

# **LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA**

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## **Documents Online**

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# SAN FRANCISCO OLYMPICS

HARRISBURG at the Gay Olympics? It could happen, if enough of us care to see it happen. The date is set for August 28, 1982 for the 1st Gay Olympics ever. All sports open to both sexes with the exception of wrestling, men only and rugby, women only. EVEN VOLLEYBALL.

City teams are now being organized to raise the needed dollars for fares to San Francisco. The Olympic Committee will host the stay of participants, with the exception of meals--discount tickets will be issued for that.

Tom Waddell (415) 863-6079 is Chairman for the Gay Olympics. Locally if you want more information call Colin (or GSH) at 232-5674. Wouldn't it be grand seeing Harrisburg there?

Contributions are sorely needed by the committee now as they prepare the August events. Those dollars may be sent to:

GAY OLYMPIC GAMES  
P.O. BOX 14874  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94114



The man who makes everything that leads to happiness depend upon himself, and not upon other men, has adopted the very best plan for living happily.

-- Plato

## NEW NEWSLETTER

This newsletter expires with our December issue. But happily it goes not without a successor. MCC/Harrisburg has pumped new life into the dying cause of a Harrisburg newsletter. The first issue of the new newsletter will appear in December. It will be available free in the bars.

If you are unable to obtain a copy you may write: MCC c/o Bill Osborne, editor, P.O. Box 7897, Harrisburg, Pa. 17105. Subscriptions are only \$5. until January 31, when an increase may be necessary.

So send that \$5. check to MCC and continue to receive the "Harrisburg" gay newsletter. If you are interested in working for the newsletter, please call Bill at 732-3537. There are lots of jobs to be had, and you'll be glad you volunteered for yourself and for Harrisburg!

ATTENTION READERS: PAGE 4 BOTTOM RIGHT



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My 2¢ Worth

Editor's Comment

Writing is in my blood. I love to write and the news 'It has been a golden opportunity to voice my thoughts, my hopes, my dreams and my heart. And while these are not quite Civil War days, it is closely akin where prejudices are left unchallenged because gay people feel little freedom to un-closet themselves.

Most of us hate that closet. But until society can learn the truth -- right there is where we will stay. Today is the time for us to find freedom from what others will think if we defend gay people.

It is not necessary to share "everything" about ourselves with people. But it is very important to share the truth about "selected groups" of people when we know the truth.

As I have come to accept myself as gay, I have been able to share that with people who can live with the same truth. With the frightened people, I don't share all of me, but I do share the message that gay people are PEOPLE!

Recently I spoke to a group of councillors for retarded citizens on behalf of the Gay Switchboard. I challenged the prejudices that are harbored by a multitude of people against gays and other minorities. After the speech a black man came to me admitting a store house of prejudices against gays and being ready to re-examine them in light of the prejudices hurled his way for being black.

Being gay we must fight stereotypes. Fighting those stereotypes is often difficult as some try to deny the differences among us as a political body. But we are different. And united with a common cause. We will never agree on ALL subjects. If any one of us insists upon being "right" we will leave Gay Progress right on the starting line.

Switchboard '81 has been tremendously successful. I believe it has been because our volunteers have unselfishly devoted their time and talents to GSH, knowing their job is important. And the leadership has been excellent. As one of the leaders, I know that Chuck and I have compromised. We have given at different times and progress was

realized. I am certain that if Chuck or I would have fought for our own way in everything--nothing would have been accomplished.

In December, a new administration will come to the forefront. I am again confident that the 1982 team will be successful. We have strong and able candidates for each office. The job is an important one. And we will stick together like snowflakes, and cover the dark myths and prejudices about homosexuality.

# RABBIT REVIEWED

by Frank L.

The lights went out and for the next hour we were plunged into an experience of intense giving. For us it was a night of laughter, of surprise, of thought, of remembrance, and of just simple enjoyment. For us it was a night of stars as well: the queen of soul: Aretha Franklin, the queens of comedy: Laverne and Shirley, and the queen of fashion: Miss Piggy. But the stars that shone the brightest before our eyes and ears were the sharp-witted 'Buh Rabbit' and the man who brought him to life.

We, the audience, responded with laughter, sat in reflective silence, and broke into firm applause for the performance given by Colin on Sat., Nov. 14. "That Rabbit's in Love" offered something for everyone: from the pedantic lessons of rabbit himself, to the expressive movements of free dance; from the chortles of Miss Piggy wit, to the sober force of ultimate dreams. And throughout the performance, we became increasingly aware that we were receiving a special gift, a gift that is all too rare: the giving of one's self. For that is what happened: a talented, creative, and caring man shared a part of himself and touched the minds and hearts of his audience.

Thanks to the crew who made the production possible: ushers, lightman, soundman, and cooks (if every rabbit eats like that I'm going to start growing big ears and a funny little tail as soon as possible!) And MOST THANKS to Colin for his time, his energy, his talent, and his giving each one who was present a part of himself. It was a spectacular evening!



# STUDENTS TALK BACK

On October 12, Martha and Colin traveled to Elizabethtown College to present their views on homosexuality to a class there in "Human Sexuality". Their letters of reaction were forwarded to the editor and are presented here for your education.

Is it really necessary for the Gay Switchboard to send speakers out into the community? Just read the reactions. Closets are for cloths...I'm sure.

letter #1

At the beginning of the period, I felt very uneasy. I had always had the kind of stereotype about gays as most people hold. I really wasn't sure about how I felt, but I knew I was interested right away. No matter how I felt personally about Colin, I developed a real respect for the man very quickly and his views about his minority. Through the course of the class, I became more and more relaxed and I began to see more clearly how stereotypes evolve and why people act the way they do.

#2

I would like to first of all thank you both for coming in and speaking so openly about your sexuality with us. I know that I have gained a much different perspective dealing with homosexuality. You were honest with me so I will be very honest with you. I think deep down inside I had a fear of homosexuals. For example: "What's wrong with them, can't they find anyone else?" kind of feeling. I also thought that someone could be homosexual any time they wanted; I didn't realize that it was within one's self. Now that I've had the chance to openly listen, really listen to what a gay person has to say, I believe what you say. You are no different than a heterosexual is when it comes to needs, feelings, relationships, love etc. (for that matter anything). I am doing my paper and presentation on homosexuality. Your discussion with our class gave me insight, and a new frame of reference to begin the process.

#3

I felt that the speaker from the Gay Switchboard, Colin, did a good job defending his sexual preference. He presented a good defense and his honesty helped make his speech more interesting. I think actually admitting to being a homosexual would be quite hard to do. But, he failed to persuade me from changing my prejudices against gays. I still feel that homosexuality is wrong and abnormal, even if it is labeled as normal. I do not believe that a gay person is born a homosexual. I feel that it is a learned behavior like any other behavior. Colin mentioned about parents not wanting a gay to teach their children. If I were a parent, I would not want a homosexual to teach my children either. Many ideas and concepts are formed during the primary and secondary schooling years and I don't think a teacher could be completely unbiased. Homosexuality is not natural. I disagree with Colin's statement, for example, Man is an animal. What other animal mates a male with male? There is nothing natural about being gay. It goes against the laws of nature. Other than my own prejudices, Colin did defend his position well and I was glad he did not try to preach to us.



#4

I was scared. I was apprehensive. I was wondering how anyone could choose homosexuality over heterosexuality. I wondered what the difference was between what a heterosexual looked for in a relationship and what a homosexual looked for in a relationship besides the obvious. I found there was no difference. Both look for a friend, a lover, someone who meets emotional and physical needs, someone who will share the give and take that is important in a relationship. At the end of class I was more accepting of homosexuality. I could understand that being homosexual doesn't only mean sex with the same sex. I also understood that homosexuality is something that cannot be helped. The decision of homosexuality lies not in choosing between homosexuality and heterosexuality, but standing by what you believe in. I cannot condone homosexuality for myself, but as a helping person, I can understand it and accept it.



#5

I was somewhat anxious about the speaker on Monday, but since I had already heard a presentation on homosexuality this summer, I was somewhat relaxed. I was glad to get the opportunity to hear his point of view concerning homosexuality. It really made me feel a great deal of respect for him to come to the class and share with complete strangers his sexual preferences. I was totally closed minded concerning the topic of homosexuality before I had the chance to listen to a speaker this summer. That experience really made me understand and better appreciate what type of lifestyle and pressures the homosexual lives under. The areas of life that are influenced and directly effected--because of one's sexual orientations. I guess since I had already know some of the issues that the speaker discussed, I wasn't as "shocked" as I probably would have been if I'd never heard a gay speaker.

It was amazing the discussions that went on among friends when we left the class. It really seemed to make a big impression on all of us. People's opinions really change with more exposure to such issues. Maybe the more homosexuals "come out", the less society will frown upon them and negatively label them. I wish a lot of other students could have the opportunity to hear their views and concerns. My overall reaction to the speaker was one of interest and a better understanding of an issue that not too long ago I would have more than frowned upon and probably would have remained very narrow-minded about.

#6

My initial reaction was to guard myself. I felt uncomfortable, threatened. I thought if I established eye contact with him, he would "come on" or think I was interested. As time passed and I became more relaxed, I accepted his views and lifestyle for him, but not me. I gained insight. I never heard homosexuality discussed from their viewpoint, always from a biased viewpoint. I don't think he was right to publicize his views anymore than a heterosexual has the right. People should live their lives as they see fit, but don't push your views on me. If I want to know them, I will ask.

#7

Today was the first day of my life I have ever heard a homosexual speak honestly about his sexuality. He said for once in his life he is happy. I heard his words yet I felt pain.

I learned about prejudice, not about homosexual "bedroom" behavior. I learned about a person. A person, like myself who needs warm affection and love. A human being who desires the freedom to be himself, to love himself and share his specialness with others.

I also finally acknowledged my own prejudice. I suppress it, pretend it does not exist and I appear to be totally accepting. But--Hey. Don't get too CLOSE! I am less afraid today than yesterday. And even if I never understand why someone is a homosexual, it really does not matter because I understand that a homosexual is someone. I don't have any answers. But I think the first place I have to look is within myself. I don't feel sorry for homosexuals. What I hurt from is the fact that many people are not able to express and love themselves.

#8

Before we heard the guest speaker on homosexuality I felt uncomfortable talking and especially thinking of the topic. I guess my main problem was lack of knowledge and understanding. I thought of it as a type of "disease" instead of a lifestyle. Before the discussion I never even took the time to think or read about homosexuality. I really didn't care, as long as it didn't affect me.

Now, I realize the stress and social pressure homosexuals face. It's apparent that all of society isn't ready to accept this life style--yet. But becoming educated on the subject helps one to feel more relaxed about it. I believe that people should respect one another as persons and not judge one according to their preference in lifestyle. I basically felt this way before the discussion, but now I am more accepting of homosexuality.