

Out in the Mountains
established in 1986

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Out In The Mountains (ISSN 1081-5562) is published monthly except for a combined July/August issue. The newspaper maintains offices at 109 South Winooski Avenue in Burlington. Our mailing address is PO Box 177, Burlington VT 05402. Our e-mail address is OutVermont@aol.com. Bulk rate postage for the mailing of the newspaper is paid in Burlington. The subscription rate is \$20 per year within the United States.

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Statement of Purpose

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

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, gay men, and bisexuals.

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

All materials submitted must be signed. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously, upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed.

To Submit Articles & Letters

We encourage and implore our readers to do what they can to make *OITM* a paper both for and by gay, lesbian, and bisexual Vermonters. Please assist us by typing your articles and letters double-spaced and including your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Thank you for helping out!

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

How to Advertise

If you would like to run an ad in *OITM*, please contact us for rates, sizes, and information. Copy can be mailed to: *OITM*, P.O. Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402, or call Ellen at (802) 860-1922 Steven West at (802) 864-6399 or Bruce at BMH graphic design at (802) 658-1556.

Read *OITM*
Monthly

**From the Editor:
A Question of Queer**

Fred Kuhr

Back in November, the over 500 participants of the Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights' (VCLGR) second annual conference were given the opportunity to come up to one of the microphones placed around the auditorium to speak their minds. One of the issues debated was the appropriateness of the conference's name - A Queer Town Meeting. One person said, "I like 'Queer Town Meeting' because it's very quick and easy, and there's a sense of politicalness to it. There's also a sense of 'Yeah, damn it, we're different!'" Another attendee stated, "I have a friend I told (about) the Queer Town Meeting. He said, 'I hate that. Why do you have to say (queer)?' I said, 'Well ... if we use that word, it's not going to be used against us.'" Smiles, nods, and intermittent applause were evidence of the crowd's approval.

When the issue of whether or not VCLGR's name is exclusionary to bisexuals and transsexuals, one soul stood up to offer the word 'queer' as a substitute for the laundry list of sexual minorities. A quick raising of hands gave this idea an overwhelming NO.

Fast forward to Keene, NH, this past February, site of the New England-wide g/l/b conference "Affirming Every Person". In my conversations with other Vermonters, one mentioned that the word 'queer' makes him very uncomfortable because of its connotations of "oddness and peculiarity". He said that although he identifies as gay, the word 'queer' is so distasteful to him that he did not attend the Queer Town Meeting.

On June 3, the statewide g/l/b community will once again come together to not only empower itself and each other but also to show the world (or at least unsuspecting Church Street Marketplace shoppers and Marselus Parsons fans) that we take pride in who we are personally, socially, and politically. Unfortunately, that queer word has reared its little head once again in the theme of this year's Pride Day - Queers and Friends Fight The Right - and a part of the state g/l/b community will stay home.

"I don't look at 'queer' as being a negative word," said VT Pride Committee member Jennifer Muncil during a recent phone interview. "If we use the word, we

are letting the world know that they're not hurting us. (The word) loses its impact." She also explained that many in the g/l/b community still suffer from internalized homophobia. In order to combat this for herself, she proudly says, "I am queer, and I am more than proud to be queer." Although Muncil admits that she can only speak for herself, she said, "You accept ('queer') as a negative, or you accept it as (just) a word."

Peter Thomas, also of the VT Pride Committee, spoke from a slightly different perspective. " ('Queer') doesn't bother me, but I am sensitive to the fact that it does bother others. Five years ago," he admits, "it did bother me." He sees the reason for the word popping up in community event names is the perspective of the organizers. If you have a small group of people who have been actively out for a long time, Thomas explained, "the sensitivity to certain ideas, words, (and) events go away." He did apologize, however, to those who are offended by the theme, "Our intention was not to alienate."

Personally, I can usually appreciate the word 'queer' used in a humorous or ironic context. To me, "Queer Town Meeting" was a perfect name - it took a Vermont tradition and turned it on its head. I must admit, however, that I am still not totally comfortable with "Queers and Friends Fight The Right". This is too serious and forceful a theme to be mired in the 'queer' muck. I do not identify as 'queer' - I am gay. So in a way, I am inadvertently excluded from the theme.

Does this mean I will not attend Pride activities? Certainly not. But I will offer a challenge to gays, lesbians, and bisexuals across the state. Part of the pride and celebration of our community is its diversity. To those who identify as 'queer', please remember that the word offends even those in your own community. To those who do not identify as 'queer', speak up! Show up at Pride Day. Talk to others in your community. Write a letter to the editor. Or better yet, get involved. This is your community - whatever word you use.

And to those who I have either angered or confused, go watch *The Brady Bunch Movie*. Now that's queer! ▼

Letters to the Editor

9 out of 10 surveyed ...

I'm one of the two transsexuals who (was featured) in the (*Rutland Herald/Montpelier Times Argus*) on Jan. 15, 1995. I read your story in the ... Feb. 19, 1995 (issue). You make the statement that *OITM* represents the transgender community. I don't think so. You see, I have two issues (of *OITM*) ... and nowhere are we, the transgender community, mentioned. As far as stereotyping, it still goes on within the gay and lesbian community, I'm sorry to say.

If you were to conduct a survey of gay men, 9 out of 10 would not have anything to do with us, and 8 out of 10 women would feel the same way. That's all I have to say.

Julie A. Maynard
Newport

Balloon Buster

Are you aware that you printed some inaccurate information in the April "*OITM* Roundup"? The paragraph was titled "Well, everyone knows that already," and it referred to a study which found that individuals with Gender Identity Disorder are considered to be more attractive than others. The article stated that people with GID are boys who adopt feminine traits and girls who adopt masculine ones, and concluded that therefore gay men are more attractive than straight men.

In actuality, Gender Identity Disorder is the clinical term that psychologists use to identify "transgendered" individuals. Often, people with GID become transsexuals. GID describes a person's internal sense of being another gender. It therefore has to do with gender identity - NOT sexual orientation (although some people with GID are g/l/b). Sorry to burst your balloon.

Anna Myers-Parrelli
Burlington

A Friend

Just a fellow Vermonter wishing you folks luck! Although I am not a targeted reader, I have read your publication in the past. Keep going!

A Friend in Christ
Cyberspace ▼

OUTSPOKEN:

OITM's Quote of the Month

"Within the theater industry, homosexuality is hardly the love that dare not speak its name. It's the love that doesn't ever shut its fucking mouth."

Nicholas Hytner, openly gay British director of the film *The Madness of King George*

Where to find OITM

- Barre**
Pen Dragon
- Bennington**
Bennington Free Library
Bennington College
Bennington Library
Record Rack
Southern Vermont College
- Brattleboro**
Book Cellar
Brattleboro Food Coop
Collected Works
Common Ground
Everyone's Books
- Burlington**
Burlington College
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Fletcher Free Library
Onion River Co-op
Partners in Recovery & Growth
Peace & Justice Center
Pearls
Planned Parenthood
- Castleton**
STEP Learning Center
- Chester**
Misty Valley Books Chester
- Craftsbury**
Craftsbury Public Library
- Center Rutland**
Rutland Area
Gay/Lesbian Connection
- East Dover**
Dover Free Library
- East Hardwick**
Greenhope Farm
- Fair Haven**
Fair Haven Free Library
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Buffalo Mountain Coop
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Storm Cafe
- Montpelier**
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Woman Centered
- Morrisville**
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- Newfane**
Moore Free Library
- New York City**
Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop
- Northfield**
Brown Public Library
- Norwich**
Social Alternatives for Gay Men
- Plainfield**
Woman's Study Program
Maple Valley Cafe
- Putney**
Putney Library
- Randolph**
Kimball Public Library
- Rutland**
PFLAG
Rutland Free Library
United Methodist Church
Grace Cong. United Church of Christ
- St. Johnsbury**
LUNA/NEVGALR c/o Umbrella
Natural Provisions
Regional Library
St. Johnsbury Athenaeum
- South Burlington**
South Burlington Community Library
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