

Orientation of the Species continued from page twenty-one

course. But it would have been a tactical disaster to forward such an individual to symbolize that cause.

Similarly, a sixty-something leather daddy and his 19-year-old boy/slave ultimately deserve the rights of civil marriage. They would, however, make uniquely unconvincing symbols, at least in the minds of most Vermonters.

This is because when people are at all open to influence – when they have at least a bit of indecision on a subject – they are more persuaded by others more similar to themselves. Emotion-laden appeals get the biggest initial reaction, but it usually fades. Rational arguments presented by credible sources tend to have the most durable effect. (Credibility depends on who's listening: plenty of folks find, for instance, psychologists to be uniquely lacking in trustworthiness.)

Think back to the Phelps gang's visit. I know of no evidence that they could have changed many Vermonters' minds. For all their supposed savvy, the Kansas contingent

seems to get caught up in acting – in their minds, at least – in a “prophetic” way, to the detriment of their message.

This would comfort me, but for every Phelps, there are three in the Gary Bauer mold: cool, seemingly rational, and armed with allegedly scientific evidence to justify his subtle hate.

In a better world, we could effectively counter such messages with a chorus line of sassy, dirty-talking drag queens; wouldn't that be great? But satisfying though it might be, it would not be very persuasive.

So we're somewhat stuck with a choice. By focusing attention on how same-sex couples are, mostly, just like “normal” people, we are, in a little way, telling a lie. What about those leather daddies, boy toys, diesel dykes, and the rest of our community's “diversity?” Downplaying their existence does, in fact, misrepresent who and what we are. This poses an ethical dilemma, one that psychological research doesn't really inform.

However, to the degree that equity may flow from same-sex marriage, the research does suggest a means to that end.

First, determine which decision-makers are either on our side or open to persuasion. Rely on rational evidence, forwarded by credible sources. Present a unified front. And resist the urge to counter outrageousness of one kind – remembering that it doesn't have much influence, anyway – with our own kind.

We may not win points for style, but we may achieve something much greater. ▼

Faith Matters and Identity Matters continued from page twenty

that I write this column every month, because we who are GLBT have too few resources in our lives that affirm and celebrate the complimentary nature of sexual and spiritual identity development. We believe a lie to think that our GLBT sexual identities are contrary to having a healthy spiritual identity. But too few voices in our culture say this to us. Too few of us seem to know that becoming a happy, healthy GLBT person of faith can be like learning to ride a bicycle.

It's a matter of owning our natural envy of those who have become happy, healthy GLBT people for whom faith matters. After that, it's a matter of giving ourselves permission to mingle with and learn from those who have attained this, what ever “this” is for us.

This is not a risk-free process, any more than learning to ride a bicycle is. However, becoming independent, self-loving, two-wheeling spiritual and sexual beings is worth the risk. Like my nieces,

I would rather risk the pain of the learning process than die never having experienced the exhilaration of riding freely through life. ▼

Rev. Christine Leslie, founder and director of Triangle Ministries, A Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Spiritual Identity, lives near Burlington. For more information, call 802-860-76106 or email revcsl@aol.com.

health source

HEALTH

ALANA Health Care Organization
POB 357, 179 S. Winooski St., Burlington
VT 05401 * 864-2631/864-2632

Alcoholics Anonymous

Burlington, 658-4221 * POB 5653
Burlington VT 05402 * Thur, 7pm
St. Paul's Cathedral, Cherry St.
Concord, NH, 603-357-4300
Wed, 7:30pm, First Congregational Church
N. Main & Washington St.
Hanover, NH, Thursdays, 6:30pm,
Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center
Women only.
Keene, NH, (603) 357-4300 *
Sat, 7-8:30pm. Call for location.
Manchester, NH, Sundays, 7:30pm
UU Church, 669 Union St.
Nashua, NH, Mondays, 7:30pm
Nashua Unitarian Church

The Comprehensive Women's Program (CWP)

POB 5248, Burlington 05402
802-863-2437 or 800 649-2437

Dawnland Center (Native American)

POB 1358, Barre St., Montpelier VT 05601
229-0601

Hepatitis Support Group

VA Hospital White River Jct., VT
Mary Chaffee RN * 802-296-5191
hepcmary@hotmail.com

Lesbian Cancer Support group

660-8386

Men's Health Project

POB 5248, Burlington 05402
802-863-2437 or 800-649-2437

North Star Holistic Health Care

RR2 Box 3255, Morrisville VT 05661
888-2858

Tribal Remedies (ALANA Community Organization)

8 Williston, Brattleboro VT 05301
254-2972

Twin State Women's Network

POB 3, Cavendish VT 05142-0003
226-7807 * Margoc@mail.tds.net
www.dartmouth.edu/~hivnet/orgswswn1.html

VT Dept. of Health, Office of Minority Health

108 Cherry St, POB 70, Burlington
VT 05402 * 863-7273

Vermont Women's Health Center

336 North Ave, Burlington VT 05401
863-1386

HIV/AIDS SERVICES

Hotlines

Vermont (800) 882-2437
NH (800) 752-2437
NY State (800) 541-2437
MA (617) 522-4090
ME (800) 851-2437
National: (800) 342-2437
National TTY: (800) 243-7889
Teen Hotline: (800) 234-TEEN

AIDS Community Awareness Project (ACAP)

POB 608, St. Johnsbury VT 05819
748-1149

AIDS Community Resource Network (ACoRN)

578 Hartford, White River Jct VT 05001
802-295-8777/800-816-2220
acorn@valley.net

AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region

(800) 639-7903

AIDS Services of Southwestern VT

108 Union St. #3, Bennington VT 05201
442-4481 or (800) 845-2437
Alice Mazur 447-8007

Bennington Area AIDS Project

POB 1066, Bennington VT 05201
442-4481 or (800) 845-2437

Brattleboro Area AIDS Project

POB 1486, 67 Main St., 4th fl, Brattleboro
VT 05302 * 254-8263 or 254-4444
sbell@sover.net

Comprehensive Care Clinics

Hotline: (800) 763-2460
Brattleboro: 257-8860

Burlington: 847-4594

Rutland: 747-1831

St. Johnsbury: 751-7603

Franklin/Grand Isle AIDS Task Force

Kara at 800-649-2437

National Assoc. for People with AIDS (202) 898-0414

NH/VT HIV Information Network on WWW

http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hivnet/

Rutland County AIDS Network

Mary Kathryn 775-5884

Vermont CARES

Vermont.CARES@vtcares.org

Web: www.vtcares.org

POB 5248, Burlington VT 05402

863-2437 or (800) 649-2437

PO Box 6033, Rutland VT 05601

775-5884

PO Box 275, Montpelier VT 05601

229-4560

PO Box 503, St. Johnsbury VT 05819

748-9061

Living w/HIV AIDS support groups:

- Washington County, Rick 229-4560

- Rutland County, Mary Kathryn 775-5884

- Burlington, Kara 863-2437

- St. Johnsbury, Rick 748-9601

Vermont Deaf AIDS Project

POB 172, Brattleboro VT 05302

800-257-1123/ (TTY) 800-253-0195/

fax 257-2013

VT Dept. of Health AIDS Program

108 Cherry St, POB 70, Burlington 05402

863-7245

Vermont People With AIDS Coalition

POB 11, Montpelier VT 05601 * 229-5754

or 800-69VTPWA * vtpwac@sover.net

www.vernet/~vtpwac/

Washington County AIDS Network

Rick at 229-4560

anonymous HIV testing/counseling sites

BARRE-MONTEPIELIER
Berlin Health Center
371-4342
RD #4, Box 1370
Montpelier, VT 05602

BENNINGTON
Bennington Family Practice Assoc.
447-1191
140 Hospital Drive
Bennington, VT 05201

BRATTLEBORO
Comprehensive Care Clinic
257-8860
Brattleboro Memorial Hospital
9 Belmont Avenue
Brattleboro, VT 05301

BURLINGTON
Community Health Center
864-8309
617 Riverside Ave., Suite 200
Burlington, VT 05401

COLCHESTER
Family Health
855-2055
311 Malletts Bay Avenue
P.O. Box 35
Colchester, VT 05446

DANVILLE
Health Center, Inc.
884-2275
Box 185, Hill Street
Danville, VT 05828

HARDWICK
Health Center
472-3300
High Street, P.O. Box 535
Hardwick, VT 05843

ISLAND POND
Health Center
723-4300
Middle Street
Island Pond, VT 05846

MIDDLEBURY
Open Door Clinic
388-0137
PO Box 95
Middlebury, VT 05753

NEWPORT
Northeast Kingdom Health Center
334-5008
30 Coventry Street
Newport, VT 05855

PUTNEY
Thomas Hoskins, M.D.
387-5581
Main St., P.O. Box 247
Putney, VT 05348

RUTLAND
Comprehensive Care Clinic
Rutland Regional Medical Center
747-1831

ST. ALBANS
Robert Zelazo, M.D.
524-8553
2 Crest Road
St. Albans, VT 05478

ST. JOHNSBURY
Comprehensive Care Clinic
748-7478
Northeast Vermont Regional
Hospital
Hospital Drive
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

WINDSOR
Leahy Hitchcock Clinic
874-2193