



Dear Gertrude & Alice

Dear Gert and Alice,

I am 25 and have been out to myself and my friends since going to college. My parents live on the west coast and I haven't broken the news to them. They're pretty conservative and I don't see them too often. The situation is that my younger sister is starting college at UVM this fall. Since she's 7 years younger, I don't know her very well, and I don't know if I should come out to her. If I do, do I have to tell my parents too, or can I ask her to keep this a secret for her brother?

Closeted in Colchester

Dear Closeted,

Hey! One step at a time. It would certainly be pretty impractical to try to avoid her. Burlington may be the biggest city in Vermont but not big enough to hide in. So get to know her. Maybe she's sitting in her room right now asking herself "should I come out to him? he always seemed open-minded..." If you can develop some friendship and trust, then coming-out should

come naturally. If she seems homophobic, then you've got to do some thinking. Are you going to feel more comfortable in the long run telling her or not. Are you ready to take that step with your parents? Yes, you can ask her to keep a secret but do you want to?

Dear Gert and Alice,

I work in a small company, and my co-workers and I often go out for drinks together, or socialize after work. It is assumed that on these occasions, spouses and significant others are welcome and often attend. (They have all been of the opposite sex though.) I have been working there four months and have never stood up and said "I am a lesbian" - but have made enough comments that I assume they know. Over the last few weeks, I have started a

To send your queer queries to Gertrude and Alice, write c/o Out in the Mountains, P.O. Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402. Please write? Anonymous questions fine.

from page 10

promote the strength, beauty, power, and potential of women. Is this so horrible? I see them as very positive beliefs. It's certainly not my whole focus in life, but only a facet of my personality. Where did you get the idea that I'm a "slave" to this ideology??

When you say "this sexist women's lib stuff", I wonder if you have applied what other people have written and said, to me. Or have you made assumptions in your own mind that don't even apply to me. It's as if I said to you "what's with this God stuff?" It creates a fog rather than a clarification; doesn't get down to critical issues. What do you think about the ERA? About a woman's right to choose abortion? About day care needs of working mothers? About rape prosecution? About credit laws for divorced/widowed women? About supporting girl athletics?...These are some things that concern me. I do believe that women have been exceptionally and deliberately degraded down through the ages, that's why there is so much inequality now, and the resistance to changes.

I know I'm not free from being sexist - I'm working on it. It's a rare person in this society who is not sexist - it's almost a part of our culture.

As to "what's going on back there?" The usual. I work, help keep house, dream of the future, enjoy my hobbies and a wide variety of entertainment. Have a lot of good times, have some bad times about my job. I'm having a basically ordinary life - thankful for having so much, and offering

few complaints. This is the real me. I'm proud of the way I've taken care of myself, of developing a beautiful relationship with Mary, of all that I've learned and accomplished so far. You are still my father, and I want you to accept me as I am. I hope you can. I hope you will.

The only change I may need is a change of jobs - of career maybe, or place. Don't need or want any change in my lifestyle. It's just great for me as it is - anything else would be intolerable. I have all that I dreamed of years ago, and even more.

I hope you won't become too frustrated about my not leaping in a religious experience. Just don't feel the need or desire for it. I do appreciate your sending the reading material, but I haven't read any since Pat Boone's book. There are so many things that I really want to read, that I just don't take the time and effort to read things that don't appeal to me. Since I feel guilty having them, knowing that you might pass them on to someone else, I'll be sending them back with slides and etc.

If you'd be interested in reading anything about some of the ideas I've mentioned, I'd be glad to send books, too. Just as you probably want me to come around to your point of view, I'd like you to come around to mine.

Well, enough for now (maybe more than enough). I hope this letter hasn't hit you too hard. It definitely seems time to be open and honest.

Love, Carol

fairly serious relationship and would like to bring her to these work events but am a little nervous. I don't quite know how to introduce her without making a fuss, but making it clear that she's not just "a good friend." Any advice?

Waiting in Waterbury

Dear Waiting,

Well, that's a toughie! Why not stick to your style of "making enough comments." When they say let's go out for drinks tonight, say "great, I think I'll give my sweetie a call. Then you can meet her." When they ask how your weekend was, tell them about your hot date or romantic dinner. Don't worry. They'll pick up on it. Just introduce here by her name. If they've been hearing that name all the time, we assure you, they'll know who she is.

## Calendar

### OCTOBER 1, Friday

No VLGR meeting this month

### OCTOBER 3, Sat

Yom Kippur

Integrity. Service at 7:55. Social at 8:45pm. St. Paul's Cathedral, Burlington, VT.

### OCTOBER 4, Sunday

P-FLAG Organizational meeting in Rutland. For directions call 773-7601.

### OCTOBER 5, Monday

March on Washington Van Reservation Deadline!! Call Terje, 863-2437 to reserve your seat.

### OCTOBER 10, Saturday

6:45am Vans leave from the Peace and Justice Center, 186 College St., Burlington for Washington.

### OCTOBER 9-13, Fri-Tuesday

Lesbian/Gay MARCH ON WASHINGTON (see related articles on the events).

### OCTOBER 14, Wednesday

Burlington Peace Coalition Board meeting. 7:00pm. 186 College Street, Burlington, VT.

### OCTOBER 15, Thursday

OITM articles deadline.

continued, page 12