

health & wellbeing

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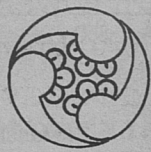
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Toward Intimacy Group
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SILENCE brings VIOLENCE

BY RIC KASINI KADOUR

Gay Bashing on Loop, Police Catch Attacker

A gay man was assaulted in Burlington this past April. The Burlington Police apprehended the suspect.

The assault occurred near the corner of Bank and Pine Streets, behind the Burlington Square Mall on 23 April around 12:30 in the morning. The area, a popular cruising ground for gay and bisexual men, is often referred to as "the Loop."

The police described the attacker as a white man in his early 30's wearing a jean jacket, blue jeans and a white t-shirt. The suspect had long blonde hair, a beard and mustache.

The police allege the attacker approached the victim and asked him for oral sex. A witness observed the initial contact.

Later, the witness saw the victim lying on the ground. Together the two men reported the incident to the police.

The attacker broke the victims ankle and bruised the left side of his face.

On 1 May, Officer Paul Blin of the Burlington Police Department went down to the area with a composite sketch and subsequently questioned the suspect who had returned to the area.

Eric Hoyt was arrested and charged with Hate Related Aggravated Assault. Hoyt was jailed, but released on bail.

Part of a Trend

In their 1997 report, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) reported an 8% increase in anti-gay violence since 1995. This figure includes a 36% increase in serial incidents of anti-gay violence. Serial incidents are defined as continuous violence and harassment by one offender against a single victim over a period of time. The NCAVP also reported a 67% increase in bomb threats or bombings and a 33% increase in extortion and blackmail.

The NCAVP is a coalition of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV positive (LGBTH) victim assistance, advocacy and documentation programs located throughout the nation, mostly in urban areas. Their report "does not purport to document the actual, or even approximate, number of anti-LGBTH incidents that occur in the United States" due to the vast under-reporting of such incidents.

Anti-LGBTH incidents "are under-reported due to the fact that most areas around the country do not have local victim assistance or documentation programs." No such programs currently exist in Vermont.

In addition to the April incident in Burlington, some people in Vermont's GLBT community are aware of other anti-gay incidents. People are often unwilling to report such incidents because of an unwillingness on the part of the victim or a fear of how the incident will be handled by authorities. The lack of anti-violence and victim assistance programs contributes to the community's silence about such events.

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Climate of Violence

Violence against GLBT people occurs for a variety of reasons. As GLBT communities become more visible and more vocal about their rights, violence is often part of the backlash. In Vermont, GLBT rights as once again risen to the forefront in both media and political circles. As the community progresses toward a Supreme Court decision on Same-Sex marriage, anti-gay groups are becoming more active.

This past February, Take It to the People (TIP) published an anti-gay flyer in Vermont's largest newspapers. The flyer objectified GLBT people and portrayed the community as a threat to civilization in Vermont. Such rhetoric contributes to a climate where GLBT people are seen as 'other' and 'dangerous'—characterizations which lead to violence.

Some anti-GLBT violence is committed by GLBT people. Same-sex domestic assault is often understood and documented as either a hate crime or anti-gay violence. Additionally, 'closeted' GLBT people can also perpetuate violence by acting out on their own self-

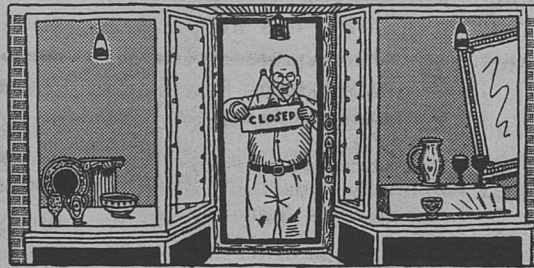
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The Mostly Unfabulous Social Life of Ethan Green

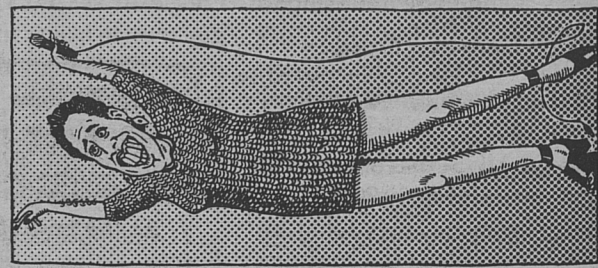
by Eric Orner

So it turns out that Jerry & George were leading these terribly conflicted, disavowedly homosexual double lives...

The George you never saw on camera owns a small antiques business in New Hope, Pennsylvania, and commuted to the city on Thursday nights to do the show...



...and Jerry is a performer alright, but what you don't know involves heavy make up, sequined gowns, and a regular gig M.C.ing the "Mister Hot Bums" contest at a tired old spot in Lake Ronkonkoma



Also, that soup Nazi? Well Jerry dated him for three years before falling for a Chelsea boy and ending the relationship faster than you can say gazpacho...



All the while Jerry's mom diligently organized a PFLAG chapter at her Florida condominium complex...



Elaine, of course, was aware of all this, & without objection, so long as the boys didn't come onto "Putty", who everyone on the island had lusted after for ages, but who, sadly it was understood, is just a straight boy who gets off on teasing the queens...

