

volume 1 issue 4 DECEMBER 2005

OUTSIGHT

SPEAK YOUR WORD



PRIDE *alive*

A PROGRAM OF THE MINNESOTA AIDS PROJECT



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OUTSIGHT SPEAK YOUR WORD

OutSight is the creative 'zine for Minnesota Queers, brought to you by PrideAlive. We strive to build community by challenging you to write about your own life and experiences. Participation is open to any PrideAlive participant. *OutSight* reserves the right to edit or revise content when necessary.

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Dear Everyone:

Ranting isn't as easy as it seems! Sure, it seems simple when we sit around sipping our preferred libations, bitching and complaining about all the things done wrong in the world. But you know what? Actually putting those issues down on paper, and synthesizing those ideas into a coherent piece, isn't the piece of cake you'd imagine.

So, this issue of *OutSight* is a little leaner, and only slightly meaner. It's a good lesson that in a culture dominated by contrasts, conflict, and "I'm right, you're wrong" divisions, we all tolerate certain shades of gray. As you've seen in all our issues to date, the writing and artwork within is personal. It shines a light on the ways our community lives, loves, argues, forgives, and survives in these sometimes enlightened, often conflicted times. As usual, *OutSight* aims to continue the conversations *PrideAlive* starts on how to build a healthy queer community. And as usual, we welcome your feedback, suggestions, and rebuttals.

Our next issue will be out in time for Pride 2006. In that issue we're discussing *The Body*. Which body? Body politic? Body image? Spiritual bodies? Could we even talk about S-E-X? That's for you to decide! We want your thoughts, voices, opinions, and illustrations in this 'zine!

Get involved by emailing outsightmag@mnaidsproject.org, or calling *PrideAlive* at (612) 373-9165. And thanks for reading!

The OutSight Team

More Fan Mail!

Hey there,
Just wanted to say that I think the Summer '05 issue is really fantastic. I'm not even done reading it yet, and I felt compelled to write and tell you how wonderful this publication is. "Watch Me" is an incredibly intense well written emotional article. Made me cry. As a heterosexual ally, I want to express my thanks and admiration for both the *OutSight* Team and *PrideAlive*. Everyday I learn from my coworkers and friends. Today I learned a lot. It is from these personal stories and poems, I think, that people gain knowledge and understanding. Kudos to those who are willing to share their life experiences so openly.

Thank you,
Julie Hennen

The OutSight Team Replies

Hey Julie!
That's the kind of encouragement and genuine support our GLBT community needs! We never take for granted our wonderful allies, and thanks for sharing that this issue inspired and motivated you. Keep reading, and be sure to share it with your friends and family! A healthy queer community can't happen in a vacuum.

The OutSight Team

Do you have something to say to the *OutSight* team? Did anything catch your eye as you read each articles? Don't be shy. Write to us! Email your comments to outsightmag@mnaidsproject.org, or write to:

OutSight

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18 AGAIN? NO THANKS

By David Harvey,
dchdemmn@hotmail.com

In the late '80s there was a movie called *18 Again!* It featured George Burns as a dying octogenarian whose soul gets switched with that of his 18-year-old grandson. In the film Burns sings a song titled "I Wish I Was 18 Again." Well, I don't wish I was 18 again—or at least 18 again in today's world. To paraphrase English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, life today seems to have become more poor, nasty and brutish than when I was 18 a little more than 20 years ago.

Let me list some of the problems of the 21st Century: Gated communities... anthrax mailings... suitcase nukes... zero tolerance... mandatory minimum sentences... towns competing to be the site of a new prison instead of fighting against it... children tried as adults... an ongoing war where more than 2,000 Americans have died with no light at the end of the tunnel... can you feel a draft? I bet you do if you're a male between the ages of 18-25. A draft was seen as a possibility during the Reagan years, but the man never got us into a real war... Ronald Reagan looking like a statesman compared to the present

White House occupant... an aggressively anti-gay party in control of the U.S. House and Senate... reality TV shows dominating the airwaves (look for the *Running Man* game show coming soon)... metal detectors at schools... random drug screening of student athletes... global warming... SUVs... calling customer service and getting someone in India... peak oil prices... five minute commercial blocks on network TV... 6 billion people on earth vs. 4 billion... visible underwear as a fashion statement... thongs... \$3 a gallon gas... public profanity in conversations as the norm... road rage... drug resistant tuberculosis... Hepatitis C... the West Nile virus...

pharmacists denying women birth control because of "personal moral beliefs"... airplane seats designed to comfortably seat a person that's 5'4" and 100 lbs, just to name a few.

I know there's the risk of sounding like one of these "back in the good old days" types, and I do admit we've made a hell of a lot of positive social change in the last 20 years. But

I've seen the path we've taken recently, and I don't like where it's heading. Too often I think about the world in the year 2025 and visions of Thunderdome dance in my head: Two Men Enter, One Man Leaves; Masterblaster and Bartertown; having to bow down to the whims of Lord Humongous, The Ayatollah of Rock and Rolla; etc.

I do hope my pessimism is misdirected. The author of the 1968 book *The Population Bomb* made the prediction that hundreds of millions of people would starve to death in the 1980s. That proved wrong. Maybe the retrograde situation of today is just a bump in the road to a bright and promising future. Maybe things will turn around for the better. Check with me in about 20 years. †

QUEER ASS PARENT(S)

By Sam Hunter Malloy, SHMalloy@hotmail.com

Why is it that when folks, gay, straight or otherwise, find out I am a custodial parent they all ask me the same damn thing? What is the mystery? I am a gay middle-aged dad, raising not one, not two but three kids. Obviously either I've walked on the other side of the tracks, or at some other point in my broke-ass life I had enough disposable income to spend on surrogate mothers and expensive lawyers.

I'll give you a hint. I've never had excess disposable income.

So why is it, when faced with the rather obvious existence of my three sons (yeah, like the old sitcom gone really wrong!) do I repeatedly get asked "how'd 'it' happen?" or "how did you do that?" Like they don't know where babies come from or how it could possibly be that, gasp!, a faggot could be involved in creating a child. Mercy!! Queer or not, folks, procreation of the human animal is still the same as it ever was—there is no mystery to the process!!

Which brings up another point: what is with this weird head space that some of the straight and bi women I've befriended along the way come up with—the one where they get fixated on creating the perfect picture of hetero domesticity with me, complete with references to the ease of hetero privilege? Ack! Am I supposed to actually want this just because I have my own biological progeny and full custodial rights? Give me a break! I was a papa long before I figured out I was a faggot too. Hell, I was already single parenting before I completely came to terms with being gay.

For those of you still somehow confused by all this—I didn't magically wake up one fine day and say "Ah ha! I know how to cure my blues! I'll be a happy homo! That will solve all my worries!" (Yeah, like living below the Mason-Dixon line would've been any easier being gay!) Hell no! I spent long arduous hours, days, weeks—ok, months—in therapy slowly, methodically peeling the damn onion of my life to finally arrive at the startling realization that the fog of depression I'd been dragging around with me for years was due to denial of my sexual orientation.

Even if I had woken up one morning sitting bolt upright and suddenly decided I was gay, what in the hell makes anyone think for even one second that I would be in the least bit interested in



returning to the nightmare of living the frigging hetero-dynamic lifestyle? Feh! Double feh!! If I wanted that agony to repeat itself in my life, I would have bypassed therapy, gone straight to my doc, asked for antidepressants and gone out to find a suitable stepmother for my kids. Let me tell you all something, when you have had to fight your way to the realization that you are not straight, and therapized your way to self-acceptance and understanding, there is no need to see/replicate/experience how the other half lives.

Been there, done that—no need for reruns!

Which brings up yet another point: what is with this "straight acting" tagline in personal ads? Would that be the jealous, clutching, "let-me-into-every-corner-of-your-life-and-mind" type of straight acting? Or maybe it is the sexist, excessively macho, "I-am-so-paranoid-about-being-seen-as-gay" type of straight acting. Or could it be the straight acting that causes women to cut men down and men to cut women down in order to bolster weakened self-esteem? C'mon people! Why buy into the whole "gay is bad" bullshit by even using such a phrase? It reinforces negativity around queerness and validates rampant heterosexist delineations.

To those of you well-meaning folks who are still caught up in the perspective that a gay dad isn't really gay or a lesbian mom isn't really lesbian if they actually had sexual contact with a member of

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45-SECOND RANT

by Matthew Antonio Bosch, MBosch2003@aol.com

Scenario:

I am gay,
but not sure of my full gender.
I work out,
but mostly cardio, not weights.
I hit home runs & smash serves,
but play no football & basketball.
I am a baritone with no lisp,
but I can yip-yap about reality TV.
I like to shop for clothes & boots,
but nothing with a brand name on it.
I am assumed straight a lot,
but I have done drag before.

How Butch/Femme am I?

Where will people place me in their sphere of:

Butch
Femme
Masculine
Feminine
Dateable
Undateable
Doable
Undoable

Ridiculous yet intriguing, tantalizing yet amorphous, the amount of time gay men put into categorizing potential mates as butch or femme is off the chart. How do we have time to breathe with all this label attention going on with each person we see in the club, bookstore, support group, taqueria, or church???

My time schedule:

‡Wake up
‡Work
‡Eat
‡Socialize
‡Work Out
‡Watch Reality TV
‡Sleep

Where can I fit in time to decipher the intricacies of gender specification?

Where can I fit in time to discover the inequities of gay sexuality?

Where can I fit in time to disturb the inertia of butch/femme categorization?

I walk into a room. Immediately people know if they want to:
A) approach me.
B) be approached by me.
C) do me.
D) be done by me.
E) be done with me.
F) look past me.

I always wonder what people mean when they say:

“He’s too femme, I can’t date him.”

“He’s too butch, I’m afraid.”

What are the indicators? What can he cook? Is it his mannerisms? What if he’s a mechanic who does drag? What if he’s a baton-twirling hockey player? What if he’s a computer geek who loves action movies?

If you can detect the level of butch/femme, then we should get together, promote it, and sell it in a bottle.

Oh, and if you are “that guy” who says, “I could not stand to date someone femme,” you best look in the mirror, Polly. It’s probably because you’ve self-selected the role...



And femme does not equate with “bottom,” just as butch does not equate with “top.” Trust me...some of the “queeniest” guys I know forbid themselves to be bottoms. Trust me...some of the “butchest” guys I know are yearning to be penetrated constantly.

Lasting Thoughts:

People

transgress sexual boundaries, gender roles, and the perceived binary of butch/femme on a daily basis. Someone may be butch in three ways, and femme in three ways. Does this make them an anomaly? Does it make them dateable or doable, and is that visible upon the first five minutes of meeting them? How much of butch/ femme is physical looks, how much is personality, and how much of it is their actions?

My answer to all these is: Who cares? If anyone thinks they’re dating me because I’m butch or femme, they better get prepared for a whole lotta butch and a whole lotta femme, because only THEN can you be the best gay that you can be ‡

GAY WITHOUT A FACE?

By Michael Glirbas, pridealivemike@hotmail.com

“People that seem so glorious are all show; underneath they are like everyone else”

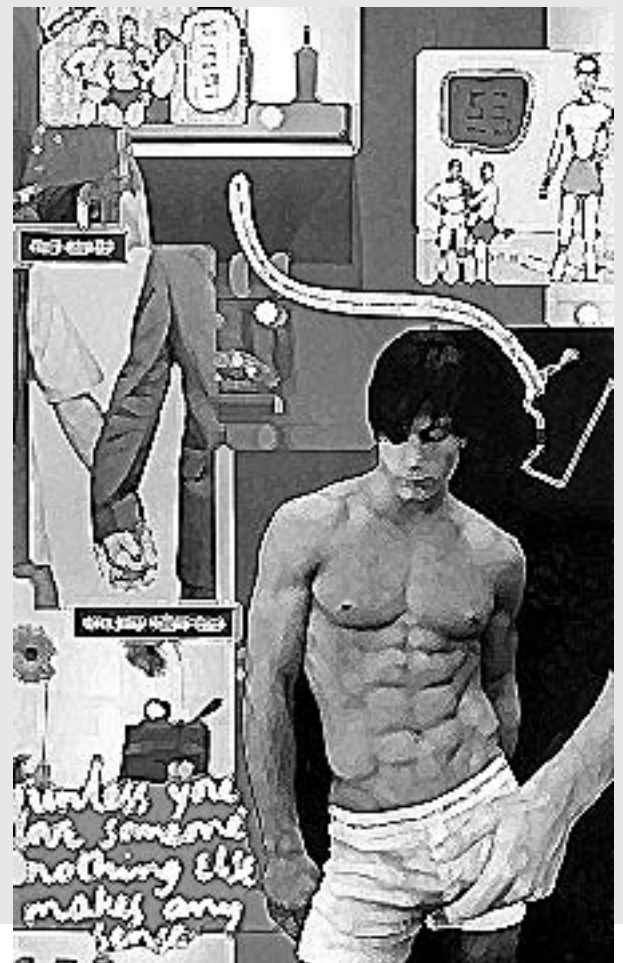
-Euripides BC 480-406

My eyes caught fire when I held my first gay-oriented magazine in my hands. I recall the anticipation burning inside as I began to explore the pages of *Genre*. There they were staring me in the face, two very attractive young actors, Jesse Bradford and Jordan Brower. They were promoting the release of their movie, *Speedway Junky*, which finally hit the U.S. in 2001. I began to page through the issue and thought, “This is what gay life must really be like.” A community full of pretty boys and their masterpiece physiques were all I could see. Weeks later, I picked up a copy of *OUT* and once again the bulging pecs and washboard abs graced the pages and monopolized my eyes. However, I was searching for the average young male, the one with the unchiseled body, the one who was not obsessed with his outer shell, but could still shine with self-confidence. I was searching for someone like me. Would he come to me in the next issue, or would my subscription run out before I found him? Maybe I was buying the wrong magazines, but I did get a sense of the gay community I had yet to enter. How accurate the magazines portrayed us, I had yet to find out.

Growing up as a teen I could hardly find a gay character on television. My first came in the summer of 1992 when actor Doug Savant portrayed Matt Fielding on *Melrose Place*. I was anxious to follow his character as I didn't know anyone around me who was gay and I certainly had no role models to look upon. I remember being frustrated that his character didn't really have a crucial role during the first couple of seasons. He was a supporting character and never seemed to have a visible relationship like everyone else. When he was going in for his first scene-stealing kiss with another male, the producers at Fox never showed it. Instead they captured another character watching them kiss through a window. Television changed once we entered the 21st century. We were exposed to *Queer as Folk* and *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. Although gay men started to pop up everywhere, how we were being portrayed still bothered me. We ranged from the sexually aggressive Brian on QAF to a group of fashion and lifestyle police on *Queer Eye*. I know a lot of guys who are not on a quest for a nightly hook-up and a lot of gay men who could use a few tips from the Fab-Five. I feel that many networks have taken selected aspects of who a gay male can be and have used them as the focal points that try to define us all.

At one time you could open up my closet and not find any dogs, eagles, seagulls or even a moose on any of my polos. I never bought into any of the fads during my high school or college days. I dressed like your average prep, but I didn't find the need to resort to all the expensive name brands. One of my friends and I would chat a lot online and he'd tell me all about his wardrobe. He said if I was going to be gay, I needed to dress the part. I couldn't go out to clubs with a bland closet full of nameless clothes. I refused to conform until I inserted myself into the gay environments I had avoided much of my young adult life. I'd go out and about with my friends and I'd see Abercrombie to my left, Hollister to my right, American Eagle in front of me and turning around I spotted Aeropostale. I finally caught onto what everyone else was wearing, as my shopping habits changed. I began integrating the embroidered birds and animals into my attire. I'm not going to attack the hiring practices of these well known retailers, but I must say I've yet to ever see an employee look like your average male. Maybe the design

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OBFUSCATION OF INTENTION

By Paul Olson, outsightmag@mnaidsproject.org

Harvey Milk was right when he urged all gay people to come out and be counted. When we do this, we propel ourselves toward acceptance of ourselves and by those who love us beyond the prejudice of hating a faceless stereotype of 'the other.' I have been privileged to know men who decided they could not live a lie perpetuated out of fear. These men said that they were amazed that the ones they expected to lose turned 180 degrees, and complimented them for having the guts to stand up for themselves.

That being said, I would like to address some examples of what seems to me to be 'bad' or manipulative behavior by some of our tribe. I find that some gay men have no problem saying whatever lie will suit their desires, no matter what harmful impact they have on those who are naive or blind to these behaviors.

Here are a couple examples of what I consider to be cheap tricks. I think you have probably run into these if you date or cruise online. If you have participated in behaviors of this sort, I suggest you think about their consequences. If you still act out like this, I urge you to slink into a hole and pull it in after you!

1. A man I knew through a local men's group whined about how he couldn't connect and that he was insecure about meeting others after a failed relationship. This man wouldn't show his face on chat, but had no problems asking for a date. When he arrived, he whimpered that if they actually went out for dinner and a show, he feared that circumstances would prevent them from going to bed. Saying lines like "I think you're excellent boyfriend material," and bragging about his income or vacation plans are in this case hot air to deceive his date into believing he is something he is not, i.e. genuine. After appearing to be fragile and vulnerable, he then turns the tables to accuse the other party of chasing them in an unwanted fashion, saying he is



uncomfortable, and wanting a break. He assures that he will reconnect soon, but of course never does. If the person calls, he will insult the poor guy and then say it's over. I think this is reprehensible, but sadly not uncommon. He may even date the sap until a better looking or richer man comes along, having no shame in lying or maneuvering to break up, even if it hurts or devastates the man he has used. I remember the axiom: "Never date a rebounder, as they often relive and inflict on others how they were hurt in order to feel good about themselves."

2. Here's the latest cheap trick I've seen in chats. Someone will be ready, willing, and able to connect, only to get the message "Do you bareback?" before signing off to meet in person. This, of course, is then the dealmaker or dealbreaker: once your blood is boiling, they hope you will have invested so much time and energy to negotiate the hookup that you will concede your concerns over safer sex. I even heard this line once: "I only hook up about once every six months and then get tested, Really, I'm clean". I was certain he had a career selling bridges as well. I find it characteristic of these creeps to just stop a chat and ignore you if you hold your ground. They don't even have the courtesy to make some statement of closure.

I would like to call the media to task over the misery they bring to the 9/10ths of the gay crowd who are not in the "perfect" age bracket, most likely who feel ugly in comparison to porn-star models we glamorize, and are probably a bit fat, jealous, imperfect and miserable that they don't have, for instance, the 8-inch penises that many insist are a prerequisite for satisfactory pleasure.

OBFUSCATION OF INTENTION continued on page 13

ers didn't have me in mind when planning their clothes, but rather those who have been hired. I'll continue to shop at Hollister and Aeropostale until I hear "would you like a gift receipt with this purchase."

I feel our American society places too strong an emphasis on what is and what is not considered attractive. It's true that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but I'm talking about the influence our media and corporations have on body image. We have so many young girls who are messed up today because society tells them they must look a certain way. Some are so afraid to gain an ounce because they won't measure up to the models they see or the stars they idolize. I know how this feels when I am constantly reminded of the desired male body by what is in magazines and with buffed up movie stars on the silver screen.

We complain about how arrogant the sexy and beautiful are, yet we have a role in making them that way. We have developed "leagues" and rating scales that you can find anywhere online. I've had friends freak out because their scores dipped below 9s, so they had to erase their scores and start again. No one is forcing them to create accounts at "Hot or Not" or "Face the Jury."

However, is that 9 really a true rating of one's sex appeal or have we just limited our attraction to outer appearance, because we've been conditioned to do so? Are the 9s and 10s too good for the 5s and 6s? Are the 5s and 6s too afraid to message the 9s and 10s? I also feel we have stereotyped those who many find very attractive as offering nothing more than a hard tanned body. It's not fair to them if we don't look beyond their outer appearance. I think we all lose out on some pretty awesome people if we're going to sub-divide ourselves into leagues. We all walk to a different beat and we're a stronger community because of it.

I know what I am and who I want to be. I have certain limitations and certain gifts and abilities. I'll continue buying polos and hoodies with mammals and birds on them. I'll probably watch programming with gay characters who don't act or look like me. I now know there is a face out there that represents who I am in the gay community. That face belongs to me. I'll do just fine without ever gracing the cover of *Genre*, *OUT* or *Gay Times*. However, if I don't get on at least Newsweek, Time and The Nation in the summer of 2028, I'll be really pissed.

"Doesn't everyone look at himself in his own particular way?"
-Pablo Picasso

your insight?
your oversight!

We want your views, feelings,
and experiences to fill these pages.
Add your creativity to the queer community, and
speak your word! Call PrideAlive at
(612) 373-9165, or email
outsightmag@mnmaidsproject.org
to get involved.

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FULL COLOR

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HIDDEN RULES

By C. Saxon, scflyboii@aol.com



I know we all have been in situations where we have broken a few rules. Most of the time, as adults, we know when we are bending or just plain breaking the rules. We also know that if we are caught there are consequences that have to be paid for the wrong we have committed.

Friendships are one of the many areas that have such guidelines and regulations. Now, I am not here to preach or teach you about rules and how they pertain to our lives or why you should follow them. I am here, however, to tell you that if you are building a friendship then you should be upfront and honest with those who you are dealing with. The most annoying thing is to have someone who is supposed to be your friend, yet they turn around and get pissy with you after you broke a rule you didn't know existed.

I understand that the most common courtesies are ones that you automatically give to the other individual anyway, such as open communication, honesty and respect. Those would be the main three that I can think of at this time. I know we all have our pet peeves and things

that just drive us crazy. However, if those peeves are so embedded into your personality and it affects how you act or treat others, then maybe you should inform the other person. This would give the others a heads up, so if they happen to do something that would "break a rule" they would not be so surprised, offended, defensive or irritated.

One thing that I cannot stand is conditions! Let me tell you how aggravating a supposed friend is when there are conditions added to the equation. How can you possibly have a solid friendship when you sit there and say, "I cannot associate with you because you are friends with ____." Just because you do not get along with the other person does not give you the right to set terms for your friendship. Nor does it allow you to try to sway how "your friend" thinks about the individual you do not like. Another situation that is closely related would be the statement, "I cannot be friends with you because you participate with that group or activity." In a friendship you take the person for who they are and what they believe, and respect the difference in that person. If you do not agree with something they participate in or someone they associate with, then voice your opinion. However, do not use it as a condition in retaining your friendship. I am pretty sure you will lose on this one.

Another thing that really peeves me off are those who live their lives through yours. You all know someone who has tried to squirm into your life. They do this by saying, "You should dress like this, you should take this job, or you really shouldn't be friends with him/her." They are the ones who are always giving you advice and voicing their opinions without listening to any of your concerns or thoughts. Sometimes you do need your true friends to question you or bring things up that you do not see. However, the last thing anyone wants to hear is someone constantly and loudly telling you what you should do, who you should hang out with, or how you should live. Then if you speak up and mention to them that you appreciate their thoughts and insight but it is not needed, they become angry because you have "broken a rule." What, like I cannot have the right to tell you I need you to back off a little? A true friend would be able to hear that without becoming offended or upset. If not then, to use one of my favorite quotes from a good friend, "Cry me a river, build me a bridge and get the fuck over it!"

If you are one of those individuals who happen to have hidden rules for friendships, then please explain to me why you do not make them known? Why hide them? Is it a security blanket? Are you insecure in yourself and have to find a way to verify how you think? Is it a way to easily end the friendship if you get bored with it, or is it an easy way out if you decide that you no longer want to hang with this person? Why? †

Well, to break that bubble, in talking to some of the guys who do get to bag these 'Please take me now' icons, I've learned that they often make the lousiest lays. Why? I suspect it's because they always expect to be serviced, giving little more than limp attention in return. Why do these guys get away with it? Because they are trophies to the egos of those who manage to show off their catches to other lonely souls who will wistfully see them leaving a public venue together.

Not everyone who is attractive is bad-mannered or poor in bed, but I have heard it reported more than once, and seen more than my share of guys who beat themselves up because they don't measure up, men who if they would not buy into the widespread focus on hunks or twinks, would find that they have a better chance of something stable if they would realize we all have faults, thank goodness, and that in the real world your partner is bound to have some surface blemishes and buffalo breath in the morning. The odds of winning the Powerball may be better than having a long term relationship with someone who would still be hungrily pursued by throngs of admirers if they were exclusive to you. Tolerance and acceptance of who we really are, faults and all, would be a nice place to start adjusting our rose colored glasses.

Recently, I saw in a male magazine that a former stud who was a solid 10+ had returned to show the world he still had what it takes eight years past his prime. I looked at the spread and thought that he had probably beat himself up for months before the photo shoot because he could not maintain the ideal weight and skin glow he had in his glory days. Did he think that the wrinkles and bulk he was gaining could be kept away forever?

In Lewis Carroll's famous story, Alice met the Cheshire Cat and asked, "Can you tell me, please, which way I should go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," replied the Cat.

"I don't much care where," said Alice.

"THEN IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH WAY YOU GO," answered the cat.

People who think that looks and tricks to get laid are the measure of success are in for a rude awakening. In all likelihood, the man they wouldn't dream of being seen with might actually have the personality and attributes to have the meaningful long-term relationship they claim to want. My hope is that we as a gay culture will encourage mutual enjoyment and honesty when we express our desires, without cruelly exploiting others for their insecurities. In the meantime, we all need to be on the watch for and warn others about people who do this. They need to be confronted about their actions by their friends—if they have any friends left at all. †

JUDGE NOT, LEST WE BE JUDGED

We're only human, after all. No proper "Rant" issue can succeed unless we, the ranting and raving *OutSight* team, acknowledge that we, too, have our flaws. So, once we finished purging those nasty, pent-up frustrations, we cleansed our souls by admitting those little annoying habits we have, which our friends so graciously forgive.

1. Multi-tasking. At any given moment I'm running around my house or office with thirteen different things to do, mumbling incoherently the whole time.
2. Breaking my boyfriend's glassware. For some reason, when I am in his apartment I become the clumsiest ape on the whole damn planet!
3. Getting on the phone and choosing to toggle off for other callers again and again and again.
4. Thinking that my to-do lists might actually fit around commitments with others, and ending up being late after seeing how much time I miscalculated, leaving the project in a glorious state of confusion.
5. Setting a time limit for my use of the Internet and never sticking to it.
6. Heaping bills, papers and clutter in a place that my guests hopefully won't stumble upon, because there never seems to be any time to properly clean when impromptu visits happen.

LANCASTER COUNTY (FOR M.B.H.)

By Raymond Luczak, RL@raymondluczak.com



[I]

The horsewagon plods behind tourist cars
jangling with their 35mm cameras.
The Amish man tightens his jaw
as he shakes his reins a little more.

Their voices sift through the breeze;
they are awed by his grim silence.
Secrets he knows, and stories he holds.
His eyes shrink from exposure.



[II]

In a suburb nearby a Civic is filled with boxes,
packed with the all-in-the-name-of-Jesus touches.
The young woman rearranges in the trunk,
stretching like taffy empty centimeters to inches.

Her father's eyes watch from the porch windows;
she shoves some shoes into a side cave.
Secrets she knows, and stories he holds.
Her eyes glare at his: never again.



[III]

On the F train hurtling out of Manhattan,
she stands near two Hassidic Jews sitting.
Their wafer glasses are glued to their Talmuds
while F*CK YOU is sprawled in spray paint
above them.

She hides her smile as the train slows.
The two men look up and give her a queer look.
Secrets she knows, and laughter she holds:
home is suddenly a different concept.

STOP THE CHURCH (PART II)

By Tim, outsightmag@mnaidsproject.org



Stop the Church is a documentary about a famous ACT UP demonstration at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. The group disrupted mass at St. Patrick's in response to the homophobia of Cardinal John O'Connor and the inadequate response of the Catholic Church to the AIDS crisis. While Cardinal O'Connor is no longer with us (and his obituaries had the audacity to include references to his "compassion for and ministering to AIDS patients"), the Catholic Church is once again targeting queers in its campaign against gay marriage and by scapegoating gay men for the church's pedophilia scandal. Once again, it needs to be stopped.

Even in countries where gay marriage is now legal, like Spain and Canada, the Catholic Church is doing everything it can to defame it. Earlier this year at an anti-marriage rally in Madrid, as reported by the Associated Press, Fr. Jose Ramon Velasco compared the law legalizing gay marriage to the rise of Adolph Hitler: "Back then the majority of people also backed Hitler just like the majority back this law. I'm serious, give it time and it will destroy the moral fiber of Spain and the West." In Canada, the Archbishop of Quebec has ordered priests to not baptize the children of legally wed same-sex couples. And of course, the Catholic Church is at the forefront of the fight to repeal same-sex marriage in Massachusetts.

Ultimately Fr. Velasco and the Archbishop of Quebec take their orders from the Vatican, which has an abysmal record when it comes to compassion toward our community. While they're no longer burning us at the stake, they're still stoking the fires of homophobia. Even on his deathbed, Pope John Paul II managed to describe gay marriage as part of

a "new ideology of evil." And if you think things are going to change for the better with the current pope, forget it. Benedict XVI, when he was still Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, was responsible for running a Vatican campaign against same-sex unions beginning in 2003 which included issuing guidelines for Catholic politicians to oppose laws granting legal rights to gay couples.

The Catholic Church's ongoing campaign against gay marriage and for "sexual morality" in general might mean something if it hadn't operated as little more than a large-scale pedophile ring for the past several decades. Since 1950 the U.S. Catholic Church has paid out over \$1 billion to cover more than 11,500 abuse claims. And of course, those claims only represent the survivors who went public. How many thousands (if not tens of thousands) more people still live in shame over what happened to them at the hands of priests?

I'm not even sure which is worse, the predatory behavior of individual priests or the way cardinals (including, as it turns out, Cardinal O'Connor) and bishops aided and abetted these crimes. Individual priests couldn't have gotten away with all that they did if it were not for the intervention of their superiors who bribed and shamed victims and victims' families into silence while they quietly transferred sexual predators from one parish to another. The reaction of the Catholic hierarchy has been one of damage

control and shifting blame rather than owning up to the role they played in this tragedy.

In the face of this scandal, the Catholic Church came up with a less than original strategy: blame it all on the queers. The logic ran something like this: since the priests and the majority of victims were both male the priests had to be gay, right? Wrong. Pedophilia, like other forms of sexual assault is about power and violence. James Hord, a psychologist who specializes in treating sexually abused children says that for pedophiles it's not so much about gender as it is about age. They need to feel they have power and control in a relationship, which is rather easy with children and teenagers. Also, due to the sexist nature of the church, it's not as though priests even had access to girls (they're not called altar boys for nothing).

But never one to understand the complexities of human sexuality, the church has been too busy trying to distract everyone from its own failings and criminal activity by escalating its homophobic rhetoric and actions. Like fighting against adoption and parental rights of gays and lesbians. Like spearheading the campaign against gay marriage. Like complaining that there are too many gay priests and demanding purges at seminaries that are viewed as gay-friendly.

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I DO
SOLEMNLY
SWEAR:
AN OATH
OF HYPOCRISY

By Michael Glirbas, pridealivemike@hotmail.com

*"Only the hypocrite is really rotten to the core."
-Hannah Arendt*

The renowned bearded figure stood before his nation in a desperate hour as he addressed the words "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds." The words once spoken by President Abraham Lincoln have fallen on deaf ears in our nation's capitol today. If America was beholden to the same brutally ruthless and misguided policies in 1865 as we are today, would an America even exist in the 21st Century? Our geographical map could have been divided forever had our leaders kept a "you're with me or you're my enemy" frame of mind.

The integrity it takes to uphold the oath of office is in desperate short supply. Political debacles have arisen at every level of state and federal government. Too many who rule America have moral foundations made of clay that shatter once hammered by their personal egos. They are rendered useless when they can no longer think critically and ethically. Their personal ambitions and thirst for historic legacies outweigh their moral obligation to us all. As a student of political science I'm finding it difficult to digest the current climate we're living in. We cannot continue down this track and sit at our tables with a content face as we eat our dinner. We must ask ourselves the question, are we so divisive a nation that we'll accept policies that treat us like human trash?



I DO SOLEMNLY continued from previous page

SERVING WITH PRIDE

I became a pen pal with "Thomas," a brave young man who is currently stationed in Iraq. Thomas is a member of the National Guard with a bright white smile and youthful innocence. Sadly, our Federal Government is not serving him honorably in return. They have sent him into harm's way under false pretenses by pumping fear into the minds of Americans from coast to coast. For all the Americans who said I was un-American for opposing this war, it only took one soldier to thank me for caring about him and for picking him up on bad days. Thomas knows that I have never been against our soldiers, but against the reasons they were asked to serve. When you ask a soldier what is anti-American, many will tell you it's how poorly our soldiers are treated when their benefits are cut. Look at many of the ill-equipped hospitals they are sent to when they return. When I asked Thomas what he felt was un-American he said it was the policy "Don't Ask-Don't Tell." I've never served in the military, but I cannot imagine what it must be like to be on active duty while hiding your sexual orientation. Thomas is faced with the astronomical pressures of being gay in the military. Don't Ask-Don't Tell should have no place in our armed forces. If we must still maintain this compromise established in 1993 in the year 2005, where is our progress taking us? Where is the respect our federal government claims to have for its men and women in uniform who are GLBT? If they have the bravery to serve, I say let them serve openly if that is what their heart tells them to do. Thomas has served us all well and now the time has come to honor him and other veterans by ending discrimination in the armed forces.

THIRTEEN HUNDRED

Did you know that the Federal Government has denied gays and lesbians over 1,300 rights that accompany marriage licenses between one man and one woman? These rights help protect the family structure such as child custody laws, joint home ownership, spousal privilege and tax incentives. Same-sex partners do not have the same legal rights to pension benefits when a partner dies and some are not granted access to see a sick partner in the hospital. Instead of upholding "liberty and justice for all," government has upheld the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) since it was signed into law in 1996. The law states that a legal union is formed with one man and one woman and no state shall be required to recognize a marriage-like relationship between two men or two women. Under DOMA, Minnesota would not be required to acknowledge the marriages that come from Massachusetts, nor the civil unions in Vermont. Our federal government, along with many state legislators, is trying to polarize our nation with ballot initiatives to ban same-sex marriage. They are wasting valuable time and resources by drafting hate legislation, when they should be helping families. I'd suggest they put their energy toward the common good by passing health care and social security reform, and creating "real" paying jobs. The oath of hypocrisy continues as many in our federal government believe a constitutional amendment must be drafted and ratified to ban the legal union between two men or two women. Same-sex marriages do not impose a threat to heterosexuals. Children are not being brainwashed into becoming gay or lesbian. GLBT families deserve the same rights and benefits in every sector of society. Our Constitution was drafted to include all Americans and not phase out a minority. Adding hateful amendments to the Supreme Law of the Land is the act of a coward.

You know the federal government doesn't have enough to do when they officially declared Marriage Protection Week from October 12-18, 2003. The press release signed by the Commander in Chief on

October 3, 2003, stated the goals of Marriage Protection Week. The address mentioned that marriage is a union between a man and woman. This was nothing more than a public attack on gays and lesbians and the families they have created. This was an assault on all families that are not composed of a mother and father figure. If our government wants to build strong families, I suggest they ban heterosexual divorce. Same-sex marriage does not destroy the family, but unemployment, no health insurance and spending billions on assault weapons will. The press release called for Americans to create a compassionate and welcoming society, but Marriage Protection Week is anything but compassionate and welcoming. It is another sneaky way to pave the way for hateful politics. Can the federal government be any more blatantly obvious with its hypocrisy? If the government wants to create a welcoming society, it shall start by lifting all bans on same-sex marriage and domestic partnerships. If they want to promote parenthood, let the GLBT adopt children and take part in foster parenting. It's time to end all homophobic policies that limit the pursuit of happiness. We must begin to bind this nation as one nation and let us heal both gay and straight.

TO THE FUTURE

Inside each of us is the ability to take our own oaths. We have the choice to do so with good will and charity for all, or we can opt down a much easier path, the one of hypocrisy. We need people like Cindy Sheehan to help guide us to "see the right." We need those like Thomas to help ignite a burning passion to end discrimination and to honor those who have given us so much of their lives. We have suffered through many wounds as a country and we will face many more ahead. When it seems like hypocrisy is all around us, never forget there is always "A New Hope" ahead.

"Remember upon the conduct of each depends the fate of all."

-Alexander the Great

It mystifies me how, in light of all this, many gays remain faithful Catholics. I have some questions for the gay Catholics reading this: First and foremost, how many different ways does the church need to tell you that you are unwelcome and unloved before you get it? In light of the pedophilia scandal and the church's response how can you still attend mass? How can you put money in the collection plate each Sunday knowing that your dollars help to keep this anti-gay organization afloat? How can you accept being denied communion because you chose to wear a rainbow sash to show your fellow parishioners that, yes, there are openly gay people at your church?

Open your eyes. The Catholic church is not going to change any time soon. Organizations for gay Catholics, like the ironically named Dignity, have accomplished nothing. Why? Because while select local churches and individual priests might be welcoming, the organization as a whole is not. It's not a democratic organization therefore lobbying for gay marriage or anything else is completely useless. Seriously, Log Cabin Republicans have a better chance of reforming the G.O.P. If past history is any indication it might be several hundred years before the Vatican faces up to the fact that they're wrong and offer an apology for their homophobia.

To all the gay Catholics reading this piece, please know that I'm not writing this to spite you. But I can't understand how you can belong to an organization that treats you like lepers. Your attendance and your financial support make you complicit with the church's homophobia. The Catholic church does not deserve your faith nor your devotion nor all of the energy and talents that you bring to it. So quit. This especially goes out to the gay priests. Instead of putting on that rainbow sash (or clerical collar) Sunday morning and being insulted once more, don't go at all. For the sake of your own mental health find a church that truly affirms who you are, unconditionally. †

Why?

By Paul Nadolski, <http://PaulN2719.blogspot.com>

Lying in bed together,
On Sunday morning,
It feels so good,
I must be dreaming.
It's been so long
Since I've felt this way,
You've taken my pain
And tossed it away.
Or so I think.



"For My Ex's", watercolor and ink, 2005, by Paul Nadolski;

Why do you have to lie?
Don't you know it will make me cry?

Politicians on TV,
Any given day,
Talking about
Another great way
To mislead us,
To screw us over,
Do disgusting things
'Cause they have power.
They just don't care.

Why do they have to lie?
Don't they know it will make us cry?

When I one day learn the truth,
Always surprising,
I'm often hurt,
Alone and crying.
Liars come and go,
Truth always prevails,
I will overcome
With wind in my sails.

What goes around, comes around,
And I'd hate to have
Your karma.



"Dishonest America", watercolor, acrylic and ink, 2005, by Paul Nadolski.



WAKE-UP CALL

By Andy Ansell, aansell@mnaidproject.org

When I was told the theme of this issue of *Outsight* was a rant about something that makes you mad or pisses you off, I really had to think about it. I began by looking up the definition of rant. I came up with: to scold vehemently. That's pretty harsh in my book as I'm mostly a pretty laid back person and I don't think yelling at people really gets you anywhere.

I thought about plenty of things, though, that made me hot under the collar. I could go after politicians, the pharmaceutical industry or tobacco manufacturers. Just to name a few.

I began to let my mind wander to recent events and things that I could write about. That's when I thought about the 2nd annual West Central AIDS Walk and my experiences there.

The walk took place in the small town of Alexandria, Minnesota, on September 18. About 60 people turned out for

this little one and half mile walk to raise money and awareness about HIV in rural Minnesota. It was a beautiful Indian summer day with sun shining through leaves that were trying desperately to retain their rich green color before being overcome with autumn's oranges and reds. The walk route wrapped lazily around a lake that provided refuge to a pair of loons. We took our time walking and appreciating the day.

A few weeks prior to the walk, I was contacted by one of its organizers who asked if I'd come up and participate in the walk with him. His name is Steven and I've known him for a few years through my involvement in HIV advocacy work. Like myself, Steven has been living with HIV for about 18 years. He shared with me that he had been diagnosed with an HIV-related cancer and that it had progressed so rapidly that they stopped treating him for it and that he was preparing to die.

When I saw him I barely recognized him because he was so frail, but his demeanor was warm and peaceful and he gave me a big hug. We talked about the event and how much money was raised and what it was like living in Alexandria. As people began to leave and I got ready to head back to Minneapolis, I told him what a good time I had and that I wanted to come back next year. He told me that he hoped the walk would go on even though he wouldn't be there next year. That's when it hit me that Steven was going to die soon.

It just doesn't seem right that someone so full of life is about to lose it. If you want to know what makes me angry it's that people are still dying from HIV and that the world seems to be less interested in HIV every year. It's harder to get people to talk about it, raise money for it, and protect themselves from it. It's not my style to yell, but if I had the chance I'd tell everyone to wake the fuck up! That may offend some people, but after seeing so many people die or have their life turned upside down by HIV, it seems like a small price to pay to have people wake up to the threat that HIV still poses to us all. ♪

QUEER-ASS PARENTS continued from page 5

the opposite sex—let me give you a little historical perspective: alternatives to sexual contact between two persons of the opposite sex for purposes of procreation have only been available for a relatively short period of time. Way back in the dark ages, around the last quarter of last century, homosexuals interested in being parents did not (for the most part) have access to fertility clinics, surrogates or adoption options. This meant methods now considered essentially “mainstream” were closed to most homo wannabe-parents. Go a little further back in history and we come up against the societal understanding that to have kids one had to be married to a member of the opposite sex. This meant anything from being in denial about one's sexual orientation to acknowledging it but being willing to conceal it for the sake of being a parent. All of these circumstances are still in existence today—and if the homo

wannabe-parent lives at or below poverty level, those wonderful options so blithely advertised in our 21st century gay rags are still inaccessible. What does this mean? It means that the age-old method of sexual intercourse between two persons of opposite sex has to occur (OK, I am not including the hearsay tales of successful turkey baster inseminations—in all the years I have been meeting gay parents and their kids I have yet to meet even one family with children conceived in this manner.)

For those of you fellow fags still astonished at homos being parents, get over it! Better yet, learn to celebrate the gay moms and dads among you, whether they are single or partnered, adoptive or biological. Remember, if it weren't for parents your happy asses wouldn't be here to be queer! ♪



My
God,
I am trapped
in a room
of psychos.

No.
For real,

Our "welcome"
Speaker is
singing a song
about being a lesbian
to the tune of "Old MacDonald"



this is the size
the hole would be
if I drove this pen
through my eye