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The Lancaster Inquirer

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Volume 3, Issue 2

March/April 1996

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Urvashi Vaid Charms Audience at F&M BGLAD Days Lecture.

On Saturday March 30, the BGLAD and Allies of Franklin and Marshall College were host to Urvashi Vaid, civil rights lawyer, political activist, former head of the NGLTF, and author of *Virtual Equality*, a book which at its most basic level is a critique of the "Gay Movement".

Throughout the lecture Vaid not only encouraged grass roots involvement in the Gay/Lesbian/ Bi/Transgendered (GLBT) Movement, but also validated even the smallest steps taken by groups such as F&M and Millersville Allies and the PTC. She assured us that even though we get discouraged at the lack of interest or support, by our mere existence in society, and by the services that we provide, on whatever scale they may be, we are positively effecting the outcome of the GLBT Movement.

To combat some of the discouragement, the lecture first focused on the major cultural victories achieved since the 1950's:

* We secured an admission from the scientific community that GLBT people are normal, healthy people and Homosexuality was removed from the list of mental disorders.

* We acquired a "seat at the table"-politically speaking. Known "Out" politicians began winning seats in local, state and federal government. Out gays worked closely in campaigns for gay-friendly candidates as well.

* Cultural visibility was achieved. We were no longer the "dirty little secret". Gays and lesbians were featured on television, movies and the radio. Unfortunately, a price of uneasiness and hatred was attached to this visibility.

However, even with these victories, Vaid reminds us that in many states there are still laws that discriminate. Twenty three states still have "sodomy laws" which, in effect, make same-sex, private, adult, consensual sex- a felony. Besides that, there are states with bans on gay

adoptions and even gay foster parents. Finally, most of us are familiar with the struggle we are having to gain recognition and validation for our relationships.

Urvashi also touched on the notion of a "Gay Agenda". Because of the diversity of the queer society, it is difficult to imagine a unified and singular agenda. Vaid did however, suggest that gays could agree on Equal Rights through:

- 1) Ability to work free of barriers (non-discrimination)
- 2) Right to Safety
- 3) Right to Privacy
- 4) Right to form and protect ones family
- 5) Obtaining a fair Healthcare Agenda (AIDS, breast cancer, youth services)
- 6) Liberty to live openly (out) in peace

Because of the increased visibility of GLBT society, there has also been an increase in the "moral panic" of the Radical Right wing. The Right has used every angle from child molestation to the AIDS epidemic, to "Special" rights, to influence people against supporting the equal rights for all citizens, even those who happen to be gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgendered.

Urvashi suggested using the same "propaganda" approach to expose the truth. For example, we could focus on the fact that the majority of child molesters are straight white men. Using the Radical Right's logic- should we then not allow any white straight male to become a teacher, Boy Scout leader, let alone a father or guardian? Maybe that is a little far-fetched, but that is exactly the point, if we judge people categorically as wrong or bad- we are allowing for major injustices.

Urvashi discounted the notion of recruitment by relating it to her own life. She, like many of us, were recruited heavily by the heterosexuals in our childhood and early adulthood. We were con

Urvashi

Continued on next page.

Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom Lancaster's Strong Voice for Human Rights Speaks Out

Some months ago, local activist, Laura Montgomery-Rutt Formed the Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom, a human rights activist group to counter the attack of the right wing's agenda. The PTC's Chris Mandros interviewed her as a preview to the upcoming Speakout 1996 on Sunday April 28, 2:00 pm at the Lancaster Jewish Community Center. Please attend! Many important speakers will be present.

CM: My first question, for people out there who do not know you is, What is your background and how did you get involved in activism?

LMR: Well, my dad's a union rep., my brother is involved in People for the American Way, and is gay. That's how I was brought up. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Injustice to anyone is a threat to justice" and I live life by that. I guess I saw the injustice in the way gay people were treated through my brother, and y'know people can easily dismiss a thousand gay and lesbian people asking for their rights, but it's harder to dismiss a straight woman asking for their rights. The March on Washington really opened my eyes. I saw so much love and people holding hands. It struck me that this is the way it is supposed to be. But Kit Howell's (former pastor of the UUC who recently passed away) letters to the editor started my activism really. He was my mentor.

CM: What is the Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom. What are its goals?

LMR: It's a group I started to expose the Religious Right's increasing intolerance toward Homosexuals and other minorities and involve the community in the political process. Community doesn't necessarily mean the gay community, it means the progressive community, to get them speaking out...I don't necessarily mean running for office... just writing letters, making phone calls. I want to get people involved by educating them as to how to get involved.

CM: Who is the Alliance aimed at?

LMR: It's for everyone who believes that our government should include all people. Tolerance, Diversity, and Equality. That's the topic of the Speak Out.

CM: How will the Speak Out target those people?

LMR: Well, every group involved is doing some of it's own promoting...within each group. I want to emphasize the inter-faith groups that are involved in this.

CM: There's support within the religious community?

LMR: The Christian Coalition doesn't speak for all the christians and Religious Right doesn't speak for all religions. By the way Ralph Reed, director of the Christian Coalition is speaking in Lancaster. We were going to protest, but it is a fundraiser for the special needs program at the Living Word Academy. It wouldn't look too good to protest a fundraiser for needy students.

CM: Maybe we should call ACT UP, Philadelphia. They could stand up & shout "What about special needs of PWA's?"

LMR: Unfortunately, I think groups like ACT UP sometimes help the Christian Coalition, they make the Christian Coalition look less radical than they are. Because they are extremely radical. Oh no, you're writing that down. Now I'll have ACT UP against me.

CM: I doubt it. But I think there are some people who need to hear that.

LMR: O.K.

CM: What can our readers do to help with the Speak Out?

LMR: The first thing they can do is show up. We need a strong presence because the press is going to be there. I'm encouraging each sponsor to sponsor some kind of petition that each person there could sign.

CM: How do you feel about the gay community's involvement in the Alliance and the community in general?

Alliance Continued on next page.



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We want to hear from you! Our e-mail address is: ptc@lancaster.net

stantly reminded that we will grow up, fall in love, and get married to that special someone of the opposite sex. Our remaining gay is proof that the recruitment method is a fallacy.

Urvashi's vision for the future of the Gay movement is one of cooperation with other minorities. We need to become involved in all issues, not just those directly related to our cause. (Everything from housing to healthcare, education to equal representation) "When we don't have anything to say on the big debates of the day...we marginalize ourselves."

The lecture ended with an encouraging note. Vaid commented that the "...most important thing that you can do is Come out, Reach out, and Speak out." Although "...there are millions of ways to talk yourself out of being an activist", she encouraged us all do our part and become aware and active in politics, both federal as well as local, and do what we can to make our state, city, town or street and better place. The Pink Triangle Coalition is just one of the organizations in Lancaster and surrounding area which need your help and participation to continue to affect the community in which we live. Join us at one of our monthly meetings and check out the opportunities. ▲

Alliance

Continued from page 1

LMR: Just like every other sector, there's not enough involvement in the community, which is how the Christian Coalition came to power. The people in the Christian Coalition are motivated to get involved. They pick up the phone, write letters, so the people in office have a warped view of what the people want, because not enough normal people are willing to do these things. No one ever says a word.

CM: Except the Religious Right.

LMR: Actually, it is politically correct now to call them the Religious Political Extremists.

CM: That's actually very accurate. Because true conservatism is about careful, mindful, restrained government which is the opposite of what they are about. As this issue is one that we here at the PTC regularly ask ourselves, How do you break down the apathy that keeps people uninvolved?

LMR: The biggest way is to keep educating people to the threat. That is the purpose of the Speak Out. A lot of people are just so involved in their little world that they don't even realize the threat exists until their little world becomes impacted and then it is too late.

CM: For people in this area who insist that our community is not affected by the religious extremists, what might you offer as proof?

LMR: Look at E-town schools, Manhiem Central, Palmyra. In Octorora, they took *Quest* out of the public schools because it was a self esteem program which taught children to rely on themselves, instead of God. I mean, it's here! *Heather Has Two Mommies* is being taken out of all the schools because they don't want to deal with the controversy. Joe Pitts, who's running for Congress, is constantly introducing legislation that is directly in line with the Christian Coalition's Contract on the American Family. They're Here!

Please join us at the Speak Out '96. Speakers will include Deanna Doby, People for the American Way; Ed Doerr, Americans for Religious Liberty; Barb Ditullio, PA NOW; Rev. Meg Riley, Unitarian Church; Bob Rise, Interfaith Alliance; and Allen Kukovich, State Representative. ▲



Hollister Love's continuing saga of life and lifeless times in this town of fruited streets. Q-Spot takes you on a Lazy Boy journey of the loves, lives, and daydreams of people, perhaps familiar — or maybe it's déjà vu.

II. LAST WEEK'S LEFTOVERS

Terrie and her 'i-e' led the way through a door in the garage into a kitchen. Her long, formerly blonde hair swayed back and forth in time to the rhythm she made with her flip-flops against the linoleum floor. He thought surely her cigarette wedged into her right hand would ignite the frayed ends of her mane, but she seemed to have it timed just right.

"This is our kitchen" She said raspyly without turning her head. "These steps lead down to the place."

He noticed the house had one of those significant, personalized house smells—not necessarily bad, but not good. A combination of smoke, last week's leftovers that had probably been tossed out yesterday, and perhaps a little touch of pet. That certain blend which renders the owner immune due to familiarity but has the opposite effect on newcomers.

Halfway down the stairs she picked a huge tankard of a mug full of something brown with lots of ice cubes. She took a sip. "Hey," she turned her head back, "would ya like some ice tea? It's Turkey Hill."

"No, thanks," Andrew said, smiling faintly. Although a drink would have been nice after his mini-journey, he was not thirsty enough for the dreaded Turkey Hill Ice Tea. He knew too many people who drink it in lieu of coffee.

She flipped-flopped her way into a spacious rectangular room with plushy mauve carpeting. He glanced up and cringed. One of his biggest apartment-seeking fears—a white drop ceiling.

Hanging in the middle was a octagonal ceiling light with frosted panels etched a with winding ivy pattern.

"Whaddaya think of that?" she asked, noticing his attention. "We had it connected to a dimmer switch for Mr P."

"Oh, it really adds to the room," he said politely.

He followed her down a brief hallway and into the next room. Royal blue, high-piled carpet.

"This must be considered the bedroom," he commented.

"Uh-huh. And I'll bet you've never seen closets like this!" Terrie said, turning to face herself in two mirrored, sliding double doors. He immediately froze his expression of feigned interest, seeing her glance at the mirror into his reflection. She proudly swung the right door to the left like a game show hostess, careful not to spill a drop of her tankard and flicked on a light. The brightness of the light revealed a cavernous walk-in closet with white, metal shelving, racks, and drawers everywhere as if custom-made.

"Wow, who lived here before, Imelda Marcos?" he quipped before a sneeze.

Terrie grunted a low, monosyllabic laugh, looked him directly in the eyes and said, "Nope. Mr.P. didn't like shoes that much. But he sure liked his squeaky toys."

Andrew smiled at her trying to restrain his confusion. After several uncomfortable seconds and another sneeze, he asked gamely, "This Mr.P. He collected toys or something?"

She stared into the closet. "Oh, I guess you might say that. Others might say we spoiled him. This closet was full of balls and pullies," she continued, caressing a white metal support rod. Her cigarette was smoldering toward the filter. ▲

What's Happening

Sat., Sun., April 27, 28, ARTWALK
1996 Downtown Lancaster 12-5 pm.
Visit participating stores and galleries, signified by Rainbow windsocks.

Sun. April 28, Speak Out for Tolerance, Diversity and Equality. 2:00 pm at the Lancaster Jewish Community Center. (See article in this issue.)

Sun., May 5, AIDSWALK '96
Downtown at the Brunswick Hotel. Registration at 12:30, Walk starts at 2:00pm. GET OUT AND WALK!!!

Tues., May 28, Pink Triangle Coalition General Meeting. 7 pm. LAP Offices, 44 N. Queen St. Lancaster.

Sat., June 1st, Adopt-a-highway, 9:00 am, meet at Homedco- Harrisburg Pike. Usually finished by 11:30.

Tues., June 25, Pink Triangle Coalition General Meeting. 7 pm. LAP Offices, 44 N. Queen St. Lancaster.

Happy Gay Pride Month From the PTC!!!
(What better time to get involved? 394-6260)

Sun. June 9th, Philadelphia Pridefest, Penn's Landing.

Sun., June 16th, Washington, D.C. Pridefest, Info. (202) 496-0800.

Sat., Sun., June 22-23, Baltimore Pride, Wyman Park, Info. (410) 837-7748.

Sun., June 30th, New York City Pridefest, Info. (212) 620-7310.

PTC bus only \$30, round trip. Call 394-6260 for trip info. Make check out to the PTC and mail to P.O. Box 176, Lancaster, PA 17608-0176. All reservations will be confirmed by the PTC.

Horrorscopes

ARIES (MARCH 21-APR. 19) Now is a good time to begin new projects. Your self-made walls are due to come crashing down.
KEY WORD: GRASS

TAURUS (APR. 20-MAY 20) Give back to the community this month. Be sure that your shoes are tied and your hair combed before stepping outside. KEY WORD: LION

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20) Your friendships heat up this month. If you've bought soap, take it back. KEY WORD: LAMB

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22) You know the meaning of success. When the clock strikes three, move to another part of the room.
KEY WORD: TREES

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22) Spread you message this month. Comic strips are sending you messages. KEY WORD: KITE

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22) Commitments get interesting. The smell of freshly cut grass brings pleasant surprises. KEY WORD: WIND

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22) It's time to relax and have fun. Beware of styrofoam.
KEY WORD: DARK

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21) You can no longer be quiet. The color burgundy seems to inspire you this month. KEY WORD: RAIN

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21) It's time to speak your mind. You will meet an interesting person in an Asian restaurant. KEY WORD: MAGNET

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19) Be aware of your finances. A liberating experience is bound to happen this month. KEY WORD: CUPID

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18) Don't believe everything you hear, and don't let traffic patterns get you down. KEY WORD: EYES

PISCES (FEB. 19-MAR. 20) You will be inspired this month. Be careful of people named Zippy. KEY WORD: PLATFORMS

Newsletter Staff

Editor: Kimberli Werner

Contributors: Lawrence Biemiller, Tim Erdley, Nikki Evans, Anthony Lascoskie, Chris Mandros, Mark Stoner, John Wilkins

Dodge Family Memories

For most of the Franklin and Marshall's long history, gay and lesbian students have lived in relative isolation. Matrix, the college's first organization for gay students, wasn't created until 1985; before that, the best many of us could manage was to meet and befriend other closeted homosexuals without ever coming out to them, and without giving them an opportunity to come out to us. Alumni from classes in the 1960's, 70's, and even the early 80's report having come out to their best college friends years after graduation.

But gay life at the college did have its Camelot, in the late 60's and early 70's. That was when a former student named Dennis Manley Kimball moved back to Lancaster — after a year in San Francisco — and established the Dodge Family.

"He was Cassandra Dodge," said Bruce Sussman '71. "He dropped out in 1965. He went to San Francisco and cavorted with royalty at Grace Cathedral, and then he came back here. He was living in a house on James Street my first year, and then he and Bob Esty and I moved into a house on Prince Street, and basically we spent my sophomore year decorating. And ensnaring candidates."

Franklin and Marshall was a much different place during the Dodge Family's time. "Kurt and I started in the fall of 1970," said Waldo Wentz '74, nodding toward at Kurt Everhart '74. "That was just after Kent State, and students had shut down the college, and there was lots of protesting. It was not cool to be in a fraternity. F&M was a pretty anarchistic place." Continued in next issue.

The Club Scene

The Tally Ho — Corner of Orange and Water Streets — \$2.00 Cover. Mixed gender crowd. • DJ Mike Post spin phat house and tribal mixes. Get your groove on before the party doors open at 8:00 — DJ spins at 10:00.

The Sundown Lounge — Mulberry Street, No cover. Predominately female. • Most people call it the "Dump." No DJ — but a tiny dance floor. Known for the pool table and great drink specials... especially on Wed. nights. Oh, and don't forget to read the Dyke Handbook before entering.

The Chameleon Club — Water Street — \$3-5 Cover, Mixed gender crowd. • A mixed bag of club kids, B-boys, straight-laced queers, preps, jocks and frat boys. Largest dance floor in town. Features live bands. Best nights- 70's Disco, Club dance party, and Industrial Dance night.

The Village — Chestnut Street — \$3-5 Cover, Mixed gender crowd. • Crowd determined by the band playing. Age range varies widely. Friday night — Alternative Dance music. Great light-up dance floor reminiscent of Saturday Night Fever! Big hair and bigger attitudes abound. ▲

Resources

F&M College LGB's & Allies399-6192
Gay & Lesbian Switchboard
of Harrisburg234-0328
GLORA (Reading).....610-868-7183
Interweave
(Unitarian Universalist).....393-11733
Lancaster AIDS Project.....394-3380, 394-9900
Lancaster Gay Helpline397-0691
Millersville Allies871-2241
PA AIDS Hotline.....1-800-662-6080
P-Flag of Lancaster299-7043
Vision of Hope, Metropolitan
Community Church.....285-9070
York Area Lambda.....Box 2425, York, PA 17405
Pink Triangle Coalition 394-6260
E-mail the PTC at: ptc@lanaster.net and visit us
on the web at: <http://lanaster.net/community/ptc/>
and http://155.68.3.11:80/CampusLife/Organizations/Allies/Gay_Lancaster/Home.html