

Book Review: Vaid Impresses with *Virtual Equality*

Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay & Lesbian Liberation, by Urvashi Vaid. Published by Anchor Books.

Review and Interview by Joy D. Griffith

We are second class citizens, persecuted and demoralized in the land where supposedly "all are created equal."

Urvashi Vaid took off a year from leading the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to write *Virtual Equality*, a book which analyzes the placement of the gay and

lesbian movements in the American Society. Vaid finds us to be in a state of conditional equality based on the appearance of acceptance by straight America.

With only a few significant visible gains to our credit, our status continues to be blocked by the country in which we live. This political visionary examines what we want, and raises the banner to the gay and lesbian community to vigorously pursue our struggle for equality with all citizens of America.

"I do not have brilliant answers to the problems of general apathy or unwillingness to be involved on the part of so many gay people," Vaid said in a recent discussion. "Activism reflects both the internal and the external conditions people live under: If people are comfortable with their sexual orientations and open about them, I find they are more likely to be involved; and if people experience discrimination, they are more likely to be involved. A group that gets together to talk about being queer is the most important strategy to overcome disengagement and lack of involvement.

"The good news," Vaid continues, "is that more and more of us are involved in the movement — as volunteers, donors, members of national

groups or as openly gay people who come out in our circle of family and friends (critical work that does more to advance gay equality than any other act)."

Vaid urges us to join, get information, and support our groups and each other in the struggle. "The importance of (groups like) Lambda Legal Defense Fund and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force was demonstrated to me again as I read the Supreme Court's decision in the Colorado case. We could not have won without LLDEF's legal work or without NGLTF's community organizing and educational efforts. That's my piece," she says. ▼

AIDS Quilt to Cover National Mall

WASHINGTON, DC -- The NAMES Project will display the AIDS Memorial Quilt in its entirety in the nation's capital on the weekend of October 11-13. Over 40,000 panels — 24 football fields of fabric — will be unfolded as 70,000 names are read.

The litany of the names of the dead will continue for the full three days as more than 2,000 readers, many of them well-known and respected public figures, each take a turn at the podium.

Since its last showing in Washington DC in 1992, the Quilt has doubled in size. More than 10,000 volunteers will participate in the three-day display, and an estimated 750,000 visitors are expected. Over 23 miles of walkway fabric will be laid down between Quilt sections to allow viewers to get close to each memorial panel.

Founded in 1987, the NAMES Project Foundation sponsors and displays the AIDS Memorial Quilt to help bring an end to the AIDS epidemic. The Quilt is seen in smaller traveling sections by more than one million people annually at nearly 2,000 display sites. This may be the final time that the Quilt is able to be shown in its entirety. ▼

Health Resources

AIDS HOTLINES:

Vermont 800-882-2437
New Hampshire 800-752-2437
New York State 800-541-2437
Massachusetts 617-522-4090
Maine 800-851-2437
National 800-342-2437
Canadian 613-563-2437

Addison County AIDS Network
For meeting time, call Dick at 352-6679 or Kate at 388-4193.

AIDS Community Awareness Project (ACAP)
PO Box 608
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
(802) 748-1149

AIDS Community Resource Network (ACoRN)
PO Box 2057
Lebanon, NH 03766
(603) 448-2220

Bennington Area AIDS Project
PO Box 1066
Bennington, VT 05201
(802) 442-4481 or 1-800-845-2437

Brattleboro AIDS Project
PO Box 1486
Brattleboro, VT 05302
(802) 254-4444 (Helpline)
(802) 254-8263 (Office)

Gay/Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous
GLAA, P.O. Box 5653
Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 658-4221

Lesbian Cancer Support Group
(802) 660-8386

North Star (Holistic Health Care)
RR2 Box 3255
Morrisville, VT 05661
(802) 888-2858

Vermont AIDS Council
PO Box 275
Montpelier VT 05601
(802) 229-2557

Vermont C.A.R.E.S.
(Committee for AIDS Resources, Education, and Services)
PO Box 5248 • 37 Elmwood Ave., Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 863-2437 (Burlington)
1-800-649-2437 (VT)

Vermont Department of Health
1-800-882-2437 (AIDS Hotline)
or (802) 863-7245
(AIDS Program office)

VT PWA Coalition
PO Box 11
Montpelier, VT 05452
1-800-69-VT-PWA or (802) 229-5754

Vermont Women's Health Center
336 North Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 863-1386

Subscribe
to OITM

Don't forget your rubbers.

You don't get it from toilet seats. You don't get it from coffee cups. You don't get it from desk tops in a school room. It doesn't fly through the air or swim around in hot tubs. You don't catch it from shaking hands, kissing, sneezing, wrestling or dancing.

According to the Surgeon General, your best protection against AIDS, barring abstinence, is use of a condom. For the facts about AIDS, call the Vermont AIDS Hotline.

VERMONT AIDS HOTLINE: 1-800-882-AIDS

©1987, State Department of Health, Division of Epidemiology,
60 Main Street, P.O. Box 70, Burlington, Vermont 05402

Read OITM
Monthly