

Strictly Heterosexualist, Strictly Homophobic, Strictly Vermont: News for the Unsuspecting Shopper

OITM Staff

The Strictly Vermont storefront at 184 Main St., Burlington, has been the site of two recent protests by people concerned with Strictly Vermont's promotion of a doctrine that they claim encourages (hetero) sexism, homophobia, hatred, fear, and misconceptions toward gays, lesbians, and the role of women in our community and in society at large. Strictly Vermont is owned and operated by a group calling itself the "community".

There are several "community" settlements in various parts of New England and in various corners of the globe, although the one that Vermonters are probably most familiar with is the settlement

in Island Pond, which was the site of a child abuse controversy in the mid 1980's. Members have distributed literature at various local gatherings, including the Rainbow Gathering, the Reggae Festival, and the Gay Pride march and rally. The document that caught our attention at *Out in the Mountains* is called, *Back to the Garden... and Destroying Those Who Destroy the Earth* -- a 38 page newsletter format that offers a series of brief articles on the community's philosophy and way of life. If you live in Burlington and haven't seen a copy, pick one up in the entryway of Strictly Vermont... And while you're there, you might try to re-educate the merchants! Here are some choice quotes on homosexuality:

"One of the most vile aspects of homosexuality is the insatiable appetite for new (young) flesh. They put on a gentle, plastic front, as if they are nice people with different sexual preferences than some. Well of course they act nice! How could they seduce people if they were coarse and obnoxious?"

"Homosexuals are bringing the earth closer and closer to devastation... Homosexual love is a perverted love"

Peggy Luhrs, of the Burlington Women's Council, says that when confronted by their belief system, workers at Strictly Vermont and/or members their community have denied being directly involved in the recent wave of violence directed at women and/or the gay/lesbian community -- particularly in the form of rape and gay beatings. However, she feels they are contributing to a climate that sets the stage for gay bashing and hatred by promoting a belief system that is rife with sexism, homophobia, intolerance, and misconception. Their words speak for themselves. Is this the kind of business and philosophy of life we want to support? Let them know what you think! Strictly Vermont outlets can be found at 184 Main St., Burlington, and 115 Rockingham St., Bellows Falls. Community settlements exist in Boston, MA, Lancaster, NH, and Bellows Falls, Burlington, and Island Pond, VT. Phone numbers can be found on the last page of *Back to the Garden*. ▼

Susan Franz, M.A.
Kate O'Brien, M.S.
Psychotherapists

Individual
Couples
Family
Group



15 Pinecrest Drive Essex Junction, VT 05452 802/878-4399

Where to Find OITM

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Bennington Free Library | Bennington | Northshire Bookstore | Manchester Center |
| Brattleboro Food Coop | Brattleboro | Middlebury Natural Food Coop | Middlebury |
| Cahoots | Brattleboro | Bear Pond Books | Montpelier |
| Colors | Brattleboro | Horn of the Moon Cafe | Montpelier |
| Common Ground | Brattleboro | Woman Centered | Montpelier |
| Everyone's Books | Brattleboro | Morristown Centennial Library | Morrisville |
| Burlington College | Burlington | Moore Free Library | Newfane |
| Chassman & Bem | Burlington | Northeast Kingdom AIDS Coalition | Newport |
| Partners in Recovery & Growth | Burlington | Brown Public Library | Northfield |
| Pearls | Burlington | Social Alternatives for Gay Men | Norwich |
| Planned Parenthood | Burlington | Woman's Study Program | Plainfield |
| STEP Learning Center | Castleton | Putney Library | Putney |
| Craftsbury Public Library | Craftsbury | Kimball Public Library | Randolph |
| Rutland Area Gay/Lesbian Connection | E. Middlebury | PFLAG | Rutland |
| Innwood Manor | East Barnet | Rutland Free Library | Rutland |
| Greenhope Farm | East Hardwick | LUNA/NEVGALR c/o Umbrella | St. Johnsbury |
| Fair Haven Free Library | Fair Haven | Natural Provisions | St. Johnsbury |
| Buffalo Mountain Coop | Hardwick | Regional Library | St. Johnsbury |
| Galaxy Books | Hardwick | St. Johnsbury Athenaeum | St. Johnsbury |
| Jon's Automotive | Lyndonville | Food for Thought | Stowe |
| Project EXCEL, Lyndon State College | Lyndonville | WRJ Books | White River Junction |