

the core issues of mainstream America, she said. "Our fight is a fight against disinformation." But in order to do so successfully, according to Ms. Osborn, "we need to take a deep breath, look at what has happened over the last twenty-five years, and change the way the movement thinks about itself in relation to power." Gays and lesbians need to "get over" their fear of being outsiders and play the "politics of taking power".

As an example of the job that Vermont has done in the area of grass roots organizing, Ms. Osborn pointed to the fact that the Religious Right has targeted every state in the U.S. that has a statewide anti-discrimination law except Vermont. "They don't think they can win here."

She also squelched rumors as to why she is leaving NGLTF, the nation's largest gay and lesbian organization, after less than a year as their Executive Director. According to Ms. Osborn, she accepted the offer with NGLTF in order to do "big picture planning" for the national movement.

However, the job actually entailed writing "personnel manuals" and performing other "administrative tasks." She calls it an "amicable divorce."

Ms. Osborn fielded questions and comments from the audience on issues such as outing, bisexuality, lesbian chic, feminism, and Clinton's "don't ask, don't tell" military policy toward gays and lesbians. When asked if Donna Shalala is a lesbian, she said that she has spoken with lots of people who have known Shalala for many years. "Some say she is (a lesbian), some say she isn't....That sounds like she is." But she did break the bad news that "George Stephanopoulos is straight!"

She ended her talk with an endorsement for the Vermont Coalition of Lesbians and Gay Men's Creating Change/Creating Community conference in December. "This is just what you need to do," she said of the upcoming event. "As usual, Vermont is in the vanguard." ▼

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*SERVING THE NEEDS OF THE
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