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no consistent, objective way of defining "male" and "female" that will allow us to place everyone unequivocally within one or the other of these categories, and any statute that requires anyone to be definable as either "male" or "female" to participate in an otherwise common benefit does not pass Constitutional muster.

Sumner Grey
Brattleboro, VT

Outright deserves support, not attacks

I saw in the weeks past in the people putting Outright Vermont down and talking trash and spreading lies about them. Me, I think we need not spread trash; Outright Vermont is a good thing. When I've needed to talk to someone, they were there for me. When I've felt down, they were there for me. When I needed info on stuff, they were there for me. And to me, I know that they're going to schools, not to promote their lifestyle, but to help kids understand about being gay. Did you know there has been a study done and that 1 in every 10 people are gay lesbian or bisexual? If we do not let them know they're ok, people, if they find out they are gay later on in life, might hurt themselves. I mean, the reason behind most gay youth suicides or drug or alcohol use is that society tells them they're not ok.

I think Outright is a good thing and that it should be going around to schools. There is no porn in there stuff; I've seen their info. I do not know where people are getting their [negative] info, but they better get it somewhere else. Wake up and get a life and stay out of ours! We are not all up in you lives, so you do not need to be in ours. Live and let live. As a gay male, I feel you need to

stop talking trash and spreading lies and hatred.

Thanks again, Outright Vermont, you're the best—keep up the good work and never give up!!!

Bradley James Jr
Piermont, NH

On darkness

I have rarely been quite so offended or felt victim-blamed quite so strongly as I did reading Rev. Christine Leslie's November column.

Imagine my surprise to discover that, no, I don't have seasonal affective disorder—it "seems" I suffer from "something" that is currently "called" that. "Apparently current medical thought indicates that the amount and proper absorption of sunlight can affect mood and function in some people. But Rev. Leslie informs me that this is not the case; rather, I suffer from a variety of other ills that cause me to have physical and emotional difficulty during the winter months.


I had no idea that I was so confused, ignorant, self-misled, un-valued, avoidant, and weak-willed.

Disease as moral failing or character weakness is an old theory that just won't go away, no matter how often it is disproved. Cancer and tuberculo-

sis were such cases; HIV/AIDS is still far too often targeted this way. Anyone struggling with mental health issues faces it daily. I heard my share of "just snap out of it" (in other words, you're just making it up or blowing it out of proportion or too weak to fix yourself) during a deep depression in my adolescence. Let me tell you, there's almost nothing worse one could say to a person suffering from a bewildering and debilitating episode of clinical depression.

To hear from a pastoral counselor that I don't "really" understand or that it doesn't matter the way I've "made it matter" or that I'm taking the "easy" way out by "obsessing" over something she deems trivial is more than a slap in the face to my very real experience of seasonal affective disorder. It's offensive, and it's unprofessional. I suggest that Rev. Leslie take some of the time offered by the shorter days to think before she writes.

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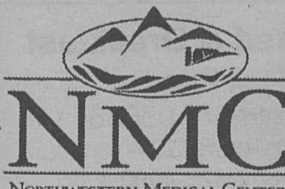
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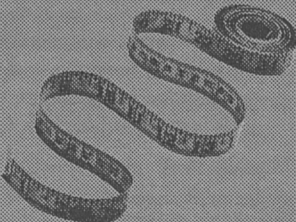


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