

## Dean Speaks Out:

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**OITM:** State Senator (and probable candidate for Lieutenant Governor) Jeb Spaulding has proposed legislation that would create ballot initiatives in Vermont. What is your position on this proposal?

**Dean:** I don't like those and I would vigorously oppose those because they have been nothing but trouble for most other states. They have led to expensive and distorted campaigns of various kinds, some against minority groups, some against spending of various kinds, so I am a very strong opponent of government by referendum. I believe we have a representative form of government and that is the appropriate way we should continue.

**OITM:** How do you feel about outing? Specifically, should closeted gay members of the Legislature who voted against the Gay Rights Bill be outed?

**Dean:** I don't like outing because I think people need to make their own decisions about when or if they want to disclose if they are gay. Outing is now being used by some members of the gay community as a technique for advancing causes and also showing hypocrisy in politicians. It's always fair to show hypocrisy in politicians. The temptation is gigantic when you have hypocrisy in politicians but usually on issues of policy not issues of personal and private matters.

**OITM:** Will the NGA address any issues that specifically concern lesbians and gay men?

**Dean:** I doubt it. The NGA has a majority of 30 Republicans who are not inclined to address this cause in any kind of constructive way. Which doesn't mean that there are not some very good Republicans who are supportive of gay rights. (Massachusetts Governor) Bill Weld comes to mind immediately and there are others who would be sympathetic as well but the vast majority are unsympathetic. I can't think of anything constructive that would come out of the NGA meeting in this area. I can't even get universal health care on the agenda!

**OITM:** In the past you've supported legislation that would mandate HIV testing of convicted sex offenders. Do you still support it?

**Dean:** That's probably my one difference with the gay community. It's not going to happen but I still support it. It has to do with my views of victims . . . I feel so very strongly about victims rights, which in fact is the same sense of justice that makes me very supportive of the gay and lesbian community.

**OITM:** Do you plan to run for Governor in 1996?

**Dean:** Yes, and you're the first newspaper in the State to know.

**OITM:** Who will win the milking contest?

**Dean:** I'm going to get my butt cleaned! ▼

sexuality and if you don't know this in 1995 you are, at best, politically naive.

I don't doubt there are gays in the Republican party. We are everywhere and part of everything, we have criminals, pedophiles the likes of Roy Cohn. It's not that gay Republicans are not truly gay, it's that they have bad judgment if they think the Republican party will ever be helpful to the cause of gay rights.

Our community in its reaction to being discriminated against has gone overboard on the idea of non-judgmentalness to the point of becoming meaningless relativists. Sometimes you have to stand for something and omigod there may be a gay person alive who doesn't agree with you. Especially now with a real fascism from the right facing us. Have you heard **OITM** that the Republican party is catering to the Christian right? And why is Fred trashing (left fascism) the majority of our community who name themselves and are out and are pro-choice for the sake of maybe dragging out of the closet a couple of gay Republicans who would do what for their community? Not much I imagine.

At a time when we face real attacks from the right, **OITM's** mislabeling of left fascism is irresponsible and dangerous to all who are under attack from the right. **OITM** seems thrilled to get mail from the gay anti-choice group but maybe doesn't realize how the right tries to find these types of groups to split existing movements ...

When the Women's Council had its "Fight the Right Forum" in December, Sue Hyde of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force gave a workshop on coalition building because that is what gays and lesbians have had to do to fight the right wing attempt at anti-gay ballot initiatives. She made the point that if you are going to have a real coalition you cannot abandon the issues of any group in that coalition. Perhaps we're complacent in Vermont, we haven't had the extreme attacks gays have experienced in Oregon and Colorado, but we would be fools to think it can't happen here. A coalition that works for lesbian and gay rights believes no group should be scapegoated or oppressed by economic injustice either. It is a coalition that includes feminists who work for abortion rights and affirmative action. It is a coalition that is multicultural because it understands that the ruling class has always won by dividing and conquering. It knows the history of the right is anti-civil rights and anti-semitic.

I believe this is the type of movement we need, rather than one that panders to those in power, hoping for a blessing from above. No one has ever been given their rights by those in power. It is about creating a movement and fighting for them and it takes organizing at the grassroots. I hope this community will take the high road of liberation for all and not kid itself that it can clean up its act, vote Republican, and go home to Kansas.

Peggy Luhrs is Executive Director of the Burlington Women's Council.

All readers are encouraged to take their turn at the editorial bat and let their voices be heard on the topic of their choice. Send articles/columns of less than 1000 words to **Out In The Mountains**, P.O. Box 177, Burlington, VT 05402, or via the Internet at [OutVermont@aol.com](mailto:OutVermont@aol.com). ▼

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VERMONT'S NEWSPAPER FOR LESBIANS, GAY MEN, AND BISEXUALS

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07-08/95

# Letters to the Editor

## Not Proud of Pride Day

To participate or not to participate in the 1995 Pride Day parade (had) been my question. Whether 'tis nobler to participate when clearly many gay people have been discriminated against by some of the organizers of the parade or to stay away, that (had) been my dilemma.

Fortunately the June 1995 issue of **OITM**, with Editor Kuhr's highly responsible editorial, came out prior to Pride Day. In that editorial Kuhr probably (spoke) for the majority of us in the greater "gay community" who value the diversity within that community.

I honor that diversity which includes drag queens and transsexuals and leather and dykes on bikes and Republicans and Democrats and socialists and Catholics and atheists and all the rest that seems endless. I honor those who wish to call themselves "queers" and those who wish to be known as "radical fairies." I am fine about being called a queer, a fairy, or a queen; but a lot of gay men and lesbians find some of those labels offensive.

Pride Day is supposed to be inclusive. Using the term "queer" instead of "gay" is exclusionary. And disinviting our Republican Lieutenant Governor is exclusionary. We have room in our broadest definition of a "community" for all points of view. But when one of those points of view dominates that whole of Pride Day, then we become our own enemies.

I hope that Pride Day 1996 will return to a celebration for all gay persons, not just those who seem to have become self-appointed "chosen people."

Fred Kuhr deserves a standing ovation for his editorial and for exposing in **OITM** what happened to Pride Day 1995.

Cleland Selby  
Middlebury

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## OITM Out Of Touch

Holy inclusion Batman! ... er Fred. It sends chills of solidarity down my spine just to think of those same-sex Right-Wingers thumping away on their Ralph Lauren sheets.

Please, **OITM** seems to have forgotten the difference between sexual activity and political activism.

Whoever convinced the organizers of Gay Pride to reconsider Barbara Snelling as speaker prevented far greater embarrassment to politically aware Gay Vermonters and to the Lieutenant Governor herself. In fact, it would have been a downright cruel spectacle to watch a heterosexual, privileged, white woman booed and jeered from the podium because of an ill-conceived invitation to address a hostile crowd.

With the amazing exception of Alison Bechdel's work, **OITM** is sadly out of touch.

Virginia Winn  
Burlington

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## That Queer Word

I read your ... editorial in the May issue about the word "queer." My opinion on this is that I don't like it when it is used to describe people who like the same sex. In the dictionary, the word "queer" means "unusual, weird, and different." I don't consider myself or others who like the same sex weird. Some people feel that by already labelling themselves, they will show the "so-called straight world" (that) they are not hurting them when they call them queer. Well, I can see their point, but I still will not let others or myself be referred to as queer! So therefore I am opposed to the (theme) of this year's Pride Day ...

Bethann Prendergast  
Burlington

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## It Pays To Advertise

I want you to know how much I've appreciated not only your publication, but your ads. Through them I was able to find a real estate agent, a lawyer, and an insurance company. Through these womyn, I've been able to purchase a small cabin in Underhill ...

I have no idea how I would have managed this without their help and your paper to find them. I first contacted realtor Jackie Marino at Coldwell Banker ... She not only knew her job, she kept me reassured about this very intimidating process ... Since I had such good luck the first time, I tried again. This time I had the good fortune to meet Attorney-at-Law Sarah Powell. She is another womyn really dedicated to the cause ... I had a closing before I could really believe it ... While all this was going on I was trying to find insurance for my new nest. This wasn't easy because of the size of it. I called Ellen Hetherington (of Allstate) ...

So thanks to your paper I finally accomplished what I set out to do ten years ago. And with all this help, I think I got to do it in style.

Nat Harrison  
Chazy, NY. ▼