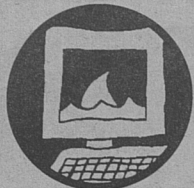


CYBER



SHARK

BY MIKI THOMAS

Alyson Press released the first edition of Jeff Dawson's *Gay & Lesbian Online* web guide a couple of years ago. Frankly, it wasn't all that impressive, especially in comparison with *Out* magazine's slick *Gay & Lesbian Guide to the Web* that came complete with CD-ROM. *Gay & Lesbian Online* looked like its poor cousin. It was a thin volume with little commentary, just listings of web sites and chat rooms that anyone could find using Yahoo or some other search engine.

What a difference two years can make! Of course, the web has grown considerably since the first edition came out. As the size of the third edition of *Gay & Lesbian Online* seems to indicate, the GLBT community had a huge part to play in that growth. There are now a jaw-dropping 3300 web sites listed, dealing with everything from activism to travel. Dawson has organized the guide alphabetically by topic for easy reference. The lists of web sites for each topic are further organized by country, state, or gay and/or lesbian emphasis.

Dawson also puts in his two cents, giving opinions about some of the more popular and important sites on the web as well as online services such as America Online. His knowledge of GLBT history and culture is impressive

and allows the reader to respect his judgments regarding a particular site. This is an important feature, considering that web guides including GLBT sites are often written by those outside the community. Uninformed opinions about a site are chiefly determined by popularity ("if

it's popular, it must be good!"), not by whether it has any real worth in terms of educational or entertainment value.

Interestingly enough, the guide's strengths — its size and completeness — are also its weaknesses. The lists are so long that they can be intimidating for a novice web surfer

who may not know where to start. Dawson does address this to a degree with his clear descriptions of numerous search engines at the beginning of the guide.

There is also the practical aspect to consider: it is difficult to hold the book and type

an URL at the same time. Perhaps the fourth edition might come with a CD-ROM version with hyperlinks of all the URLs listed.

Information is power and the *Gay & Lesbian Online* guide provides the definitive means for the GLBT community to tap into that power via cyberspace.

Mark Your Calendars!

Yes, I know it's hard to think summer when there's a ton of snow outside, but come June 19, it'll be Pride Day once again. To find out more about this year's celebration as well as reminisce about last year's Pride, check out the official web page at <http://www.theatershoe.org>. ▼



Gay & Lesbian Online, 3rd ed.
Jeff Dawson
Alyson Press

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THE VERMONT RAINBOW CONNECTION

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Sit back and enjoy our Feb. program filled with news, resources and an informative interview with Barbara Dozetos, editor of OITM.

listing of stations, times/days:

Adelphia (CH. 15) (Greater Burlington area) Fri 9pm

Adelphia (CH. 15) (Montpelier, Waterbury, Randolph) 2nd & 4th Fri 7:30pm

Lake Champlain (CH. 2) 1st & 2nd Mon 11pm and 1st & 2nd Wed. 10pm

Helicon (CH. 7) (Barre) 2nd & 4th Mon 8:30pm

BCTV (CH. 8) (Brattleboro) call 257-0888 for air days/time

MMCTV (CH. 3) (Richmond, Jericho, Underhill) call 434-2550 for air days/time

WENO (CH.15) (Enosburg, Berkshire, Richford) 1st & 3rd Sun at 8pm

CA-TV (Bennington, Pownal, Shaftsbury, Woodford, Hoosick Falls) call 442-8868 for air days/time

Tired of trying to find a queer section in your bookstore?

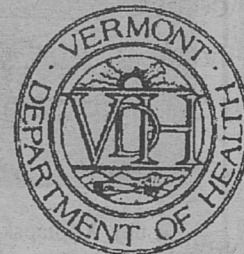
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