

Not the Party Line

I'm continually amazed at the number of times my partner, Martin, can do it.

He can watch the same movie over and over again, and still enjoy it as much – or more – as when the film was new to him.

That talent for perpetual appreciation of what is familiar has served Martin well in other areas, too. In a few days, we will celebrate our 11th anniversary. And he's as happy to see my face in the morning now as he was more than a decade ago. He demonstrates his love for me, every day, with undiminished zeal.

So, should all potential mates be subjected to the multiple-viewing test to measure their capacity for long-term appreciation?

Finding joy in the simple things is also a very desirable quality. Martin is content with a cold can of Pepsi, a variety of premium cable channels and a husband who loves him. Everything else is icing on the cake.

I'm a lucky man. After eleven years, I still get excited to hear his voice when he calls home from a business trip. I never fail to get aroused when he snuggles into a spoon position, before we go to sleep.

Martin makes me laugh effortlessly. He tells me I look beautiful and sexy – even when I least feel that way – and he means it. He allows me to reveal intimate details of our life together and doesn't object to the mining of my past relationships for material on all sorts of topics. And he does so without fear of embarrassment

or fits of jealousy – an amazing gift to give a writer. He supports and nurtures me. He understands my weaknesses and celebrates my strengths.

How cloying can I get before

there's an insurrection by the single and unhappily partnered?

It isn't always sunshine and lollipops for Martin and me. We've had our share of challenges, like any couple. We struggle with finding common ground on the frequency of sex. We get frustrated by a few of each other's quirky habits.

Our priorities for purchases don't always dovetail. We've had quiet, but very passionate, arguments in the luggage department of a store, the parking lot of car repair shop and a mini mart, among other memorable locations. It rains in our happy world but not often and not for long.

Our life, these past eleven years, has been a series of choices. We chose to be together and we choose to be monogamous. We understand that other couples don't make that same choice and we respect their freedom to do what works for them.

Respect, from our single gay brethren and those in open relationships, is rarely reciprocal.

More often than not, the question that follows, "How

Naked Curiosity

By Dennis Scott-Bush



I don't believe that open relationships are right for everyone any more than I agree that all of us can or should be one-man men. Yet, our community touts promiscuity as our right and responsibility. It's no less peer pressure than teens being told that "everyone's doing it."

long have you two been together?" is "Do you play?"

When we respond, "No," we're frequently met with disbelief and disappointment, as if being a source of bed-hopping tales was required for being a long-term couple.

Many of my colleagues in the gay press make a habit of sounding a clarion call on behalf of promiscuousness. There have been dissertations about gay men being unsuited to anything but a life of sexual smorgasbord. We've been described as animals motivated by primal urges. We're thirsty nomads and our penises are divining rods guiding us to the next spot to dig a well.

Are we all sluts by nature? It seems that even those without gonads-gone-gaga are expected to accept promiscuity as the party line.

I'm not prepared to do that. I don't believe that open relationships are right for everyone any more than I agree that all of us can or should be one-man men.

Yet, our community touts

promiscuity as our right and responsibility. It's no less peer pressure than teens being told that "everyone's doing it."

When we first got together, Martin and I experimented with visits to sex clubs and had a few threesomes. Weren't we supposed to be doing that? The query in the gay papers wasn't if couples should have open relationships but whether or

not they should tell all or keep secrets. We had our infidelities – physical and emotional. For us, those activities were not inevitabilities, as some would suggest. They were mistakes.

We've braved the exploration and errors and come out stronger on the other side. I salute the couples who have done the same.

Here's to many more anniversaries.

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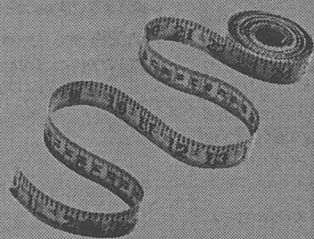
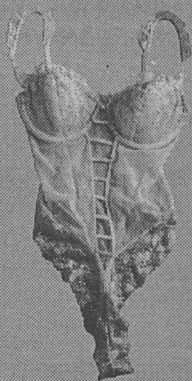
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What do you take to bed?



Whatever you take along for pleasure, consider this: We may feel safe in Vermont, but we're not immune to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Don't take a chance...

take a condom



Vermont AIDS Hotline 1.800.882.AIDS
TTY 1.800.319.3141

MOTHER & CHILD



TEA DANCE

Mother's Day Sun. May 13th

WWII Club
Conz St., Northampton, MA
Sponsored by
Intimacies & Paradise Hospitality Group
Directions and info available at 413-582-0709
DJ - Hors d'oeuvres - cash bar
\$10.00 Adults/\$5.00 Children
5 yrs. + / Under 5 yrs. free
SMOKE FREE EVENT

Coming soon!
Watch for our "Kick Off The Summer Luau" at the Inn at Northampton
Call for info