

The politics of homophobia and other atrocities

CVGM organized

Central Vermont Gay Men (C.V.G.M.) has recently formed, and will continue to sponsor, a support group for gay men.

The group is currently comprised of eight men of diverse backgrounds, experience and age. Thus far the discussions have been open and personal with each member sharing his feelings about being gay, living in a rural area with limited support, and the reaction disclosure has had, or might have.

In the future the group plans to discuss issues of the older gay male, use of substance abuse to closet emotions, how to meet someone nice, relationships, and safe sex.

A buddy system has been developed so that individual members can maintain the support generated in the group during the interim between meetings.

The group meets every two weeks and hopes to plan special events as a community, i.e., outings, attending public concerts of group members, sojourns to the bar, etc.

The group format has been supportive in facilitating members talking with each other on a person-to-person basis. It is helping to bring about the realization that we have many issues and concerns in common and are indeed not alone in facing them.

For further information, contact Keith E. Goslant at RD # 1, Box 3370, East Hill, Barre, Vt 05641 (476-7506).

Purpose

The purpose of *Out in the Mountains* is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, support and affirmation for lesbians and gay men. We also see it as a vehicle for celebration of the goodness and diversity of the lesbian and gay community.

Editorial Policy

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of the staff.

This paper cannot, and will not endorse any candidate for public office. We will serve as a vehicle for informing our readers about the views of candidates and actions of public officials on issues of particular importance to lesbians and gay men.

We will not publish any material which is overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist or homophobic.

All materials submitted must be signed and include an address and/or phone number so we can contact the author should we need to consider editorial revisions. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously, upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed. No revisions or rejections of materials will occur without dialogue with the author.

We welcome and encourage all readers to submit materials for publication and to share your comments, criticisms and positive feelings with us. This paper is here for you.

The deadline for submitting material for each issue is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Materials should be sent to:

Out in the Mountains

PO Box 438

Hinesburg, VT 05461.

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by Becky Brandt

It is no accident that the same people who object to the ERA, reproductive freedom, masturbation, social programs, socialism and peace, etc., also oppose homosexuality. All this opposition has a common root, the fascist political agenda of capitalist patriarchy, male supremacy. (This is not true in the case of pornography, which patriarchy defines as obscenity but which in reality is prostitution and woman-hatred and was created by patriarchy for the purpose of degrading womyn. For more information on this subject read "When God was a Woman" by Merlin Stone, and "A Herstory of Prostitution" by Jesse Wells.)

In order to end homophobic and other kinds of bigotry it is important to understand the connection between all forms of bigotry, its origin, who bigotry serves and how, and how it is perpetuated.

Homophobia, the fear and hatred of homosexuality, is a part of sexism, the control of sexuality in order to achieve male supremacy (of white, old, rich, male Xtians [WORMX] in our culture). It is one of the sexual scarcity myths created and imposed on us by patriarchy, from which WORMXs get their power. Ronald Raygun's popularity is an example of this power. By making sex a scarce commodity (no masturbation, no sex outside of marriage and for procreation only, homophobia, ageism, etc.) and womyn sex commodities (mother/whore), patriarchy give capitalists the opportunity to make big bucks selling sex-ism and exploiting womyn, just as classism and racism are used to exploit people for profits.

Patriarchal religion represses and distorts sexuality in order to control us, to force men to buy sex through marriage or prostitution and womyn to work for "love" or, with other wage slaves, for low wages in de-valued, spirit-deadening jobs. The purpose of marriage is to provide wealth to capitalist-patriarchs by ensuring a dependent, vulnerable, and docile labor force and by exploiting womyn. The purpose of homophobia and other aspects of sexism is to ensure sex role division and the dominant male/submissive female model. Its ultimate goal is male control of female reproductive and therefore productive power, a main source of wealth. We can see by the latest Supreme Court ruling against sodomy that patriarchy take the business of sex roles seriously.

Patriarchy goes hand in hand with capitalism, the worship of private property rights. (This is why Randolph Hearst supported Billy Graham and Coors and the Hunt brothers support Jerry Falwell and other insidious causes like the John Birch Society, for

example.) Rich men are always behind religion and for good reason. Capitalism uses patriarchal ideology and mythology to justify and continue its exploitation of people and resources at home and abroad, just as feudalism did in the past. The Battle of the Sexes becomes the Battle of Nations. (There are also contradictions between capitalism and patriarchy, like the selling of sex-ism vs. the restricting of sex, and these need to be exposed so people will know how they're being duped.)

The combination of self-hatred taught by the Original Sin myth and sexual repression (common to all patriarchal religions, along with the dominant male myth) with economic and social oppression leads to the fear and hatred of others and the need to compete rather than cooperate. Think where capitalists would be if people cooperated rather than competed, and think where patriarchy would be if sex were free and the sexes equal!

The notion of a Supreme Being gives rise to notions of superiority and inferiority rather than difference, from which we get our hierarchical mode of organizing and the justification of inequity and injustice. In the same way

Classism, sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, imperialism, etc., are all part of the same political agenda and serve the purpose of power, profits, and privilege for capitalist patriarchy. Throughout his-story patriarchal religion has flourished when economic oppression was most severe, and it has always acted to prevent social progress and justice, while talking of the Golden Rule and compassion for others, etc. Religion's promise of a better life is in heaven. (For an enlightening analysis of the politics of patriarchy, read "Right Wing Women" by Andrea Dworkin.)

How does homophobia fit into the politics of patriarchy? Strict sex role division is essential to male supremacist ideology. The dominant male model and all aspects of sexual repression, including homophobia, are necessary to control female reproductive power and achieve wealth and privilege. Homophobia is one of the pillars of patriarchy. If we can knock it down the whole structure will collapse. No turning back is the perfect theme for the job that must be done. The sexual scarcity myths of patriarchy and the material scarcity myths of capitalism must be exposed and denounced for the harm they do to human nature and the human condition. Then we could see an era of justice, peace, and prosperity for all, never dreamed of by most people but entirely within our capabilities right now.

(I use the words womyn and womyn because woman means womb of man.)