUST show our queer families alongside our straight families. We MUST, because otherwise we are complicit in their deaths."

It's time the faith communities - be they UCC or Presbyterian, Orthodox or Reform, Ukrainian or Greek or Russian, open their classrooms and teach. Teach the children, teach the parents, and for God's sake teach the teachers. Stop hoping that calling yourself a "welcoming community" and then ignoring your queer members means you've done enough. Stop believing that simply by living on the Left Coast, you've proven your liberal credentials. Stop leaving us out in the cold, where we have no spiritual home, and no trust. Start opening your doors to us. Let us write curricula for you that will include all the members of your faith. Let us show you our life-cycle celebrations in all their glory. Let us in.

Until such a time as Canada's faith communities stop treating queer members as oddities, there will be no safe haven from gay-bashing and gay suicide and gay marginalization. Until we are accepted as full and contributing members of your church or synagogue or circle of friends, we will be in danger, and we will be outside your circle. And by the way, it's not accepting to say, "Yes, we see you, now sit down and shut up." It's not accepting to allow for Pride Week, but never mention the queer families that are mourning loss or celebrating a joyous occasion throughout the remainder of the year. It's not accepting to have education that allows only for "one man, one woman, 2.5 children." It's no more accepting than to say "fags burn in hell." It's just a whole lot more polite.

Let us in. Let our light shine. We have so much to teach you.

And for those of you who are currently members of an accepting congregation, I want to hear from you. Tell us about the safe places, the welcoming and warm places. Let's encourage our faith communities that are doing the right thing to keep doing it.

b'shalom

Jenny

Left out of last month's column...

All of this is by way of introducing myself. This column will, over the time we are together, listen to and reflect the faith and spirituality of a vast cross-section of our community. We will hopefully ask difficult questions, leaving the answers to you. And occasionally, we will make you angry, or curious, or needful to set the record straight. Your job then will be to let me know. Let your voice be the next one to speak in this space. Allow your learning to become our teaching. I feel so lucky to have the opportunity to share with you, and want you to share with me. That's the point of Queer Spirit. To hear, and to tell.

RCMP: 'Are You Gay' Mounties Screen Gays

by: Ben Thompson

Major city police forces across Canada are actively trying to recruit gay and lesbian cops, but the country's national police force doesn't want GLBT officers.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police routinely asks applicants if they are homosexual. It is a direct violation of the law but the Mounties make no apologies.

Not only is it illegal to deny a job or fire someone for being gay, it is illegal to ask the question. The federal force says it wants to know for security reasons, an excuse used in the past to exclude gays and lesbians from the army, diplomatic corps, and high ranking civil service jobs.

When the R.C.M.P. took over policing from the local force in Caraquet, a small town in New Brunswick, the Mounties subjected the fishing town's cops who wanted to keep their jobs to the test.

Daniel Maillet has filed a discrimination complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission alleging an investigator acting on behalf of the Mounties asked a colleague whether he was gay.

Maillet, who says he is not gay, says he is outraged that in this day and age the question would be asked of anyone and says the R.C.M.P refused to hire him on the basis of sexuality.

His complaint to the Commission includes a letter from a fellow officer with the former Caraquet force that states an investigator asked him questions about Maillet's relationships with male friends.

"Is it true that he is a homosexual?" the investigator asked, according to the statement. The fellow officer wrote that he was surprised by the question and told the investigator that Maillet was involved with a woman. But the investigator persisted according to the letter: "It doesn't matter if he is a homosexual, he'll just have to admit it."

R.C.M.P. Staff-Sgt. Normand Nadeau, the man in charge of the Mounties in the area says there is nothing unusual in the question. Nadeau said it was departmental policy.

"This is a federal department and our members have to deal with top-secret files on a regular basis, and are made aware of privileged information," Nadeau said.

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Growing Good Children

By: Linda A. Boulter

How do we talk to children about hate crimes? And, I MEAN all hate crimes. The violent death of Aaron Webster was a hate crime against Family. So close to home, it touched our fears; it broke our hearts. The anger and fear we feel is very real but anger and fear is also at the base of this heinous crime; difference justified destruction.

We need to go beyond our basic instinctive reaction; yes, the perpetrators of the crime should be held responsible but let us not make them martyrs for a cause. The outpouring of grief and support and love during the peaceful gathering was healing. It is a salve that says no matter what we are Family and yet, let us not forget we are still part of the human family. To be whole we need carry the healing even further. We need to connect with our young people honestly and emotionally. There is no greater fear than fear itself.

So let it be through school programs or one on one. Children need to understand that hate crimes are fear based; very frightened people acting out an inability to connect to the basic principle that people are people; no matter their colour, height, weight, religion, skin complexion, the clothes they choose to wear or the partners they choose to love. All those are superficial, what matters, and what a child can and does understand, is that all we need is to love and be loved. Hold your child in your arms and you will feel the power of that love.

Once the fear is identified we can educate and honour all differences. It is so simple, all it takes is willingness, that you and I can make a difference in life. When our children talk to their friends and their friends share to others we send out a ripple that one small child in this world can send out infinite wave of "live and let live" and "love and let love".

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'Attacking GL Marriage Incites Hatred'

by: Ben Thompson
365gay.com



British Columbia Senator Mobina Jaffer has lashed out at a bill that would define marriage as exclusively "between a man and a woman."

The Senate was debating Bill S-9 "An Act to Remove Certain Doubts Regarding the Meaning of Marriage. It was put forward by Senator Anne Cools. The Liberal appointed Cools, a one-time activist, followed the enactment of gay and lesbian partnership rights last year.

Cools bill would enshrine the heterosexual definition of marriage in Canadian law.

During the debate, Alberta Senator Tommy Banks proclaimed gay and lesbian relationships could never be called a marriage.

"In many respects, they are similar," Banks told the Red Chamber, "and there are certainly many examples of such unions that are, to my direct personal knowledge, unassailable examples of constancy, of responsibility and of true lasting love; but they are not the same thing."

Marriage, Banks said, "is laden with such weight of history, of practice, of application, of common usage and of universal understanding in its various translations as to make it impossible to apply in any way other than the one that is known and understood in every society on every continent, and which transcends virtually all races, languages, religions and geography."

Jaffer, also appointed by the Liberals, said Banks' remarks left her "dumbfounded" - especially following the recent murder of Aaron Webster, a gay man who was viciously beaten to death in Vancouver's Stanley Park.

Jaffer warned Senators that those who speak in favour of Bill S-9 are only helping to ensure such crimes keep recurring.

"They are telling more generations of young Canadians that we should not treat homosexuals equally: Homosexuals must not use the word 'marriage' to describe their relationships," she said. "They are also teaching that intolerance of homosexuals is both proper and righteous."

Michael Hendricks and René LeBoeuf, a Montreal couple who is challenging the constitutionality of denying gays and lesbians the right to marry in a Quebec court welcomed Jaffer's remarks.

In a statement the couple said: "How can we thank you for your thoughtfulness, your strength, your straightforwardness?"

"We are sure that you are aware that your taking this position in public will result in hostile comments and unpleasant mail coming to your office, all 'proper and righteous' in tone.

"We too know a great deal about this kind of criticism and that is why we want you to know that you have friends across Canada who respect you enormously. And who are so proud of you for what you have done."

Sen Jaffer can be reached at:

*The Honorable Mobina Jaffer,
Senator for British Columbia
Parliament of Canada
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mjaffer@direct.ca

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"Most of the time we stand with our backs to our own Light, looking into the shadows."

Swami Radha

Susan -Rose Slatkoff

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Personal Reflection Vigil Speech by James Beresford Youth Leader

When a tragedy like the death of Aaron Webster strikes, it is time for us all - and especially for we, the young people - to stop and take stock of the past, the present and the future.

In the past, the violent death of a queer person was too often tolerated. While some brave people spoke out, most just mourned in silence. That silence gave the license to the hatred behind all gay bashing.

Today, we mourn in public, not in silence. We mourn with anger, but not with hatred. We mourn with the determination that we can change the way that we treat each other as a society.

And we mourn with the knowledge that we must do more to ensure that we have a future where everyone is safe from the mindless violence that killed Aaron.

Everyone - gay or straight - should be outraged by Aaron's death, and outraged by the hatred behind this violence. Young people have a special responsibility to speak out, and to act.

It is easy, and it is tempting to respond to violence with violence. To seek retribution and revenge. To cause the same pain in those who hate us as we feel for Aaron's senseless death.

But we will never reach a peaceful society through violence.

We need to do a number of things. We must stand together, to support each other.

We must reach out to others, and deliver a clear message: Intolerance and hatred don't just result in violence; intolerance and hatred are violence.

That violence costs everyone. We lose our brothers and sisters to violence, we lose our friends, we lose our community, and we lose our freedom. Not just queer people, but all people.

How do we fight intolerance and hatred?

We fight it with knowledge. By challenging the way some people think. And we do this one person at a time.

We fight intolerance and hatred not by mourning in silence, but by speaking out. By being outraged, as we are here today.

And we fight intolerance and hatred not by hiding - but rather by being a part of our community and by being leaders in our community. Intolerance has no home here, no place to hide.

Hatred will no longer hide behind silence. And it will not have the acceptance that is brought about through fear.

The sense of hopelessness that has existed for too long in the past must be replaced by our sense of belonging.

Tonight we can share a tear - many tears - for Aaron, and for the many others who have been murdered because of who they were.

But we owe Aaron a lot more than tears.

We owe him the commitment of our beliefs.

And we must re-dedicate ourselves to act upon the same beliefs.

World Aids Day December 1, 2001

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Arts & Entertainment

Someone Pinch Me

By: Lexi Nicole

This year's celebration of the dead, turned out to be better than most expected it to be and the festivities provided everyone with something to look at and a great place to hang out for the night. The hot spot for the night was the One Lounge and Bar where I noticed a lot of people from our community showed their support for local merchants who sponsored a magnificent show complete with skimpy lingerie and sparks galore. The show was in benefit for PWA or People Living With Aids charity and it's my opinion that we all came out with our colors flying.

Suitably titled *Somebody Pinch Me*, the event started with a leather clad woman fastened tight to a breast plate of metal, clutching a metal grinder which she periodically pressed to her breast. With each touch of the grinder to the plate the crowd was awed by the light display that followed. Both girls and guys continually poured out onto the floor, under the spell of music and the well-choreographed theme for each skit. One of the many features of the night was the Victoria drag kings, The Five O'clock Shadows. Those guys sure know how to impress a girl and put on a great display. Lurking out of the Shadows came exciting songs fit for the occasion such as *Thriller* by Michael Jackson, and they threw in (for our pleasure) one of their specialties from the Back Street Boys.

Then came the hostess and mastermind behind the show, Contessa; who in her many splendid colors brought along with her an entourage of lovely dancers from Sugar. With her many looks and characters the night went very well and provided for much fun and enjoyment. Great Job Contessa, we hope to see you again real soon.

I am sure the people who find themselves in need of PWA's services were pleased to see we are thinking of them at a time when most are only thinking of parties and fun. I had a great time and personally wanted to thank the sponsors of the event, including Kiss & Tell, The Bleeding Rose, Monday Magazine, Molson Canada and Sideshow as well as the lovely Contessa and her dancers. The One Lounge was very gracious providing the venue for the night and our thanks must go out to them. Let's not forget to support our local Drags Kings. I guess a special mention should go to Elvis who I had the pleasure to see several times all around Victoria that night. Signing off till next time.

No Regrets

Brad Pitt knows he's a gay heartthrob. The blonde hunk with the sexy body has made more than a dozen films that have scored big with gay fans even when they have had questionable reviews. But, alas, Pitt while saying he's flattered by the attention, is straight.

Live from New York, it's Ellen

Ellen DeGeneres, who's been mentioned as a possible host of next year's telecast of the Oscars, is definitely going to anchor "Saturday Night Live's" Christmas episode, which airs on December 15. DeGeneres' performance at the Emmy Awards apparently impressed Lorne Michaels so much, he chose the out actress to ham it up with the SNL cast during holiday sweeps.

Life Of Transgendered Kickboxer Turned Into Movie

Parinya Charoenphol gave up a sensational career as a kickboxer to become a woman. His life is to be immortalised in a new movie. Beautiful Boxer will be a tribute to the life and struggle of the 21-year-old.

Charoenphol shocked the kickboxing world by appearing in the ring wearing lipstick and mascara and kissing opponents on the cheek. But his highly skilled classical style soon won him fans, fights and international fame. She underwent her sex-change operation three years ago and became an entertainer in a nightclub. The movie will have dialogues in Thai, English and Japanese.

"Here's a boy who was born with the heart of a girl," said Ekachai Uekrongham, a Thai-born stage director based in Singapore. "Yet he does the most masculine things to achieve femininity. He is a walking paradox."

Parinya attended the news conference announcing the film in a slinky black dress, accompanied by her parents. She said: "I hope the people who watch the film will find courage to fight on their inner battles in the midst of all the gloom and doom in the world."

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Finding the Queer inside

By: Ignacio Rodríguez

*"I am my own especial creation,
so, come take a look,
give me the hook or the ovation".
Jerry Herman: La Cage Aux Folles*

Imagine this for a moment: The International University Of Queerness. You'd go there for four years to learn how to be a Certificated Gay or a Professional Lesbian. You'd take courses according to your innate interests. Mirror Ball Physics, History of Divahood, Show-Tunes 101, Weight Lifting 240, AmylNitrite Chemistry and the Theory of Denim Bleaching for guys. For the ladies: Flannel History, Cat Care 101, Etymology of Processing, Potlucks 420 [Theory& Application], Leather Crafting, and Psychology of Co-Dependence... Better yet, make that one a required class for everybody. And let's not forget queerly oriented Sex Ed, including the use of dildos, straps, and harnesses for everyone interested in that. You would be able to find your identity in this ever changing, growing and specialized community and graduate with the tools to be the most efficient and proactive queer you can be.

Most of us grew up with the sensation of being outsiders, of not fitting into what we are supposed to be or to do. After accepting that we are Queers – different from the norm - we have to find our own niche among the myriad of subgroups of homosexuals. In the past month, I read in two different books a couple of lists of gay stereotypes, where I was supposed to find a subgroup into which I fit. I was not surprised that I didn't find one.

No one likes to be considered a faithful representation of a stereotype, and from Stonewall to the present the queer community has been fighting to change labels and characterizations attributed to us by straight society: we are not a bunch of sissies and tomboys. We are gays and lesbians, human beings with depth.

The most interesting thing about this is that we spend our lives trying to show to the straight people that we are not only what they want to see in us, and then we go ahead and create new stereotypes and more prejudices among ourselves.



Karen Wreggitt

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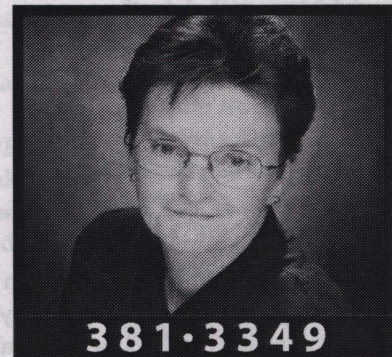
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We label and classify others as muscle queens, club kids, Joan-Crawford-wannabes, leather men, drama queens, bears, twinkies, bar flies, daddies, drag queens, smooths, nellies, chorus boys, Martha-Stewart-freaks, snow/dinge/rice queens, cowboys, butches, Barbies, drama queens, machos, and that's only for the guys! And we are supposed to find which of these groups we belong to, which stereotype is closer to our inner Queer! Another anxiety attack!

I am hairy, but not a bear. I wear military boots, but I'm not a leather man. I like Broadway shows, but I couldn't hit the right key with a sledgehammer. I have a black feather boa, but with my goatee I'd be the ugliest of drag queens. I don't really like bars or discos. I've never even been too attracted to Salsa and Meringue, so I don't even fit the "Latino lover" type. I haven't figured out yet which of these – if any – my inner Queer is. But, my anxiety has diminished considerably after I realized that probably no one really possesses the characteristics of any of these tags without really trying to fit the description... Or maybe I'm fooling myself.

The problem with stereotypes is their shallowness, their photographic bi-dimensionality. We tend to forget that they are only a simple way of organizing our impressions of the world outside us, not the world itself, and we too easily forget that there's something beyond the façade. The amazing thing is that we claim before straight people that we are more than "who we sleep with" but we keep organizing ourselves with labels identifying us according to the objects of our desires or how we look. Far too often we lose sight of the fact that we are "Queers" because we are different. Should we not embrace the "Queerness", the different-ness, of our own community? Diversity? Isn't that what we are about?

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IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I don't mind straight people as long as they act gay in public."
--*T-shirt worn by Chicago Bulls transvestite Dennis Rodman during a network-TV interview.*



"Just because."
--*New Zealand Justice Minister Doug Graham when asked why he is opposed to gay marriage.*



"It's these propaganda queens who are really hurting us. These people who put out this lie that we're exactly the same [as heterosexuals] and that we're just straight people who fuck our own; that is just not true!"
--*Kids In The Halls' Scott Thompson to San Francisco Bay Times.*



The next time someone asks you, 'Hey, howdja get to be a homosexual anyway?' tell them, 'Homosexuals are chosen first on talent, then interview, then the swimsuit and evening gown competition pretty much gets rid of the rest of them.'
-- *Karen Williams*

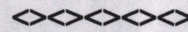


Gays don't have legal rights. The only thing a queer couple can adopt is a highway.
-- *Maggie Cassela*

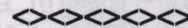


I get sick of listening to straight people complain about, "Well, hey, we don't have a heterosexual-pride day. Why do you need a gay pride day?" I remember when I was a kid I'd always ask my mom: "Why don't we have a Kid's Day? We have a Mother's Day and a Father's Day, but why don't we have a Kid's Day?" My mom would always say, "Every day is Kid's Day." To all those heterosexuals that bitch about gay pride, I say the same thing: "Everyday is heterosexual pride day! Can't you people enjoy your banquet and not piss on those of us enjoying our crumbs over here in the corner?"
-- *Rob Nash*

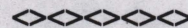
The radical right is so homophobic that they think global warming is caused by the AIDS quilt.
-- *Dennis Miller*



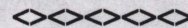
The opportunity to be threatened, humiliated and to live in fear of being beaten to death is the only 'special right' our culture bestows on homosexuals.
-- *Denver Post columnist Diane Carman*



If you gave me \$1 million tomorrow and told me to promote homosexuality, I haven't the faintest idea what I would do. What do you do? Have a contest? Make up posters? Put ads on television? The notion of promoting homosexuality is preposterous. Our agenda is very simple: Please leave us alone. Please let us be what we want to be and live our lives with others.
-- *U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass*



All men are homosexual, some turn straight. It must be very odd to be a straight man because your sexuality is hopelessly defensive. It's like an ideal of racial purity.
-- *Derek Jarman (b. 1942), British filmmaker, artist, author. At Your Own Risk: A Saint's Testament, "1940's" (1992).*



"This is a celebration like a marriage, modeled on what's happening throughout the rest of the world."
--*Quebec Justice Minister Paul Bégin*



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INTERESTED?: in forming a support group for lesbians who have a brain injury or have had to deal with a brain tumor. Partners welcome! For more information please call Brenda Vallillee: 479-9602, mornings or leave a message if no answer. Or email brenster@sprint.ca.

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SUPPORT GROUP for glbt persons with disabilities (1st meeting) will be held at the Action Committee of People with Disabilities 926 View St. Monday Nov. 5. For more info Jim at 383-0433

ISAW YOU: Edible woman with rubberwear coat @ The Rose Nov. 28. I am the Triangle Mountain woman with black hat. Call me for Rendez Vous 592-2725

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Dyke Dimensions Radio: CFUV Mondays, 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. FM 104.3 Cable FM 101.9

Camosun College Lesbian Collective. Alternate weeks. 370-3484

FTM (etc) Transgender Resource Line at 413-3220.

Lesbian Seniors Care Society Victoria: Reva @ 250 388-4161 Mail P. O. Box 39022 James Bay Postal Outlet V8V 4X8

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VYPS: Victoria Youth Pride Society (14-25) 413-3177 vyyps@writeme.com

Women's Creative Network:

www.victoria.tc.ca/community/wcn, wcn@victoria.tc.ca

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(gay fiction/short stories)

Ask for information about our upcoming Christmas Party and volunteer opportunities in both Bleeding Rose and Bleeding Rose Afterdark.

ABOUT THE NEW STORE...

We are expanding. The new store will be called, Bleeding Rose Afterdark and should be opening sometime in December or January. We will be carrying a full line of adult products including dildos (**catalogues now available some already in stock**), lube, body paint, liquid latex, dental dams, condoms (both latex and polyurethane), adult mags, XXX film rentals and sales, fetish wear and other sex and fetish accessories.

We will also be carrying bondage/sm gear, furniture, clothing and a large selection of reading material on sex issues and sexual health. In addition we will be offering both free and special low cost workshops on sexual topics as well as retreats. We will provide a safe, open, sex-positive atmosphere for those in the Queer and Kink communities to obtain adult items and information.

If you have any questions about our products or have any specific requests of items for us to carry, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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We have added the following magazines:

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