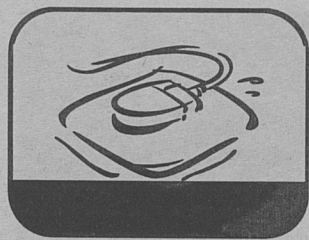


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CYBERSHARK
by miki thomas

Black History and Current Events

With a ruling as momentous as the one the Vermont Supreme Court handed down in December in favor of equal benefits and protections for same-sex couples as for straight, one would expect the opposition to gear up with a campaign hitting all media outlets, including the Web.

That's right, folks, Take it to the People has its own Web site. However, unless you have a strong stomach or unlimited patience, you would probably rather spend your time on the Web visiting more, say, positive and supportive sites.

What better place to start than with the Web site of Take it to the People's archnemesis, the Freedom to Marry Task Force? There you can read the Vermont Supreme Court decision and find out how you can let your voice be heard at the Statehouse as the legislature debates the issue.

Along the same lines, check out the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund's site for information about its National Freedom to Marry Day on February 12, 2000. Personally I think February 14 would've been more appropriate. Oh Well. Anyway, this day has been set aside by the Fund's Marriage Project to both cele-

brate the Vermont decision and bring attention to such anti-marriage measures as the Knight Initiative in California.

With all the hubbub regarding the same-sex marriage issue, let's not forget that February is Black History Month. What better way to celebrate it than checking out Web sites for and about African-American gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people? Well, okay, maybe there are better ways – but this is a great way to learn and to connect.

The Blackstripe is a huge resource for the black GLBT community. There are articles, discussions, online shopping, and free personal ads. The real treat Blackstripe offers is the Blacklist, an ongoing list of GLBT African-Americans that was initially drawn up for Black History Month in 1994. Items sold through Blackstripe benefit the Millennium Project of the National Black Lesbian & Gay Leadership Forum, an organization whose mission is to "[empower] the nation's Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered community." You can learn more about the NBLGLF at its own site.

There are several online magazines available for GLBT African-Americans; two of the best are Venus and Blacklight.

Venus is a general interest GLBT magazine with celebrity interviews, news, and columns. Its most recent issue online has a great article called "What Black Parents Really Think: When They Find out Their Child is Gay," about efforts of Black parents developing support systems for themselves and their gay children. Blacklight was resuscitated online after many years out of print. The recent articles don't hold a candle to the articles available in the archives. Dating back to the early Eighties, the historical value of these articles can not be underestimated.

Other sites of interest include a resource page for African-American GLBT youth, and the United Lesbians of African Heritage page, which features a celebration of Ruth Ellis, the centenarian who is perhaps the oldest living out lesbian. The National Association of Black & White Men Together (NABWMT) page offers information about the organization that seeks "to foster supportive environments wherein racial and cultural barriers can be overcome and the goal of Human Equality realized." You'll also find a bustling community at Chocolate City USA, which

Take it to the People
www.takeittothepeople.org

Freedom to Marry Task Force
www.vtfreetomarry.org

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund
www.lambdalegal.org

The Blackstripe
www.blackstripe.com

National Black Lesbian & Gay Leadership Forum
www.nblglf.org

Venus
www.venusmagazine.com

Blacklight
www.blacklightonline.com

African-American GLBT youth resources
members.aol.com/marinersc/yoc/sgl/index.htm

United Lesbians of African Heritage
members.aol.com/uloah/home.html

National Association of Black & White Men Together
www.nabwmt.com

Chocolate City USA
www.chocolatecityUSA.com

The Log Cabin Republicans
www.lcr.org

National Stonewall Democratic Federation
stonewalldemocrats.org

Outright Libertarians
www.mindspring.com/~outright

Mountain Pride Media
www.mountainpridemedia.org

bills itself as "empowering the African-American gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender/same gender loving community."

A political note: primary season gears up in February, with the first one next door in New Hampshire. Given that, you may want to either go hide in a cave till all the hot air dissipates or learn more about the political parties fielding candidates from a GLBT perspective. The Log Cabin Republicans, the National Stonewall Democratic

Federation, and Outright Libertarians all have sites that offer general party information as well as opportunities to get involved in the party of your choice.

A final note a little closer to home: Mountain Pride Media's site is moving. Effective immediately, you can find the MPM site, including *Out in the Mountains'* online edition, at a new location. The old URL will work for a limited time, but you should change your bookmarks as soon as possible. ▼

STAY CONNECTED
WITH
MOUNTAIN PRIDE MEDIA

WE MOVED TO OUR NEW SITE

WWW.MOUNTAINPRIDEMEDIA.ORG

FIND THE ONLINE VERSION OF OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS, LEARN MORE ABOUT VTPRIDENET (OUR EMAIL DISCUSSION LIST), CHECK OUT THE WEATHER & COMMUNITY CALENDAR, FIND OUT WHERE YOU CAN PICK UP COPIES OF OUR PAPER AND FIND OUR ADVERTISERS ON OUR "NEW" ABOUT OITM PAGE, BECOME A SUBSCRIBER, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!