

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 candidates and actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians and gay men.

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

All materials submitted must be signed 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 7th of the month prior to publication.

Materials should be sent to:
Out in the Mountains
PO Box 177
Burlington, VT 05402

To Submit Articles and Letters

We encourage our readers to participate in bringing this publication to Gay and Lesbian Vermonters. Please assist us by submitting articles no longer than two double-spaced typed pages and letters to the editor no longer than one double spaced typed page. Your submission should be received by OITM no later than the 7th of the previous month.

Thank you!

Editorial

Upright Outright Vermont

Society has become more aware of adolescence as a difficult time of life. By establishing support networks, youth organizations, and other services, society is attempting to meet the needs of teenagers. Yet, there are few safe places for gay, lesbian, and bisexual teenagers to go to talk about their sexuality, ask questions, or gain support. Where can these kids go for information or support? And, is it the responsibility of adult lesbians and gay men to provide them with information and support?

For many adolescents, peer relations and sexuality directly affect self-esteem. Few gay and lesbian teens find acceptance among peers; few are given the resources to view their sexuality in a positive light. Also, few families are willing to provide support for their gay, lesbian or bisexual teenager. This constant ridicule and disapproval during developmental years has a tremendous negative impact on self-esteem.

Those of us who were gay or lesbian teenagers understand the fear and loneliness of that time. Even as adults, many of us must hide ourselves; many are lonely; many suffer the judgments of others. Yet, we as adults, have more power, more

choice, and more access to information than we did as teenagers. More importantly, we have reached a stable place developmentally where we have the personal resources to care for ourselves in a hostile world.

Publicly discussing the needs of teenage sexual minorities, or even their existence, is a risk for the gay and lesbian community. In doing so, we expose ourselves to homophobic judgments and assumptions. These assumptions range from the unfounded belief that homosexuals molest children, to the idiotic notion that we are trying to recruit (possibly seduce) vulnerable young people into our ranks.

It is important for us, as adults, to become involved in making our schools and youth organizations safe, accepting places for ALL teenagers in spite of these risks. Although we may expose ourselves to homophobic criticisms, we can create alternatives to the pain and isolation of being "different." And, in doing so, gay, lesbian and bisexual teens may grow into more powerful, creative, and loving adults. These are the stated goals of the new organization "Outright Vermont", and OITM enthusiastically supports their efforts.

Letters from OITM Readers

To the Editor:

You are somewhat confused about what you call my "far right agenda" on the issue of gay rights.

Twenty five years ago I worked actively in the civil rights movement. Our goal was a "color free society", and we worked with considerable success to strike down barriers facing black Americans.

Unfortunately, despite the explicit assurances of such civil rights leaders as Hubert Humphrey, "striking down barriers to a color blind society" quickly turned into "special legally mandated privileges for disadvantaged groups."

Special legislation to confer "equal rights" upon gays will just as inevitably result in "gay preference" laws, policies, and court cases. I am not about to vote to give gays any preference over their fellow citizens, or to confer some sort of official legitimacy on their sexual practices.

That is my "dangerous and intolerant" position. You are welcome to make the most of it.

Yours truly,
Senator John McClaughry

To the Editor:

My daughter recently sent me a copy of your newsletter which I am sharing with friends here in Puerto Rico.

They are amazed at the frankness of the articles in the newsletter and intrigued by the lists of services offered to Lesbians and Gay Men. There are no such organizations here in Puerto Rico, and, in fact, there are no bookstores where one can buy any materials dealing with any aspect of alternative life styles. It's as if we were living in the Dark Ages.

For the most part language is no great barrier here. Most Puerto Ricans read English and many speak it quite well, but most feel more comfortable writing in Spanish. For this reason they would like to have materials in Spanish which they could contribute to and share with others whose knowledge of English is weak.

Puerto Rican lesbians and gays live in a secret underworld isolated from the straight community. Many marry because of family pressure; all are taught that they are going through a phase which they will
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