

Dating Sites

By Jen Bonardi

Let's be clear from the start: this perpetually single lady is no stranger to online dating. Girl, I did online dating back when Al Gore taught the Internet to boom. Just out of college, I had precious little dating experience because on campus, it simply wasn't done. You just sort of hooked up and – sometimes – hoped something came of it. (“*You mean the dreaded Hook Up Culture existed in the ‘90s? Heavens, fetch me my smelling salts!*”)

Out in the real world without a community of peers at my fingertips, I viewed online dating as one arrow in my quiver for finding affection in all its glorious forms. I not only got good at dating through these online adventures, I actually came to enjoy it. I learned everything from taking a chance on people (“Well, she’s 4’10” and I’m 5’9”...but she wants to see a movie with me, and we might be soul mates”) to determining the worst kind of person to date (i.e. anyone embarrassed by online dating).

Both the Internet and I now have over a decade of online dating experience. Nowadays, with the



Internet literally in your back pocket and linked up to GPS, online dating should really be coming into its own. And it is. Unless, of course, you're bi.

Take OkCupid, one of the most widely used dating websites, partly because it's free. I hadn't used it in years but decided to log on a month ago and found an unsettling new development. In order to get started, you now need to choose your gender, current relationship status, and sexual orientation. Each question provides possible answers in drop-down menus; the one for “orientation” allows you to choose “I'm straight,” “I'm gay,” or “I'm bisexual.”

Any bisexual woman seeking a monogamous relationship knows not to put “bisexual” in a profile when searching for men. It is, for lack of a better word, distracting. In fact, this is why it behooves you to make two separate profiles, and usually on two different sites. A lady may defy this rule in favor of honesty and pride in her identity: rest assured, she'll only make that rookie mistake once.

I chose “I'm bisexual” and received a list of profiles that were mostly straight women or gay men. How was that supposed to work? (When I re-answered the question as “I'm straight,” I only received profiles of straight men.) I could then do a Targeted Search

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If Flying Solo Is An Art Form, Then My Life is a Masterpiece

By Kanika Ameerah

I confess: I'm single out of complete and utter laziness. To me, dating seems like a chore, and a rather unpleasant one at that. Hitting up the bars and clubs, going to mixers, reading books such as *The Rules* and *He's Just Not That Into You* and doing the online dating thing all seems like one huge ultra-competitive rat race to me and I don't even know what the prize is! For years now, the dating dance has been the last thing on my list of priorities and admittedly, my lax outlook on finding love has put some fear into the hearts of my concerned relatives. After all, I am already in my 30s, my biological clock is ticking and my dating options are dwindling before my very eyes. However, I am not stressed or worried about it. When the right person comes along for me, it will happen. Until then, life goes on.

It would probably be easy to dismiss me as asexual, fearful of intimacy or just plain bitter, but I am none of those things. I am quite fond of a pretty face, have crushes from time to time, and though I've made some past dating

mistakes that caused me an equal amount of headache and heartache, I am still optimistic about finding true love. However, my lust for life trumps any innate desire I might have to find “the one.” With age, I find that it's a joy and a pleasure to be single, as it allows me the opportunity to explore life in ways that I could not if I were married or had a family.

For example, while many people are afraid to go on trips by themselves, I've always preferred to travel solo. In fact, I've become so used to traveling alone that when I travel with others, I find myself getting annoyed with them after a while. Over the years, I've gone on small trips throughout North America and last year, I fulfilled my dream of seeing Europe (eight countries in all). I have met many amazing people and wandered through places that I wouldn't have dared if I were accompanied by another. I experienced all sorts of *faux-pas* and misadventures along the way as well as extremely pleasant moments. I have more postcards and magnets than I can count!

When not on the road, I keep myself busy with a variety of activities, whether barhopping in the streets of New

Kanika, continues on page 10



HONOR ROLL

Justin Adkins
Michael Alejandro
Jessie Belben
Katelynn Bishop
Jen Bonardi
Katrina Chaves
Erika
Fennel
Fernanda Ferreira
Shelley Jameson
Linda McMahan
Nasim Memon
Deborah Niles
Robyn Ochs
Rosa
Sarah Rowley
Ellyn Ruthstrom
Toni T
Jennifer Taub
Laurie Wolfe
Gail Zacharias

And many more
fabulous people!
You know who
you are!

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From your editor

The theme of this issue is “Bi and Single.” I’m pleased to say that submissions came pouring in! Jen Bonardi offers a bi perspective on dating sites. Fennel and Dillan DiGiovanni offer tips for single folks. Kanika Ameerah, Kitty Kavanagh and The B Word Poet offer personal perspectives on being single, and there’s even one by me. (No, I’m not single.)

And we have three articles about bi activism: Amy Andre writes about being the out bi Executive Director of San Francisco Pride; Apphia K. recounts her experiences as the first out bi speaker at Mumbai, India’s pride celebration; and Faith Cheltenham writes about representing the bi community as an invited guest at the White House. Katrina Chaves provides us with some more bi news, and Ellyn Ruthstrom lets us know about upcoming activities of interest to bi folks in and around Boston.

You will notice in the calendar that the Bisexual Resource Center and Bilicious are teaming up to bring us a very special Celebrate Bisexuality Day on September 23rd, and the next BBWN brunches will be on September 19th, October 17th and November 7th.

In addition to all this, we have poems by Morgan O’Donnell and Jay Ellers, and Marcia Diehl shares with us a letter she wrote to *Bay Windows* in response to their review of *The Kids are All Right*.

And last – but certainly not least – we have two fascinating interviews. For the “Bi Women Around the World” feature, I interview Australian bi activist Holly Hammond. And Ellyn Ruthstrom interviews Denise Garrow-Pruitt, an anchor of our Boston community.

Enjoy this newsletter, and please consider adding your voice and/or artwork to the next issue of *Bi Women*.

– Robyn

Next in *Bi Women*

The theme for the Winter ‘11 issue:

INTERSECTIONS

We are complex individuals with multiple identities. In addition to our sexual orientations, we also have genders, racial and ethnic backgrounds, religious and political perspectives and class privilege or lack thereof. How does your position in one of these classifications affect your experience of another? For example, how did your religious background affect your coming out experience? How does your gender identity affect your sexual orientation? What unique spin does your ethnic background give to your sexual orientation? Start writing!

Submissions for the next issue must be received by November 5th.

Send your submissions and suggestions for future topics to
biwomeneditor@gmail.com

Upcoming themes may include:

Fantasy; Choice; Out at Work;
Faith & Religion; more...

If you do not want your name published, or wish to use a pseudonym, just let us know.

***Bi Women* is online at
biwomenboston.org.**

BBWN is an all-volunteer organization. Want to host one of our monthly brunches, be the woman who coordinates the brunches, help out with our website (we use WordPress)? Or, if you’re a student, consider an internship. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Robyn (biwomeneditor@gmail.com).

The Boston Bisexual Women’s Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay and transgender people within the larger society.

Bis Around the World: Holly Hammond, Canberra, Australia

By Robyn Ochs

Holly Hammond is a 35-year-old activist who has identified as bi since age 17. She's based in Canberra, Australia's capital city, where she lives with her partner Clare and their tiny dog, Pez. She works as an activist educator with the Change Agency (www.thechangeagency.org) and a labor union organizer.

Robyn Ochs: How do you define bisexuality?

Holly Hammond: For me, being bisexual means being sexually attracted to men and women, and pursuing loving partner relationships with people of either sex/gender. As I write this I'm conscious of the limits of language, and the challenge to get beyond the gender binary. I don't mean to imply there are only two biological sexes or only two genders. But the reality of my life is that my partners have been men and women, and I feel attraction to people who identify as male, female, and trans.

RO: How – and when – did you come to identify as bisexual?

HH: I came out as bisexual when I was 17. I think identity is historically and culturally specific. I was involved in the women's movement, and other kinds of activism, in the last two years of high school. Many of my friends were lesbians and bisexual women. I was involved in ACT-UP, promoting safe sex education and access to materials for high school students. One of the ACT-UP activists was Wayne Roberts, a fantastic bi activist involved in the Australian bisexual network. So there were people around me who made bisexual identity accessible to me, and it was a great fit. To me, being a bi woman meant being in charge of my sexuality, being open to all sorts of experiences, having opportunities to get close to different people, without being constrained by the sexual and gender roles expected of heterosexual women.

RO: Why does this identity matter to you?



HH: It's part of the truth of who I am. I think it should be visible and available as an identity to anyone who wants it. I like that it's subversive of the hetero/homo binary and of homophobia. I also strongly identify with Queer identity.

RO: I had the pleasure of meeting you in July

of 2009 at the International LGBT Human Rights conference in Copenhagen, and I attended an excellent session you organized titled "*The B in LGBTIQ: Bisexuals claiming space in Queer community and social action.*" How did that come about, and what was it like to present at an international LGBT rights conference?

HH: It actually followed from presenting a workshop at the first International LGBT Human Rights Conference in Montreal in 2006, which was a great but challenging experience. When I offered my abstract for that conference I was told I'd probably be sharing my workshop with a number of similar presentations, so I went with an expectation of getting to meet awesome bis from around the world. When I arrived for the conference I discovered that mine was the only workshop focused on bisexuality, one workshop out of over 100. I was hit by feelings that will be familiar to many bisexuals: wondering if this was a space for me to be in, how the organizers could let this happen, whether this was going to be yet another time where we're overlooked and disrespected. It was actually a really empowering experience to run that workshop, and I was proud to be staking space for bisexuals, and making us visible. It was also lovely to connect with some awesome intersex activists, and notice our connections as binary-subverting folks.

I actually have a commitment to hold LGBTIQ caucuses at mainstream events, and to make space for bisexuals at LGBTIQ events. This works for me, because it connects me with my people when we're not always visible, and I think it makes events work better for everyone to have this sort of caucus space.

So after Montreal I was keen to hold a workshop at Copenhagen, and I also wrote to other bisexual activists (including you!) to encourage participation. The second conference was a big improvement, with you chairing a plenary, running a great workshop with excerpts from *Getting Bi*, and great work by Danish bis running a number of workshops and a gathering after the conference. With my workshop I wanted to look at this issue of our marginality in Queer spaces. I know I can have a bi chip on my shoulder, thinking it's the responsibility of gays and lesbians to make a space accessible for us, but I also think it's about how we organize and claim our space in those communities.

Besides feeling a bit spun out about being a visible bisexual in queer space, I had feelings about being an Australian presenting at an international conference. Our national identity has a lot of baggage about feeling insignificant on the world stage, of not knowing enough or being important. So it was empowering in lots of ways.

Holly, *continues on next page*

Holly, continued from previous page

RO: I remember that you showed a fascinating diagram of your own sexuality journey. Would you briefly describe the workshop, and share the diagram with our readers?

HH: I used a few diagrams – one that showed my participation in the Queer community, one that showed my visibility as a bi person, and another that charted my relationships. I think it can be really difficult to talk about bi identity, without sharing our stories and what our bi lives have really been like. I've lived with the situation of being read as a lesbian while in same-sex relationships, and read as a heterosexual woman while I had a male partner. I was most visible as bi when I was single and playing, or in non-monogamous relationships. It's hard work continually coming out, and sometimes it just seems academic to people. One of the things I find frustrating is when people can't handle aspects of me which deviate from their (current) perception of me as lesbian, for example, if I say a guy is hot, or talk about my past unplanned pregnancy.

RO: Australia used to be one of the hubs of bi activism. In fact, I keynoted an amazing bi conference in Sydney back in 1998. What's it like today? Are there active bi groups? Is the broader LGBTQIA community inclusive?

HH: I remember how dynamic bi activism and community was in the 90s. It doesn't seem that way to me now, but it may be that I'm going to the wrong parties or I've missed these groups somehow! It's interesting, I think I've actually resisted gathering separately with bisexuals, or organizing politically just with bisexuals. Part of this is probably internalized biphobia, but I think it's also because I've always seen our interests as fundamentally aligned with lesbians, gay men, trans, intersex, queer and

gender queer folks of all stripes. So I've tried to stay a part of a broader Queer movement and community, even though that has been really hard at different times, especially when I had a male partner for five years.

RO: Last summer I met your lovely partner Clare. How did you meet? How long have you been partnered?

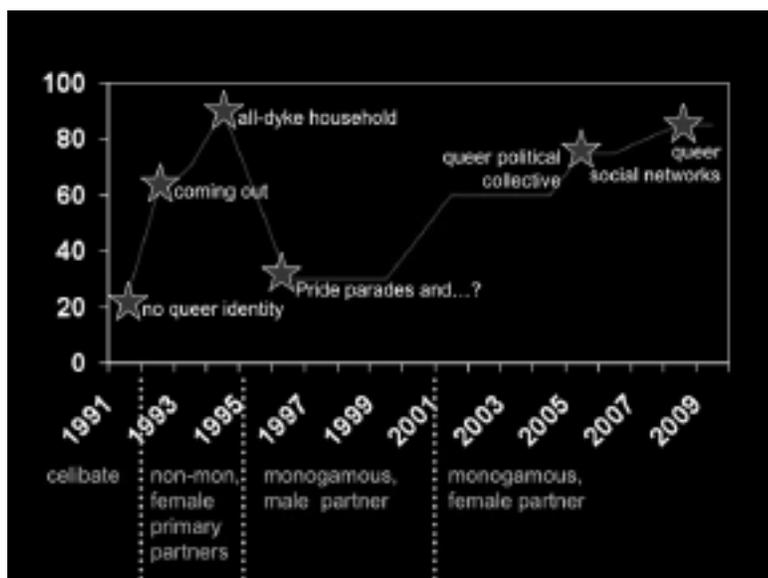
HH: I met Clare at primary school when we were both ten! We didn't get together until long after school, when we were both 25. We just celebrated our ninth anniversary. We have a wonderful relationship, and I'm so proud to be with her. She's a lesbian, and a great ally. She notices biphobia and interrupts it. At the Copenhagen workshop she facilitated the gathering of the non-bis, while we had the bi caucus. She shares my commitment to social change, and it's great to feel that we're working together to make the world better.

RO: What changes have you seen in understanding and construction of sexualities in Australia over the years you have been out?

HH: There has been a lot of change. I think there has been increasing recognition that identity can be fluid. Understandings of gender have changed in huge ways in our communities. Trans identities have become much more visible. I think this has been challenging for bisexual identity – what's all this fuss about being attracted to men and women...what's a man or a woman anyway? Straight society has become more accepting, or titillated by, some level of bisexual activity, so long as the real serious partner relationships are heterosexual. Bisexuality in some way seems more visible and valued in predominantly straight swinger culture, than in queer communities. I don't think (I hope) that people are not being so harshly ostracised within queer communities for having straight sex or desires.

I think there is a gap in understanding actual bisexual identity. That some of us are just as likely to form a relationship with people of the same sex/gender as the opposite. That this identity isn't necessarily about fluidity. I actually think I've been pretty consistent with my attractions! A lot of people still seem to think of sexuality as a linear narrative, so if you've had one relationship with a man, then a relationship with a woman, then the most recent relationship defines your identity. Maybe for some people, but not me.

Robyn is the editor of the 42-country anthology Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World and of Bi Women.



How to Win at the Dating Game

By Dillan DiGiovanni

Most of us who are single date, or want to. Whether you've been "out there" for a while or are just getting started, equip yourself to win at what is often a tough game. Why do some people seem to ace it every time? Dating is often not easy. To circumvent the drama and grief that often accompanies dating, get and stay fit inside and out to present your best self and attract the best possible mates as you survey the landscape of potential partners. Focus on your intent, your attitude, and your own health and watch how things unfold.

INTENT

Are you dating to satisfy the expectations of your grandmother or parents? To replace a lost love? Do you scour the Internet or clubs or bookstores searching for someone because you think they will complete you?

If so, stop. I mean it.

Dating to meet someone else's expectations or because you feel incomplete without a partner are the wrong reasons. Dating should happen when you feel confident that you want and need to find another person (or people) to love you and help you grow, and you want to offer them the best of your own self in return. If you start out with this as your intention, you will notice how quickly your own attitude and your experience shift in a positive direction. If your own self-esteem and confidence are shaky and you're ambivalent about what you want and need, you will attract someone who has those same qualities. Avoid this by spending a good amount of time assessing why you're considering dating another person. Ask yourself what you want to get out of it, and what you are willing to invest. Be clear about what you are looking for. Read: *If the Buddha Dated* by Charlotte Kasl, PhD.

ATTITUDE

Once you have (relative) clarity about what you want and need from dating another person, take time to read up on some good books about dating (I said, GOOD ones) or consider talking to a therapist or counselor to align your own motivations and internal health. We all have stuff in our past that might make us feel like we don't have much to offer in a relationship or that we are *too* good to find an appropriate mate. Neither of these is true. Chances are, if you head into a relationship willing to grow and become healthier, you will attract someone with that same intention. Start by being selective about your time and your body. Don't give anyone and everyone access to you. Someone showing interest in you is nice, but check your list of "ideal attributes" and see if the person matches up. If not, move along. Your mental and physical health are extremely precious and you shouldn't compromise them for anyone who brings less than his/her/per best to the table. When you see the dating process in this light, it may alleviate the anxiety and stress. You are in

the driver's seat. You choose when, where and why you are spending time with someone. Does this sound cocky to you? Selfish? Good. Chances are you haven't spent enough of your life worrying about your own needs. It might sound counterintuitive if you're attempting to create a partnership. My opinion, however, is the more you are taking care of yourself, the better you can take care of someone else. The more you listen to your own needs, the more compassion and empathy you can have for another person's. Good boundaries around self-care and self-esteem can only lead to more harmony in a relationship. Read: *In the Meantime: Finding Yourself and the Love You Want* by Iyanla Van Zant.

YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Sleep more. Drink more water. Exercise because you love it, not because you pay a monthly membership fee. Journal or talk to good friends often. Sleep more. Eat food that is grown and produced locally for optimal nutrition and for the health of your community. Eat less processed foods full of sugar, salt and the wrong kinds of fat. Drink less alcohol. Stop smoking cigarettes.

Your health and well-being should be in primo shape before entering the dating scene. Meeting new people and being vulnerable with them is hard work. You will have the best success if you're sleeping at least eight hours a day, drinking at least eight glasses of water and eating three balanced meals, for starters. What do you do to connect with others? What is your connection with nature and the world around you? What are your identities? What gives your life meaning? Spend more time answering these questions and improving your health and less time searching for your mate and you will be amazed how quickly that right person finds you. Read: *Heal Your Body* by Louise L. Hay.

To win at the dating game, be clear on your intentions, adjust your attitude about what you want, need and deserve in an intimate relationship and take good care of your mind and body.

Based in Cambridge, Dillan is a certified wellness coach and graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. She teaches her clients how to stop second-guessing themselves, start eating better and begin living more intentionally.



BBWN's April brunch at Steph's.

Having My Cake and Eating it Too

By Robyn Ochs

Peg and I have been a couple for almost 14 years, so far. During the six years before Peg and I met, I was both single and celibate.

It was the first time I had ever been single – and not looking – for any extended period of time. Prior to this, I had spent my entire adult life pursuing a relationship, in a relationship, or recovering from a relationship.

To my great surprise, I found that I enjoyed being single. And the longer I was single, the more I liked it. I started referring to this state as “being in a relationship with myself.” And what a great relationship it was! I was completely compatible with myself: liking the same food, books, films, and theater, even waking up and going to bed at exactly the same time every night. And being able to make spontaneous plans with friends without having to check in with anyone beforehand. To plan a vacation without having to coordinate schedules. For six years, I lived a life without relationship conflict, doing exactly what I wished with my own free time, never having to compromise. I spent lots of time with my friends. I learned – *really learned* – that I didn’t need a relationship to make me complete. I was happy all by myself.

And then I met Peg. I *really* liked her. I wanted to spend time with her. Lots of time. I wanted to get to know her better. Much better.

But as our relationship began to evolve, I absolutely did not breathe a huge sigh of relief. Instead, I faced a moment of choice. Getting into a new relationship would have its wonderful aspects, but it would also require making some compromises.

I ended up deciding that perhaps I should practice a unique form of non-monogamy. Rather than break up with myself and dedicate myself entirely to Peg, I resolved to figure out a way to be in a relationship with Peg *and* carve out time for myself.

To make a long story short, I’ve managed to do just that. Peg and I give each other more space than many couples. We often “parallel play” at home together: she at her desk, me at mine. And we each pursue interests not shared by the other: Peg has her passion for motorcycling, her trips across the country to work for Kawasaki at motorcycle events, her volunteer work with AIDS and Breast Cancer walks and rides, and yard work. I have my bi and LGBT conferences, partner dancing, and my vegetable garden. We have some friends that are “ours” and we each have our own as well.

I guess I’m just one of those bisexuals who wants to have the best of both worlds, to have my cake and eat it too. Yum.

Robyn is the editor of Bi Women.



“Stuff & Stuffs” are events where we enjoy food and each other’s company and also stuff and mail the Bi Women newsletter. At our May Stuff & Stuff, two of our fabulous volunteers apparently became confused. Here they are seen stuffing rice into envelopes. “No, no, no! Let me explain this to you one more time: You put the food into your mouth, and you put the newsletters into the envelopes!” In retrospect, it’s a good thing we didn’t serve soup.

Adult Drinks

By Morgan O’Donnell

It was supposed to be coffee, friendly,
just a chat between colleagues, club members.
Then she shifted the universe, altered reality,
asking about adult drinks instead.

The message on my screen dared conspire.
Her words “adult drinks” emblazoned on my mind
and I knew I was flirting with fire.
Too late, too soon, her call stirred that murky water.

My alter ego sleeping just beneath the surface
tempted by fate, the taste of the sea,
emerged, dripping like a newborn goddess
remembering how to fall into sky blue eyes.

An ordinary conversation, an extraordinary conversation.
Her breath filled the space between us at the pub
that space in which battles are fought, lost and won.
Another paradise waiting in the wings, waiting to fall.

Between glasses filled with ambrosia and honey
I heard the whisper of possibility,
a lifetime of listening to rhythm and meter
waiting for that unstressed syllable – the feminine caesura.

Morgan’s musings on nature, poetry, writing, and the search for a sustainable life can be found at Red Raven Circling: redravencircle.wordpress.com.

Embracing Being Single (even when it's not your first choice, and you hope it's not a permanent state)

By Fennel

Recently a friend and I were chatting about how it feels to be single and how hard it is to find a serious relationship. We discussed how this might be due in part to living on the East Coast, in part to age and in part that it's simply hard to find a good match. Then I brought up Woody Allen's famous quote about bisexuality, "Bisexuality immediately doubles your chances for a date on Saturday night." As cute as this joke is (notwithstanding how much I loathe Woody Allen's lack of ethics/morals), it's really not true. In fact, there is still a lot of bias against bisexuals.

But my intention and motivation for writing this article is quite the opposite of a negative rant—and I'll tell you why: I believe in being positive and trying to find the good in a situation. You may be single now, and not happy about it. If you want a great partner, then I hope you'll find one and be treated well. But if being single is where you find yourself now, try to embrace the good in it.

The idea of "becoming a friend to yourself" (as a Buddhist teacher once told me) and being able to be with yourself and create your life can apply to all of us, single or coupled, regardless of labels of gender and sexual identity.

Although there are some definite benefits to being single, some of my friends and I would like to be partnered, but only if it is a "good enough" fit.

In the meantime, if you'd like to explore some great books on positive approaches to being single, I have a few recommendations:

* Lauren Mackler, *Solemate: Master the Art of Aloneness and Transform Your Life*

* Florence Falk, *On My Own: the Art of Being a Woman Alone*

* E. Kay Trimberger, *The New Single Woman*

* Marcelle Clements, *The Improvised Woman: Single Women Reinventing Single Life*

Best Wishes on your journey—may it be filled with loving friends who support each other on their paths!

Fennel has lived in Boston for 20 years. She puts up with the cold winters and the Boston accents because she loves her friends and being close to beautiful nature, and the urban good stuff this city offers.

How To Get Me....

By The B Word Poet

An alternative press love advisor got a question from a woman who had a boyfriend but wanted a female lover to join them. In many groups and on websites there are countless couples looking for female lovers. Sites like BisexualPlayground.com and Bisexual.com set up their registration format for couples. What those couples don't understand is that a great percentage of bisexual women don't want to be human couple-sex-toy-aides. Before I began to explore polyamory, couples approached me – which was a huge turn off. Just because I told them I am bisexual didn't mean I wanted to hop in the sack with both of them. I was looking for a monogamous partnership at that time in my life. I wanted what I wanted at that time, and couples needed to respect my boundaries. I've heard from friends that they have been approached by couples at a gay club. Those couples are just not going to find the one they're looking for. Some lesbians go to clubs with their friends and are just simply there to party. Lesbians won't be open to women with male partners and even solo bisexual women are not always welcome in lesbian settings. You'll find bisexual women in straight clubs, but they are the bisexual women who are attached to men or only sexually interested in other women.

Couples tend to bombard women who have never been in a threesome before. While "turning someone out" may have a strong appeal, it's best to stick with women who identify as bisexual and polyamorous. It's not every girl's fantasy to be a couple's sexual outlet – no matter how much these couples want that to be the case.

Feeling helpless right now? Thinking you're never going to find that third party unless you can convince one of the types above? Don't be discouraged. Here are some suggestions about what I'd want: 1) Leave the search completely up to the woman. 2) Don't let your fear of getting rejected or hurt lead you to lie to me or lead me on. Got a man or a husband? So what? Set up dates between the three of us and let's be friends first. Don't rush the sex. 3) Couples that are proud of their sexuality and generally want me to be part of their lives outside as well as inside the bedroom. If these three things are in place, I'll be a lot more open to taking things further. I don't speak for all bisexual women – this is just how to get me.

The B Word Poet is a 29-year-old bisexual writer and activist in Cleveland, Ohio. www.shewrites.com/profile/TheBWordPoet.

The Bisexual Resource Center celebrates 25 years!



We had our first-ever float in Boston's LGBT Pride Parade. It was an amazing day and we received much applause from onlookers. Thanks to the amazing people who worked on this, including: Ellyn, Carla, Jen, Steph, Linda and a host of volunteers who showed up the day before Pride to decorate the float, and to Woody & Vanessa for loaning us their boat.



Dancing Dragon Flames Reborn

By *Jay Bookworm*

Divinity: from which all things **come** and to which they **return**
Dance: matter and spirit **mingle** and begin to **flow in motion**
Dream: the **cohesion of ideas** into a multifaceted vision
Desire: sharing and honoring the **circle of life in community**
Darkness: the place of **growth, beyond fear to love.**
Behold the **beloved woman** I call the **great dragon goddess, born of fire.**
She is the **empress** of the morning and the **evening star** whose name is of a **holy place.**
A **dancing dragon** transformed by the **shedding of skin and spreading of wings,**
She invents new ways to be a **flame thrower, engaging in covert combat.**
Her **revelry is revealing.** Each cue connected to **choreography of challenges.**
All acts of **love and pleasure** are her rituals. **Crush: weighty word: best blessing, worst curse.**
She breathes dragon's fire, but my fearful pain will not dispel my love. **Blessed be.**
Once upon a time, said the **dragon-hunting hero,** the dragon and dame **morphed into one being!**
As the hero, I embrace her scales, as the **surprisingly tender texture of her sensual beauty,**
And her **flaming words,** as the illuminating, **fierce tenderness of her visionary voice.**
In guiding me to a more balanced knowledge, **I grow as I glow and glow as I grow.**
My heart says: Go if you must, but **I hope you will stay.**
Crush: a lightning bolt to the heart, lightening my loneliness,
A **stylized fireball** that shape-shifts within the **volcano of my consciousness.**
Smoldering, like the **slow flow of lava** from the heavens that sent my **divinely inspired desire.**
As above, so below, and how often I have wanted **to go down, to touch upon her earth.**
With no words to **weigh down my tongue** and with no thoughts or fears to keep me silent.
If I could **dance as she does,** then I could **express my love** in a **language she speaks fluently.**
I say now, **"as you wish my lady"**, despite her persistent scorn and unjust accusations.
Crush: weighty word: best blessing, worst curse.
My body stutters, but my **dream spirit soars** as we fly together, like in **Avatar.**
Our bond can be **wordless love.** Even in her willful blindness, I still see her.
Patience with illusions, **hers, mine and ours,** distinctions within **temporary technicalities.**
Symbolically scorched and smoky, bathing **in her fiery breath,**
I declare **"may she never hunger nor thirst"** consuming **flesh and blood of service and devotion.**
Transfixed and transformed via my bodily, soulful offering for the **love feast,**
I realize we **protect and sculpt** the same **energy in myriad melds of creativity.**
Heartbreak, force within form, provides release from **pressure of separation.**
Post-volcanic eruption, sacred androgyne, **bridal chamber,** unified self **emerges enlightened.**
Darkness: where enlightenment is **first sensed in solitude**
Desire: the **creative will** emerges **in art, poetry, music and dance**
Dream: the **flame** manifests in **the mouths** of all who are **transformed**
Dance: healing poetry in motion, emerging from the shadows, **slowly.**
Divinity: the **body-mind-spirit energy** passed from **one to another.**
Though she breathes **dragon's fire,** we dance **within the flames** together. **Blessed be.**

Jay Bookworm, a gender queer, differently abled, pagan poet performing and volunteering in the Dallas area, wrote this poem in honor of a bisexual woman, whose creative dedication inspires the communities that she serves.



"Hearts, not parts." A participant in the bi contingent at London's Parade 2010

Marcia Deihl has an activist moment...

Marcia shared a letter with us that she sent to *Bay Windows*:

Dear Bay Windows:

Chris Azzopardi's informative review of the film "The Kids Are All Right" made me even more eager to see it. But about halfway through, I sat bolt upright in my chair.

Here we have a film with two lesbians, one of whom apparently has sex with (I won't say "falls in love with" but I would think it would involve mutual attraction) a man. The words "lesbian" and "gay" are used multiple times, but this relationship, regardless of the labels its lovers choose to use, is . . . oh, there's a word somewhere that means non-binary, neither gay nor straight, or both gay and straight. Hmmmm . . . don't tell me, it's coming . . . oh! I know! It's right in your masthead. It's "bisexual." Yeah. BIsexual! What a nuanced word. I think I'll use it when it fits. And so should Bay Windows.

Sincerely,
Marcia Deihl
Co-Founder, Boston Bisexual Women's Network

Marriage Material

By Kitty Kavanaugh

*I put my lips to hers and taste her
sweet and salty centre.
Only a moment's pleasure, knowing I will
never trust a woman with my heart. . .*

I used to think if my significant relationship ever dissolved for whatever reason, my next relationship would be with a woman. When I'm looking for a partner, I am usually looking for someone I want to spend the rest of my life with and, hopefully, one day marry. It may seem silly, but I know within the first week of dating a person if this is someone I could see myself spending the rest of my life with. I have spent most of my adult life thinking about what kind of relationship I would like to establish and what kind of person would best compliment my personality. And, until recently, I have never considered such a relationship with a woman. I say "person," but when I honestly seek out a life partner, I'm looking for a *man*. I'm looking for those preconceived social norms; someone who is a provider, a protector, strong and disciplined. *But can't a woman be all these things too?*

From women, I seek a type of companionship I cannot so easily establish with a man. I am a Leo with strong masculine energies, and I have the need and desire to put on my "man pants" and be a woman's provider, her protector, guard her, discipline her, and give her strength in her character. It's not that I don't do any of these things for men, but I need to receive these things much more often than I give them. Though I can be that dominant masculine energy in a relationship, I would find it too exhausting to keep up the pretense, when in my heart of hearts I am a feminine submissive. When I consider my womanhood, perhaps Yeats said it best:

*Be praised for woman that gives up all her mind,
A man may find in no man
a friendship of her kind
that covers all he has brought
as with her flesh and bone,
Nor quarrels with a thought
because it is not her own."
-Yeats "On Woman"*

Kitty is a student with a focus of Psychology and Creative Writing, living and studying on the East Coast.

Jen, continued from page 1

based on zip code, age range, and sexuality/gender. For the latter, I could choose any combination of: guys/girls, guys/girls who like guys/girls, both who like bi guys/bi girls, or straight/gay/bi guys/girls only.

But why does it matter that I identify as bi? The fact that searchers can opt out of seeing my profile simply because I'm bi might imply that the site facilitates their biphobia. I don't think it's a leap to wonder if the techies behind OkCupid conflate bisexuality with polyamory or a penchant for threesomes.

Lest you think the queer sites are any better, I present to you *Curve*, a popular lesbian magazine that has been on the stands for 20 years and online for ten. Their online personals, run by TangoWire (which also runs Latin Lesbian Dating, Black Lesbian Personals, and others), offer you the choice between "I am seeking a Lesbian" or "I am seeking a Bi-sexual [*ugh, spelled with a hyphen no less*] Woman." This presents the same opt-out obstacles and implications as in OkCupid. Perhaps, here, the idea is that bisexuals should only date each other? Who cooked up that model of a dating leper colony – Dan Savage?

Even iPhone apps are getting in on the act. Grindr, a kind of electronic gaydar for queer men, allows you to click on a pop-up that says, "I'm straight or lesbian, and I want Grindr too!" Once you do, you can sign up for notification when they create a similar app for you. Your choices? "I'm a Straight Guy/Straight Girl/Lesbian." If websites are insulting in "othering" bisexuals, the apps do them one worse by purporting that we don't even exist.

Online dating sites have evolved, but not in the way that I expected. It seems that their willful ignorance of queer culture has become more specific. Times were, mainstream dating sites thought they could just stick "M4M" and "F4F" in their drop down menus and watch the queer money roll in. That actually hasn't changed at all; these sites continue to make no effort to provide a culturally appropriate template for their queer clients. They offer no references to butch, femme, or androgynous identities, no options to indicate how out you are, no choices outside of the divorced/single dichotomy.

Now there's just more ignorance surrounding minorities within minorities. Most queer dating sites even have the gall to reduce gender to a binary choice. (Don't look so smug, Gay.com. You managed to remember that trans people exist but you socially ghettoized them in your search menu in the same way *Curve* did bisexuals.)

Some sites get it right by taking a page out of the sexual health playbook and focusing on actions instead of identities. On Skout and Act4Love, you simply choose whether you're a man or woman looking for a man, woman, or both/either (although the question of gender queerness remains). The best format I've seen is on Lovetastic, a site for men specifically looking for a relationship with another man. The profile is mostly free-form and the search engine is just that: an empty field, like Googling for love. There's even a tag cloud, making Lovetastic the '10s answer for complex, unique queer male daters who want to search and self-identify comfortably.

The problem is, no one uses Skout, Act4Love, or Lovetastic, and to get the best results in online dating, you need to be where everyone else is (read: Match.com). My vision for the online dating future is that people in their 20s – the target audience of all such sites – will drive a Movement for Love by demanding culturally appropriate dating sites. Considering younger folks seem to prefer more fluid gender and sexual identities, change may be just around the corner. And that's good, because my love life is hard enough to navigate without technology conspiring against it.

Jen is a board member of the Bisexual Resource Center.

Kanika, continued from page 1

York City, trying out new things, taking up new hobbies, volunteering or getting involved with one cause or another. I discovered one of my favorite whim activities around the time I turned 30. I decided to try out for the local roller derby league just for the hell of it. After breaking my skates, getting more than enough bumps and bruises and injuring my ribs (before finding out I didn't make the team), I decided I was better off cheering on the sidelines. Although I may not be successful in some of my adventures, I am proud of myself for taking the risk and doing something different.

Another upside to single life is the ability to partake in all of those weird habits of mine. I can listen to my new favorite song over and over again (sometimes 100 times a day while singing completely off-tune) and view any movie from my Netflix queue at whatever time I want to. When I was dating, I felt I had to constantly maintain my appearance and it was exhausting! Single life has allowed me the privilege of occasionally "letting my looks go." Naturally, I don't go around looking like a complete slob, but it's freeing to be low maintenance. If I don't feel like shaving my legs, I won't. If I want to run around in sweats and sneakers, I can. If I look terrible in the morning, I have no one to scare but myself. I don't have to keep a significant other's interest by looking hot 24/7.

Does single life have its downside? It does. Every so often, I crave companionship and wonder what it would be like to fall in love. Admittedly, it would be nice to go on a romantic vacation or paint the town red with that special someone. I miss simple affectionate gestures such as holding hands and would be lying to you if I said that I don't feel a twinge of jealousy whenever a friend of mine couples up. However, the love of friends, family and a wonderful cat make up for the lack of romantic love in my life.

I know of so many people who lament being single. I feel for them because they don't appreciate how enriching single life can be. Flying solo for so long has allowed me to develop my best characteristics and be at peace with being alone. When "the one" comes along, I feel that not only will I have the best of myself to offer them, but I can also enjoy time by myself when they're not around. And boy, do I have some tales to tell my children if I ever have any! Should I meet someone tomorrow, I am more than open to welcoming them into my world. Until then, life goes on.

Kanika lives in NYC. She is founder and Editor-in-Chief of the website RaspberryMousse.net.

Bi of the Month: Ellyn Ruthstrom interviews Denise Garrow-Pruitt

I met Denise at the Bi Women's Rap at the Women's Center in Cambridge in the late 90s. She was a part of that thriving group for several years, eventually becoming its facilitator. After that, she facilitated the Married But Not Straight group at the Women's Center and branched off to start another similar group west of Boston. Her own journey from stay-at-home suburban mom to PhD professional educator is inspirational. I am uplifted by Denise's enthusiasm for life, her desire to help others, and her ability to tell it like it is. It was a thrill to sit down with her and share her experiences with our community.

Ellyn Ruthstrom: What does the term "bisexual" mean to you? How does it apply to your life?

Denise Garrow-Pruitt: Freedom. That's what it means to me. Free to be me. Which is not something I can always say I've been able to do. It gives me opportunity to live the way I want to and not to have to justify it.

ER: How did you come to terms with your bi identity when you were coming out?

DGP: Not having to pick just one side or the other made it easier. If I don't have to clearly define anything, I can just live in that moment and not worry about it. That's where I feel my life is. There are places in between straight and gay. I always felt I can love this person or that person and I could change it up if I want to.

ER: Was it a difficult process in the beginning?

DGP: It was pure confusion. I think deep down I always knew, but I just never acknowledged it. Once I could acknowledge it and embrace it I was fine. I knew I could just be me and it didn't matter and there was no need to explain it all away.

ER: As a woman of color, how do you experience being an out bi woman in communities of color?

DGP: I can't really say that my color has had much to do with it. Most people in my life have been very accepting. Some of my flexibility comes from the fact of being a minority all of my life—you figure out how to maneuver around things. If people don't accept you, move on to people who do. I don't waste my time with people and their ignorance. But luckily most people accept. I do still have a few friends who are lesbian who just don't get the bi thing. Still trying to convert me and it's not going to happen. (Laughs.)

ER: You facilitated the Bi Women's Rap group and the Married But Not Straight group at the Women's Center

for many years. What did you learn through those experiences?

DGP: I discovered how to give to myself and how to take what I had learned and give it to someone else. It gets very isolating when you feel you are the only one and it can be empowering once you know how to live your life. It's been great for me because being an educator has helped me to learn a lot more about myself. And sometimes I wasn't brave enough to learn for myself but I did it for other people.

Living out in the suburbs is really tough for women who get caught in a marriage and later figure out it's not their real life's path and struggle with that. For a woman who's been married a long time, who's a stay-at-home mom, whose whole life is surrounded with husband and kids, finding that identity, and giving yourself permission to actually do it—you spend so much time taking care of other people and you never give to yourself.

ER: Do you think that support groups like those are important?

DGP: Absolutely. My quest was to find women who were newly coming out and help them get on the path where they needed to be. I wanted to be there because I know how very hard that is. Once they come to terms with where they are at and what they are going to do with their family I kind of feel that my work is done.

After several years, I realized how many hundreds of women I had helped, and realized my job was done here. It was time to step back and move on to the next part of my life. I needed to focus on me and my career for a little while.

Once I get to my next plateau I can give back again. Put some money into the community and maybe do something bigger. When I started out I was still a stay-at-home mom with no means of support for myself. But I've become very independent since then and have educated myself into a career, so now I can give back monetarily to the community whereas before I had nothing to give. I'd like to open a home for women to stay in during that transition time. That's my next thing. It's so needed. You know what you want to do but you just don't have the financial means to do it. And you have to stay because your only means of support is the husband, especially if you've never worked outside the



Denise, continues on next page

Denise, continued from previous page

home. A lot of women fall into that. It's noble to be that great mom and stay at home, but where does it leave you if you now have to become independent? I'd like to do something to help with that transition.

ER: How does it feel to live in Massachusetts where you can marry your girlfriend?

DGP: Oh, my god, it feels fantastic. I'm so glad to live here. I've always said that Massachusetts is the greatest place to live: the greatest hospitals, the greatest colleges, and now we have same-sex marriage. It's a perfect world. It doesn't get any better. In so many places, you can spend your whole life loving someone and you can't get married—what's that about?

ER: How have you experienced biphobia in your life?

DGP: I don't know if it's biphobia or if it's people just needing to be educated. It's interesting because when I do come out to people and I say, "I'm bisexual" and they say "What does that mean?" Oh, I used to be married to a man, now I'm married to a woman. The options are open wherever I want to go with this. "Well, aren't you going to be married to her forever?" Maybe. Maybe not. Who knows?

ER: Nobody knows.

DGP: Sometimes people think once you divorce a man and go with a woman you are a lesbian. No, the desires stay the same. You still look at a man and say, "He's cute."

We're living in a more educated society now. In the circles I travel in, people get it. And the kids—college-aged kids—they get it. Everyone is so sexually fluid. It's great to be among people who get it. But I want the older people to get it. And when you talk with them and explain more, they do.

ER: The theme of this newsletter is "Bi & Single." From your earlier experience of being bi and single...

DGP: I've never been bi and single. I was married to a man right up to the time that Rhonda and I entered a committed relationship. I haven't had a lot of dating time. I've had a lot of committed relationship time.

I'll tell you what I do remember. This is the core of the married women's group. When you are trying to transition out of that marriage and you are trying to find yourself and you are trying to find a relationship with someone who understands that you've just had this self-discovery about yourself, you can't go from A to Z in a second. What you have to do is transition out of the marriage, transition the family in a way that is going to work with your ex in your life and then find someone to be in your life who understands that the marriage is not over overnight. It's not realistic to think that there's going to be someone who says, "Sure, I accept you, your husband and your kids and I'm willing to take that

chance that you are going to stay with me and not go back to him." When you meet somebody, you need to be honest up front. I always tell people, "Do not lie to people. Never tell someone you are not married."

In the beginning, which would have been my single dating time, it was difficult because I was finding people that I liked a lot but I couldn't make that full commitment because I still had my husband and my children at home and they were my priorities. Then there was time for me and I was spending it with someone else. That time was limited and I had to go back home. And I found out over and over again, things would start out great with someone and then somewhere along the line they would say "What do you mean you're still with your husband?" Did you not get in every conversation that I was still married? "Yeah, I did, but I thought it would be over." But it really takes a good year for you to get out of a situation and be stable and that time is the hardest.

ER: What do you appreciate about the Boston bi community?

DGP: For me it was my lifeline. I did an online search and found the Bisexual Resource Center. Wayne was my first contact on the phone. I talked to him and he made me feel that everything was OK and he invited me to come out to a meeting. And I wasn't having it. I was not going public. Then I called back and I think I got Alan the second time. He was very supportive, and that made the difference for me. Someone said to me on the other end of the line, "It's OK, you're going to be OK. Doesn't matter if it's this week, next week, six years from now, we're going to be here." For me, that reassurance was the greatest thing. And I finally did get it together to go to a meeting. Wesley met me at the door and said he was going to walk in with me. Then I got a call maybe two days after the meeting, just checking up on me and saying, "We were just worried about you." When that voice came over on the phone, I was like, "Are you serious, you are calling me up?" Wow. "We want you to come back, we want you to know it's OK."

Wayne told me about the group at the Women's Center and gave me some contacts. I'm thinking, these guys are seriously helping me. It was so cool, no strings attached, no anything. And I started going to the Women's Center and met a slew of people and the journey began. I'll never forget that first call. It took every bit of strength I had to call. It was meant to be. Seven or eight years after that I asked them, do you remember me? And they said, "Sort of, but we get those calls all the time." Here I thought it was all about me.

ER: I want to use that as a commercial.

DGP: I don't think they realize what they really do. I wonder how many lives the folks at the BRC have saved and they don't even know it.

Ellyn is a past editor of Bi Women and President of the BRC.

Bisexual Activists in the White House!

By Faith Cheltenham

I'm Faith, a proud bisexual black woman. I was thoroughly honored to have the opportunity to be one of three out bisexuals invited to the White House for the 2010 LGBT Pride Month Reception, the second such event held at the White House by President Obama to celebrate LGBT Pride. (There were actually at least two others, but they were there representing trans organizations.) I arrived early at the Southeast entrance of the White House with BBWN's own Ellyn Ruthstrom, who is also President of the Bisexual Resource Center. We joined many LGBT people of ALL COLORS excitedly waiting to be admitted. Upon entering, a nice man in military dress said, "Welcome to the White House!" And Ellyn and I just about died right there. Fortunately we had the foresight to keep our cameras out and snapping!

Before the President spoke we were allowed to roam the rooms and learn about White House history from docents who were stationed in every room. Many of the folks invited to this event were local, grassroots, youth and college activists and it was wondrous to be surrounded by activists of all colors, ages, sexes, genders and orientations in the "People's House." Amidst the historical antiques and portraits of presidents are seemingly new additions of African, Asian and American Indian art and sculptures. This was one of the nicest houses I've ever been in and I highly suggest that any and every activist visit the White House in the future. Once in a while we all need a reminder that our country is for people like us.

Ellyn and I got spots on the "rope line" and waited for



Bi-identified activists at the White House: Faith, Gunner Scott, Ellyn and Nancy Nangeroni.

the President to appear, hoping to get a good picture to share with all. When the President was announced, it seemed that all heads turned towards the announcer's voice and away from the door the President had just opened. All but mine, so I stood there simply agog at him in front of me. He was as charmingly funny as he's always seemed, quietly saying, "Well, here I am, guys, the President!" as he waited for folks to realize he'd entered the room. And I couldn't help but tell him, "Dude, you totally are!" This got him laughing and it was a nice moment to share. He shook hands down the row and then went on to

speaking about what the administration has accomplished for the LGBT community.

Some folks feel it's not fast enough, and I can understand the rush: raise your hand if you enjoy being a second-class citizen! It was hard to sustain my feelings of frustration as I heard the President of the United States mention by name audience members who had lost a loved one without even being able to say goodbye. I also found comfort in President Obama's own stated frustration with the slow pace in ending that abomination, Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Listening, you got the feeling, in this place, in this House belonging to all Americans, changes are still rolling out. I'm not ready to sit by and wait so I'll keep working for equality across all boundaries and borders. I'm compiling a list of all bisexual/pansexual/fluid orgs nationwide to send to the White House for future invites to our community. Please email me at thefayth@gmail.com if you'd like your organization that works with or for the bisexual community listed!

Faith lives in Los Angeles and is Vice President of BiNet USA.

Bi and Proud and Running Pride

By Amy Andre

This year at Pride, I wore a big button on my lapel all day that said "BI" on it. Why?

Last Fall, I was honored to be hired as the Executive Director of San Francisco Pride, the nonprofit organization that, among other things, puts on the annual LGBT Pride Celebration here in San Francisco. Putting on the largest celebration of its kind in the US – and one of the largest in the world – is a big thrill! But Pride is more than a party; it's an opportunity for community building, for political collaboration, and for civic engagement.

Wearing my BI button was a simple but effective way to show that we truly are everywhere, including leading the event! My boss (the President of the Board of my organization) is also bi, and so I gave her a button to wear with a bi pride

flag on it. The two of us are the official spokespeople for the organization, which meant that every time we were being interviewed on camera our Bi Pride was showing, literally!

If you haven't been to an LGBT Pride event in your area lately, I encourage you to go. One of the most important things that we can do as bisexual folks is show up, be out as bi, and be counted.

Amy has a master's degree in Sexuality Studies (with a focus on LGBT identity) and an MBA in Nonprofit Management – both of which come in handy at work! The co-author of Bisexual Health, she can be found online at amyandre.com.



The Indian Bisexual Spake

By Apphia K.

Completely overwhelmed by the invitation to speak at the Queer Azadi Event in Mumbai, India this year, I was honored by the fact that I would be one of the first bisexual activists to give the bi community a voice. In contrast to my first experience representing the bi community at the Bangalore Queer Film Festival earlier this year, this was to be a public forum and there would be media present.

A little louder than the voice in my head that told me that I'd be the only bisexual there were my supportive friends and the knowledge that I would be speaking from the heart. L. Ramki, India's only other out bisexual activist, flew up from Chennai to show his support and have my back while friends who drove down to Mumbai with me stood at the side of the stage cheering me on.

What ensued was a total head-rush, and me silently thankful that I had written what I'd wanted to say on paper and remembered to bring it with me. I spoke about bi-invisibility, the fear of biphobia, the liberation of love, creating a tolerant and all-inclusive community, and the importance of us all speaking up together as one community demanding equality. Midway through my speech, in between cheers and applause, a transwoman from the crowd stood up and asked me to speak in Hindi. That's when I began to falter just a little bit. Luckily, a translator jumped to my aid and brought me safely to the end of the speech.

Did my action make a difference? I hope so. In the days leading up to the event and in the ones that followed I have only just realized the vastness of the task ahead of me. Making the decision to give my community a voice was easy; the follow-through is what will push me out of my comfort zone. This ongoing work is what will bring that change we wish to see, and education lies at the crux of this change.

Young, restless and just the right amount of crazy; a bit old fashioned and unconventional at the same time, Apphia is a contributor to the Getting Bi anthology, the co-founder of Birds of a Feather, Pune's first visible LGBT support group and editor of Jiah: The Magazine for Women with Heart, the first magazine for Queer Indian Women.

News Briefs

By Katrina Chaves



- On the equality front: Argentina now has full marriage equality. The federal court of Mexico has upheld Mexico City's marriage equality law. Same-sex marriages performed in Mexico City will now be recognized throughout the country. And Proposition 8 in California, which took away marriage rights from not-yet-married same-sex couples has been struck down. Stay tuned as this decision is appealed and – hopefully – upheld.

- Vanessa Carlton, a Grammy-nominated vocalist, came out at Nashville Pride, telling her fans, "I've never said this before, but I am a proud bisexual woman." And this was not the only exciting "first" at Pride celebrations this June! The Bisexual Resource Center put together the first bisexual float in Boston Pride history, and celebrated its 25th anniversary!

- On August 1st, Logo ran a "bisexual marathon," airing movies like *Imagine Me and You*, *Bi the Way*, *Can't Bi Me Love*, *Bisexual Girls*, and *Three of Hearts*. While a day of bi documentaries and drama is pleasing to the bi eye, the bi/pan/fluid communities need more than token recognition, which is how some perceive these events to be in many forms of media (especially that which is owned by MTV).

- Speaking of biphobia, OkCupid has recently posted an incredibly biphobic study that they conducted regarding registered members. The controversial conclusion that OkCupid reached is that bisexuality is one of online dating's "biggest lies." Apparently, just because some bi-identified members only messaged one gender, this meant they were only pretending to be bi? Some have decided to boycott the dating website, and others are writing e-mails, protesting this ridiculous "study."

- In Iran, such pervasive biphobia and homophobia is life-threatening, as it is one of five Sharia law nations where homosexuality is punishable by death. Recently, a 23-year-old bisexual man, Amir Hossein, was arrested by the Basij militia while having dinner with his girlfriend. According to the organization Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees, his sexuality was well-known amongst his friends, and it is unclear who reported him to authorities. He was beaten to death by Iran's security forces.

- From August 26th to 30th, the UK national bisexual event ('BiCon') combined with the International Conference on Bisexuality to create the largest bisexual event ever seen in the UK! BiCon is an annual convention for bisexual people and their allies, and this year's BiCon was the UK's 28th – making it "one of the longest continuously running LGBT events in the country." Stay tuned for a report in the next issue!



"God made me Bi": A marcher in the bi contingent at the Pride London's Parade 2010

Calendar, *continued from page 16*

Thursday, September 23, Celebrate Bisexuality Day (CBD) & Bilicious, 7:30pm, Club Café. Celebrate the BRC's 25th anniversary & the premiere of Bilicious in Boston with an evening of fabulous bi performers on the stage of Club Café. Music, comedy, spoken word & more! Support the work of the BRC & enjoy a great night out on the town. Details: www.biliciousproductions.com/Events.html. Tickets available online at biresource.net.

Friday, September 24, Dyke Night's Fourth Fridays at the Milky Way. The Brewery, 284 Amory Street, Jamaica Plain.

Friday, September 24 & Saturday, September 25, Fenway Health's Helpline Volunteer Training. 1340 Boylston Street, Boston. If you self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or genderqueer, & have 5 hours per month to spare, then you can join the Peer Listening Line & GLBT Helplines of Fenway Health which provides info, referrals & support to LGBT & questioning callers through its anonymous toll-free line. Info/registration: Joanna at jwisch@fenwayhealth.org.

Saturday, September 25, Queer Carnevale, Mardi Gras in New England, Tri-County Fairgrounds, Northampton. Sponsored by the LGBT Coalition of Western Massachusetts, a day full of music (Melissa Ferrick, Antigone Rising), comedy (Mimi Gonzalez), drag (All the King's Men) & more. Info: www.lgbtcoalitionwma.org/carnevale.html.

October

Wednesday, October 6, 6:30-9pm, BLiSS. Bisexual Resource Center, 29 Stanhope Street, Boston. (See September 1st)

Saturday, October 9, 10pm-2am, Dyke Night's Second Saturday at Machine. 1254 Boylston Street, Boston.

Monday, October 11, 7pm, Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. (See September 13th)

Tuesday, October 12, 7-9pm, BRC Board Meeting. (See September 14th)

Wednesday, October 13, 6:30-8pm, AIDS Forum. Where are the bisexuals in the HIV/AIDS epidemic? Bisexuals often get blamed for the spread of AIDS, but this time we'll explore how AIDS has affected our community. Sponsored by the Bisexual Resource Center & Harvard's LBGGS. Details at www.biresource.net closer to the date.



Saturday, October 16, 11:30am, Saturday Bi Brunch. (See September 18th)

Sunday, October 17, noon, BBWN Brunch in Cambridge at Jen's. Please bring a potluck dish &/or drinks to share. Info/directions/RSVP: Jen at jbonardi@hotmail.com. A great opportunity to meet other bi and bi-friendly women in the Boston area.

Thursday, October 21, 7pm, BLiSS. (See September 1st)

Friday, October 22, Dyke Night's Fourth Fridays at the Milky Way. The Brewery, 284 Amory Street, Jamaica Plain.

November

Wednesday, November 3, 7pm, BLiSS. (See September 1st)

Sunday, November 7, noon, BBWN Brunch in Arlington at Deb & Gina's. Please bring a potluck dish &/or drinks to share. Email Deb at debmo345@gmail.com to RSVP/get directions. A great opportunity to meet other bi & bi-friendly women in the Boston area.

Monday, November 8, 7pm, Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. (See September 13th)

Wednesday, November 10, 7-9pm, BRC Board Meeting. (See September 14th)

Saturday, November 13, 10pm-2am, Dyke Night's Second Saturday at Machine, 1254 Boylston Street, Boston.

Thursday, November 18, 7 pm, BLiSS. (See September 1st)

Friday, November 19-Sunday, November 21, Transcending Boundaries. Worcester, Massachusetts. A weekend of education, social activism, research, & support for persons whose sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, sex, or relationship style do not fit within the binary confines of male or female, gay or straight, monogamous or single. Details: TranscendingBoundaries.org.

Saturday, November 20, 11:30am, Saturday Bi Brunch. (See September 18th)

Friday, November 26, Dyke Night's Fourth Fridays at the Milky Way. The Brewery, 284 Amory Street, Jamaica Plain.

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

2nd Tuesdays

7-9pm. at 29 Stanhope Street, 4th floor, in Boston. All are welcome.

2nd Mondays:

Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. 7pm. Email kate.e.flynn@gmail.com for more info.

1st Wednesdays, 3rd Thursdays:

BLISS: Bisexual Support & Social Group, 7-8:45pm. Meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

3rd Saturdays:

Biversity Bi Brunch, 11:30am at Johnny D's, Davis Square, Somerville.

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new email list!*

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*@yahoogroups.
com*



Ask not what Bi Women can do for you ...

Help us send *Bi Women* to you, to other women, and also to community centers, youth and campus LGBT groups. Think of the support that *Bi Women* has provided to you, and give generously because your contribution will indeed make a difference in many, many lives. It will only take a minute and you will make a difference.

It costs \$5000 to keep *Bi Women* and BBWN going for one year. No donation is too small (and none too large). Suggestion donation, for those who are able: \$20-30.

Make your checks payable to BBWN, PO Box 301727, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. Or you can donate online via paypal to biwomenboston@gmail.com.

Remember: YOU can make a difference.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, September 1, 7-8:45pm, Bisexual Social & Support Group (BliSS) meets monthly 1st Wed. & 3rd Thurs. at the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope Street, Boston. All bi & bi-friendly people of all genders & orientations welcome. 1st Wed. meetings. are peer-facilitated discussion groups, sometimes with a pre-selected topic or presenter. 3rd Thurs. mtgs. are 7-8pm check-ins, discussion, & announcements followed by social time at a nearby restaurant. Only want to socialize? Meet the group at or shortly after 8pm in the lobby of the BLC.

Saturday, September 11, 10pm-2am, Back to School Dance Party. Dyke Night's 2nd Saturday at Machine, 1254 Boylston Street, Boston.

Monday, September 13, 7pm, Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. A peer-led support group for women in a straight marriage/relationship struggling with sexual orientation or coming out. Info: kate.e.flynn@gmail.com. Meets monthly 2nd Mon.

Tuesday, September 14, 7-9pm, Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting. All bi &

bi-friendly community members welcome to attend. Info: Ellyn at president@biresource.net. Meeting at the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. near Back Bay station on the Orange Line.

Thursday, September 16, 7pm, BliSS. (See September 1st)

Saturday, September 18, 11:30am, Bi Brunch. 3rd Saturdays at Johnny D's on Holland St. in Davis Sq. in Somerville. The Davis stop on the Red Line is just across the street. Great way to socialize & find out what is going on locally in the bi community.

Sunday, September 19, noon, BBWN Brunch in Arlington at Steph's. Please bring a potluck dish and/or drinks to share. Let's concentrate on fall foods. Email Steph at smiserlis@gmail.com to RSVP/get directions. A great opportunity to meet other bi & bi-friendly women in the Boston area.

Sunday, September 19, Out in the Park, Six Flags in Agawam, Massachusetts. Have a fabulous outing with the LGBT community in the state's largest amusement park. Besides the usual rollercoasters, rides & games, there will be music, comedy & drag performers including JujuBee from *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Details: <http://outinthepark.info/>.

Calendar, *continues on page 15*