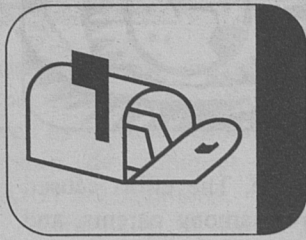


Letters



OITM, PO Box 1078, Richmond, VT 05477-1078 or oitm@together.net

Out in the Mountains welcomes your letters. Although we will withhold names from printing upon request, the letter must be accompanied by a verifiable name and address in order to be considered for publication. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. Letters are also subject to the editorial policy stated in the masthead.

Outright Vermont Says Thanks

Editor,

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Our tenth anniversary celebration and silent auction was a smashing success.

Thank you to all who participated: artists, restaurants, businesses, volunteers, Shelburne Farms for providing us with such a wonderful place, and especially nearly 200 supporters who came out to celebrate.

We far exceeded our attendance and fundraising goal and had a great time in the process.

Outright truly appreciates this tremendous show of community support. Let's do it again next year.

Outright Vermont Board and Staff

Bi-Inclusion Appreciated

Dear Friends,

I write to thank you for your even-handed coverage, specifically in the last issue (November '99) but more generally overall, of the bisexual perspective.

Since coming to understand my own bisexual identity, I have been a subscriber of gay and women's community newspapers in three states. All of these papers claim to represent the full spectrum of minority sexual orientation, including bisexuality. Yet, not until *Out in the Mountains* have I found a paper that seems to truly welcome bisexuals as genuine allies, a true, and necessary, element in the mix.

Perhaps it is part of dwelling in Vermont that we eventually learn to live with our neighbors with less friction, less line drawing. Your openness in welcoming neighbors — asking first about our commitment to community, not the nature of the credentials we carry — is truly invigorating. In each issue, *Out in the Mountains* has something to say, both directly and indirectly, about living in this world together as friends, where line drawing does little but diminish our strength.

Thank you for your consistent commitment to acknowledge sexual orientation in all its manifestations. The enclosed gift check is one way to say thanks for your knocking so consistently on my door, issue after issue, and saying, "Come on over; you're welcome, too." I add my gratitude to that of many others for the fine work you are doing. Best wishes to you all in this season of celebration.

Name withheld by request

Smiley Wrong About Dooley

Editor,

A few weeks ago my local newspaper wrote an editorial, "Spouses Are Not Chattel," concerning Take It to the People's (TIP) request for Judge Dooley to remove himself from the same gender marriage case due to his wife's support of same gender marriage. The following week, Mr. Smiley, a member of TIP wrote a letter to my paper blasting the *Valley Reporter* for their editorial. I could not pass up the opportunity to write a response.

This letter is written in response to Mr. Smiley's October 21 letter to the editor, in which he took exception with the editorial entitled, "Spouses are not chattel". I would like to thank the *Valley Reporter* for writing that editorial. It is totally absurd of Take it to the People (and Mr. Smiley) to assert that Judge Dooley must remove himself from the same gender marriage case due to his wife's support of same gender marriage.

Fortunately, in today's society, married couples have the right to belong to different political parties, vote independently, and to disagree with each other.

It appears that Take to the People would prefer that, instead of celebrating equality of rights for all people, society should return to the way it was at the turn of the century — women were owned by their husbands, did not have the right to vote, and certainly did not have the right to think on their own.

Whichever way Judge Dooley rules on this issue, I feel comfortable knowing that his decision will come from a legal basis, not based on his wife's social and political views.

Virginia Renfrew
Waitsfield

Smiley Wrong About Lots of Things

Editor,

I happened to catch Jeff Kaufman's radio call-in show *Talk of Vermont* on November 2, and I was both shocked and horrified to discover that Mr. Jerry Smiley of Take it to the People (TIP) continues to oppose same-sex marriage based on statistical evidence from a study authored by Dr. Paul Cameron.

Dr. Cameron, the Chairman of the Family Research Institute of Colorado Springs, Colorado, was expelled from the American Psychological Association in 1983

for misrepresenting the findings of others and engaging in dubious research techniques. In 1986, the American Sociological Association adopted a Resolution condemning Dr. Cameron's consistent misrepresentation of sociological research. One of his studies purports to prove that the average life span of gay men is only 43 — based on obituaries from gay newspapers during the height of the AIDS epidemic!

Dr. Cameron has written numerous anti-gay pamphlets based on his own and others' research over the past 20 years. His recent pamphlet, titled "Same Sex Marriage: Til Death Do Us Part?" purports to prove that "...homosexual marriage is a defective counterfeit of traditional marriage...it poses a clear and present danger to the health of the community" and is filled with his usual arsenal of scary "facts" and "research."

And what do judges, lawyers, and Dr. Cameron's peers think of his work? A noted California jurist, in 1993, wrote: "I believe it is a pseudo-scientific piece of swill which misuses, misinterprets, and misquotes various respected medical journals while also relying on false and irrelevant secondary sources to support [his] blatantly homophobic position."

Please, Mr. Smiley, find another research paper to quote!

Bobbi Whitacre
Manchester Center

WKDR 1390AM Responds

Editor,

In a follow-up to last month's letter, I have since spoken with Jeff Nicholson regarding my feelings and concerns of WKDR's promotion of The *Dr. Laura Schlessinger* program. (To refresh your memory, Dr. Laura refers to Gays & Lesbians as "biological developmental errors," contends that we can be "cured," and thinks it's absolutely wrong for L/G people to adopt or raise children.) Initially I was offered to "call in" during The *Mark Johnson Program* which airs 9am-11am and express my concerns. I told Jeff Nicholson that I had envisioned more of an actual program addressing the realities of L/G/B/T and discuss why what "Dr. Laura" has to say is not only misguided, and ignorant, but harmful and potentially deadly to members of the L/G/B/T community. Jeff Nicholson has since forwarded my letter to Ken Squier from the *Radio Vermont Group* and this is his response:

Dear Sharon,

Jeff Nicholson has forwarded your letter to me. I appreciate your concern, however it is not our wish to change programming based on differing opinions. Rather I would think that your group could play an important role in educating the public through an hour on the *Mark Johnson Program*. He is an excellent interviewer and would give you an opportunity to speak directly to the audience.

We would be pleased to suggest that Mark create a program based around your concerns and sensibilities as to the issue of gay and lesbian attitudes in our society. It would be in keeping with the mission of his program.

Thank you for sharing your concern and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,
Ken Squier

I spoke directly with Ken Squier after receiving this letter and am currently setting up a date time for the show to actually take place. I have asked Minister Gary Kowolski from the Unitarian Universalist to join me, thus far. Once I speak directly with Mark Johnson, I will know whether I can invite anyone else to join us, as well as the time/day to ask all of you to tune in, call in, and show your support!! (Unfortunately, Mark Johnson will not be back in the office until after this paper goes to print so, I will have to fill you in next month with date/time info.)

I'm pleased that this opportunity is occurring, however one hour on the *Mark Johnson Program* will not have the ongoing impact that the *Dr. Laura program* has daily. Please, please, please write your letter today if you haven't already and let WKDR 1390AM know how harmful Dr. Laura's rhetoric is. Perhaps if they hear from enough of us, WKDR will agree to no longer carry her program.

It only takes a few minutes and has the potential to make a huge positive difference. Write to WKDR 1390AM attn.: Jeff Nicholson 1 Main Street (The Champlain Mill) Winooski, Vt. 05404.

If you would like more information please feel free to write to me.

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OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

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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, transgendered people, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, insight, and affirmation. We also see OITM as a vehicle for the celebration of the culture and diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities here in Vermont and elsewhere.

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 *Out in the Mountains*. This paper cannot and will not endorse any candidates or actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered persons. We reserve the right not to publish any material deemed to be overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, xenophobic, or homophobic.

Writers' guidelines are available on request. All materials submitted must include a name and a contact number. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed.

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