



One of US

(a Northern AZ LGBAT Newsletter)

November 2009

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Activist Sites of Interest:

Human Rights Campaign- <http://www.hrc.org/>
 Save the Peaks!- <http://www.savethepeaks.org/>
 Black Mesa Indigenous- <http://www.blackmesais.org/>

Come OUT!!!

- Closets are for hangers
- Be honest with yourself and loved ones
- There is nothing to fear, You are not alone.
- Support is available (friends, family, community members and online- www.hrc.org/issues/coming_out.asp)

AIDS IS NOT DEAD, Play safe Always

- Know your partner
- Use condoms and/or gloves
- Don't mix excessive amounts of drugs and/or alcohol with sex, keep a clear upper head
- STDs (and babies) are other risks of unsafe sex
- Get tested often—stay healthy

Tom of Finland EMERGING EROTIC ARTIST CONTEST

The purpose of this contest is twofold: to encourage artists to share their erotic work and to elevate the field of erotic art by rewarding some of the best examples. The competition nurtures developing artists as they come forward into the public eye. A number of currently popular erotic artists got their start by submitting their work to the EEAC. There are four categories for entry, and three prizes for each category. The Grand Prize is an original work by Tom of Finland – and that alone may be reason enough to inspire artists to enter!

The competition is open to all adults that have not sold erotic artwork to the public, or previously won the contest. The submission deadline for entries is November 30, 2009.

The winners will be announced on January 1, 2010 and their work will be exhibited on the Foundation's website and at the Foundation's West Hollywood / Los Angeles Erotic Art Fair Weekend (WHLA EAFW) in 2010.

www.TomOfFinlandFoundation.org

Coming out in Rwanda (page 3), Breaking the myth of the holidays (pages 4-5) and a Manifesto (pages 6-7) all inside. Come and inside and find out more.

The Holiday are upon us, time to destroy the carved pumpkin, bring out the turkey dish and stack up the credit cards. Don't forget the lights and to deck the halls either. Friends and family, my hands are getting ready to write greeting cards.

This holiday I want bravery from readers, I want them to come forward and speak. I want them to become a community and participate in events that are offered. I want and need more input, readers. Always more and more.

Tell me your thoughts, your dreams, your ideals. Show me your events, your happiness, your identity, your coming out or staying in experiences.

Until next, take care always and come on out

Dan.

Feedback. / Comments / Submissions / Suggestions

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Articles may be edited for space or clarity. If you would like to place an ad, send the ad by e-mail to devi3ant@hotmail.com

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November 2009 Events

- Weekly on Wednesday Evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 PM join the GLBT community for some camaraderie and drink specials at REDS, Sedona Rouge and Hotel, 2250 West Hwy 89A, in Sedona
- **Saturday to Sunday, November 7th-8th**— Palm Springs Pride-see <http://www.pspride.org/> for more info.
- **Saturday, November 7th, 2:00 - 6:00 PM**— MOONBURN Men's Spanking Play Parties (First Saturday of each month) Party details, contact: MoonburnLA@sbcglobal.net
- **Thursday to Sunday, November 12th-15th** - PALM SPRINGSLEATHER PRIDE 2009, \$89/wknd www.desertleatherpride.com
Mr. Palm Springs Leather 2009 Contest, Formal Leather Dinner, Fetish Pool Party & BBQ, Recon Victory Dark Dance, Select vendor market, Tom of Finland Beer Bust
- **Friday, November 13th, 9PM - 1AM** - SO. CAL. BONDAGE NIGHT. Every 2nd Friday each month. Details: www.SoCABondage.com
- **Sunday, November 15th, 12-6PM**- BIZARRE BAZARRE Annual Fetish Vendor Fair @ Bar Sinister -- 1652 N. Cherokee Ave. (@ Hollywood Blvd. in LA) Do your early Xmas gift shopping, Hourly stage fetish performances, Full bar & food services
- **Saturday November 21st**- Out in Jerome, is every third Saturday of the month, in Jerome, Arizona. This is a monthly GLBT event where the galleries, shops and ghost tours extend their hours. Entertainment is often provided at the Mile High Grille on Main Street. Have a great time out in Jerome and visit the many gay owned businesses.
- **Saturday, November 21st**— X-Chain-G of Flagstaff bdsm monthly play party. For more details, contact Craig at railman3@hotmail.com
- **Thursday, November 26th**— **Thanksgiving!!** Dan invites you to Tday! RSVP by the 24th with a side dish to devi3ant@hotmail.com and we will provide the turkey and main dishes, and we can watch movies, play board games and have fun while celebrating.

Quotes of the Month

"While we are asleep in this world, we are awake in another one."
-Salvador Dali, painter (1904 - 1989)

"Sometimes the fall kills you. And sometimes, when you fall, you fly."
-Todd Faber in Neil Gaiman's Fables and Reflections

"Knowing trees, I understand the meaning of patience. Knowing grass, I can appreciate persistence."
-Hal Borland, journalist (1900-1978)

"Death be not proud."
-John Donne

"One can be instructed in society, one is inspired only in solitude."
-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, poet, dramatist, novelist, and philosopher (1749 - 1832)

Humor for the Masses

Powwow saying that sound nasty if ya didn't know better

10. You have to be fully dressed to receive your money.
9. He's got a nice set of bells!
8. It looks wet, think I'll put on rubbers for grand entry
7. I was half dressed in the parking lot, when they started grand entry.
6. "Painted Warrior" you're in the hole, 6 push-ups "Boyz."
5. I can't wait to "49" with you tonight
4. "Oh Hey-- I didn't recognize you undressed."
3. You need to do it more in front of the Judges.
2. "Ok girls, spread yourselves out more, so the judges can see your outfit."

AND Number One is

1. Can I get undressed now?

But Their Coffee is Fantastic!

By Steve Youngdahl

Apparently some people just aren't meant to live in Rwanda.

In the latter part of the 20th Century, members of the Tutsi nation fled the African country of Rwanda to escape the large scale genocide (hundreds of thousands of Tutsi's were killed) being spearheaded by a rival people, the Hutus. Over the past decade or so, they seem to have resolved their differences and people of all groups are welcome into the country once more.

Except one....

Homosexuals are the current poster children for ostracism. While currently, the illegality of homosexuality is not a part of the penal code, there are those who wish to have it amended so that such a ban is included. So what's a Rwandan homosexual to do? The answer is, they don't.

There are no social resources for homosexuals in Rwanda, no community centers, hotlines, civil rights groups, coffee houses, bars, tea rooms, or any other anything. During the past several years, various groups have tried to organize to create resources and some level of cultural awareness for gays in Rwanda. The government and police have quickly and effectively squashed these attempts. They arrest the organizers and promise leniency if they "out" other gays.

Known homosexuals in Rwanda face odds that make coming out the equivalent to facing a firing squad. There is nothing to stop gay bashing; people either join in or look the other way. The bottom line is, it is not safe to be out in Rwanda.

People who have been publicly outed frequently leave the country and petition for asylum in whatever country they have fled to. Leaving family, friends, and colleagues behind, they start life anew in a country where they have no social or political network as opposed to facing the alternative.

The alternative is living a life in fear that, at any moment, an angry mob could come pounding on your door, drag you into the street, and beat you to death.

When I said that Rwandan homosexuals "don't," what I meant by that is this: They don't come out. They don't liberate themselves. Instead, they find a mate of the opposite gender, get married, make babies, and spend the rest of their lives denying their true spirit.

Faced with that alternative, I'd leave town too!

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'Tis the Season of More Mythology

Minor Details By Bob Minor

The Norman Rockwell American Thanksgiving is a feast of mythology about pilgrims and Indians sitting down like buddies giving thanks to the Christian god for a successful harvest. Add the picture of the perfect American family, every member home for the holiday, sitting down together feeling blessed by their Maker for the over-eating opportunity their country has provided.



Whatever it's real, less fanciful history, and however dysfunctional family get-togethers really are, Thanksgiving is the perfect day to remind us of the fact that nations promote myths that sustain them.

In the field of religious studies, identifying a mythology is not a comment on the historical accuracy of the stories in question. History happened back then, but a myth is a story that says something meaningful to someone today.

A myth can be historically accurate (or not), but its power and meaning is that it informs, directs, justifies, and touches emotions about framing the present. And all countries have myths that teach from childhood what loyal citizens of the nation are supposed to believe about what it means to be American, French, Chinese, Egyptian, or whomever.

National myths sanctify ideals that the powers of the state want represented as part of national identity. They're taught by schools and others so incessantly that they become unquestionably so.

Whether or not George Washington ever really chopped down any cherry tree, we're to understand that honesty is American, while those who teach it might be as dishonest as it takes for them to maintain their privileged societal positions.

The power of these dominant myths can obscure their historical inaccuracy. And if so, they can teach what is good for enforcing the way things are, with the current powers, prejudices, and expectations in place.

They discourage as hopeless the chances of anyone who wants to change the system and its power structure. And doubters and questioners are suspect of something like treason.

LGBT people, people of color, and others who've missed out on mainstream privileges, know the dominant myths about their communities that support prejudice. They stumble over them regularly -- running into those who have accepted myths about them without question and hearing them repeated in the media.

How fitting, then, when celebrating this season of Americana, to remember two of the big myths that keep people disempowered. Myths that a deep reading of American history -- not the official history of our schools -- proves are historically false. Myths that if exploded will no longer keep everyday people from believing that they can change things.

Myth 1: The salvation of this country is in electing great leaders who will solve our problems. Presidents and other big heroes are responsible for America's progress.

There are people who expected a young, Illinois senator to be this special savior. So they thought that just supporting the right person would produce progress.

They didn't want to believe that he was already a part of an established system. They wanted to believe that he would be different enough in economic and political policies to somehow change the old ways that transcend the two entrenched political parties, including the party in which he was skillful enough to climb to the top.

The historical reality is that this is not how progressive change has ever taken place in the US no matter how much we think the solution would be the election of another Lincoln or FDR.

It's the social movements of the everyday people that moved our leaders. When so moved, they then took credit for what was accomplished as a result: "There go the people, let me get out in front of them and look like I'm leading."

American historian Howard Zinn concludes from his exhaustive study that American mythology downplays or omits the importance of everyday people's social movements and thus -- "a fundamental principle of democracy is undermined: the principle that it is the citizenry, rather than the government, that is the ultimate source of power and the locomotive that pulls the train of government in the direction of equality and justice."

('Tis the Season...continued on the next page)

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Myth 2: The wars we have entered are forced on us by the needs of the American people but ended because of the heroics of great leaders. Yes, there might have been a few “bad” wars, but they were necessary.

Historically, it's the exact opposite. Zinn shows that war “is manufactured by political leaders, who then must make a tremendous effort – by enticement, by propaganda, by coercion – to mobilize a normally reluctant population to go to war.”

In 1917 the government sent 75,000 lecturers around the country to give 750,000 lectures to persuade the people that it was right to enter World War I. Thousands of people were put on trial and imprisoned to suppress opposition.

FDR, as James Polk before him for the Mexican War and Lyndon Johnson after him for the Vietnam War, had to lie to the American people to convince them to support entrance into World War II. Historian Thomas Bailey, puts this in what he thinks is a positive light: “Franklin Roosevelt repeatedly deceived the American people during the period before Pearl Harbor... like a physician who must tell the patient lies for the patient's own good... because the masses are notoriously short-sighted and generally cannot see danger until it is at their throats.”

Wars begin for business reasons and end when the people have had enough. Everyday people and their movements force an end when they rise up, realize their power, and demand change.

The fact that these myths are untrue is a reminder that, yes, we can make change, that it's not hopeless if we choose to act in hope and don't wait for the right leader, Democrat or Republican, to do the right thing.

Zinn: “no pitifully small picket line, no poorly attended meeting, no tossing out of an idea to an audience or even to an individual should be scorned as insignificant.”

The holidays are a good time to reread the history beneath the myths. How about, Howard Zinn, A People's History of the United States: 1492 – Present?

Robert N. Minor, Ph.D., Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Kansas, is author of When Religion Is an Addiction, Scared Straight: Why It's So Hard to Accept Gay People and Why It's So Hard to Be Human and Gay & Healthy in a Sick Society. Contact him at www.fairnessproject.org.

Get Involved!! Health Sites:

Parkinson's:

<http://www.parkinson.org/>

HIV and AIDS:

<http://www.hiv.com/>

Male Depression:

<http://www.maledepression.com/>

Diabetes:

<http://www.diabetes.org/>

Where is Everybody?

Speak your mind.

Get published, see front cover for details.

A Manifesto! The Time Has Come!

I have made a decision. I will no longer debate the issue of homosexuality in the church with anyone. I will no longer engage the biblical ignorance that emanates from so many right-wing Christians about how the Bible condemns homosexuality, as if that point of view still has any credibility.

I will no longer discuss with them or listen to them tell me how homosexuality is "an abomination to God," about how homosexuality is a "chosen lifestyle," or about how through prayer and "spiritual counseling" homosexual persons can be "cured." Those arguments are no longer worthy of my time or energy. I will no longer dignify by listening to the thoughts of those who advocate "reparative therapy," as if homosexual persons are somehow broken and need to be repaired. I will no longer talk to those who believe that the unity of the church can or should be achieved by rejecting the presence of, or at least at the expense of, gay and lesbian people.

I will no longer take the time to refute the unlearned and undocumentable claims of certain world religious leaders who call homosexuality "deviant." I will no longer listen to that pious sentimentality that certain Christian leaders continue to employ, which suggests some version of that strange and overtly dishonest phrase that "we love the sinner but hate the sin." That statement is, I have concluded, nothing more than a self-serving lie designed to cover the fact that these people hate homosexual persons and fear homosexuality itself, but somehow know that hatred is incompatible with the Christ they claim to profess, so they adopt this face-saving and absolutely false statement.

I will no longer temper my understanding of truth in order to pretend that I have even a tiny smidgen of respect for the appalling negativity that continues to emanate from religious circles where the church has for centuries conveniently perfumed its ongoing prejudices against blacks, Jews, women and homosexual persons with what it assumes is "high-sounding, pious rhetoric." The day for that mentality has quite simply come to an end for me. I will personally neither tolerate it nor listen to it any longer. The world has moved on, leaving these elements of the Christian Church that cannot adjust to new knowledge or a new consciousness lost in a sea of their own irrelevance. They no longer talk to anyone but themselves.

I will no longer seek to slow down the witness to inclusiveness by pretending that there is some middle ground between prejudice and oppression. There isn't. Justice postponed is justice denied. That can be a resting place no longer for anyone. An old civil rights song proclaimed that the only choice awaiting those who cannot adjust to a new understanding was to "Roll on over or we'll roll on over you!" Time waits for no one.

I will particularly ignore those members of my own Episcopal Church who seek to break away from this body to form a "new church," claiming that this new and bigoted instrument alone now represents the Anglican Communion. Such a new ecclesiastical body is designed to allow these pathetic human beings, who are so deeply locked into a world that no longer exists, to form a community in which they can continue to hate gay people, distort gay people with their hopeless rhetoric and to be part of a religious fellowship in which they can continue to feel justified in their homophobic prejudices for the rest of their tortured lives. Church unity can never be a virtue that is preserved by allowing injustice, oppression and psychological tyranny to go unchallenged.

In my personal life, I will no longer listen to televised debates conducted by "fair-minded" channels that seek to give "both sides" of this issue "equal time." I am aware that these stations no longer give equal time to the advocates of treating women as if they are the property of men or to the advocates of reinstating either segregation or slavery, despite the fact that when these evil institutions were coming to an end the Bible was still being quoted frequently on each of these subjects. It is time for the media to announce that there are no longer two sides to the issue of full humanity for gay and lesbian people. There is no way that justice for homosexual people can be compromised any longer.

I will no longer act as if the Papal office is to be respected if the present occupant of that office is either not willing or not able to inform and educate himself on public issues on which he dares to speak with embarrassing ineptitude. I will no longer be respectful of the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who seems to believe that rude behavior, intolerance and even killing prejudice is somehow acceptable, so long as it comes from third-world religious leaders, who more than anything else reveal in themselves the price that colonial oppression has required of the minds and hearts of so many of our world's population. I see no way that ignorance and truth can be placed side by side, nor do I believe that evil is somehow less evil if the Bible is quoted to justify it. I will dismiss as unworthy of any more of my attention the wild, false and uninformed opinions of such would-be religious leaders as Pat Robertson, James Dobson, Jerry Falwell, Jimmy Swaggart, Albert Mohler, and Robert Duncan. My country and my church have both already spent too much time, energy and money trying to accommodate these backward points of view when they are no longer even tolerable.

I make these statements because it is time to move on. The battle is over. The victory has been won. There is no reasonable doubt as to what the final outcome of this struggle will be. Homosexual people will be accepted as equal, full human beings, who have a legitimate claim on every right that both church and society have to offer any of us. Homosexual marriages will become legal, recognized by the state and pronounced holy by the church. "Don't ask, don't tell" will be dismantled as the policy of our armed forces. We will and we must learn that equality of citizenship is not something that should ever be submitted to a referendum. (Manifesto continued on the next page)

(Manifesto continued from the previous page)

Equality under and before the law is a solemn promise conveyed to all our citizens in the Constitution itself. Can any of us imagine having a public referendum on whether slavery should continue, whether segregation should be dismantled, whether voting privileges should be offered to women? The time has come for politicians to stop hiding behind unjust laws that they themselves helped to enact, and to abandon that convenient shield of demanding a vote on the rights of full citizenship because they do not understand the difference between a constitutional democracy, which this nation has, and a "mobocracy," which this nation rejected when it adopted its constitution. We do not put the civil rights of a minority to the vote of a plebiscite.

I will also no longer act as if I need a majority vote of some ecclesiastical body in order to bless, ordain, recognize and celebrate the lives and gifts of gay and lesbian people in the life of the church. No one should ever again be forced to submit the privilege of citizenship in this nation or membership in the Christian Church to the will of a majority vote.

The battle in both our culture and our church to rid our souls of this dying prejudice is finished. A new consciousness has arisen. A decision has quite clearly been made. Inequality for gay and lesbian people is no longer a debatable issue in either church or state. Therefore, I will from this moment on refuse to dignify the continued public expression of ignorant prejudice by engaging it. I do not tolerate racism or sexism any longer.

From this moment on, I will no longer tolerate our culture's various forms of homophobia. I do not care who it is who articulates these attitudes or who tries to make them sound holy with religious jargon. I have been part of this debate for years, but things do get settled and this issue is now settled for me. I do not debate any longer with members of the "Flat Earth Society" either. I do not debate with people who think we should treat epilepsy by casting demons out of the epileptic person; I do not waste time engaging those medical opinions that suggest that bleeding the patient might release the infection. I do not converse with people who think that Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans as punishment for the sin of being the birthplace of Ellen DeGeneres or that the terrorists hit the United States on 9/11 because we tolerated homosexual people, abortions, feminism or the American Civil Liberties Union. I am tired of being embarrassed by so much of my church's participation in causes that are quite unworthy of the Christ I serve or the God whose mystery and wonder I appreciate more each day. Indeed I feel the Christian Church should not only apologize, but do public penance for the way we have treated people of color, women, adherents of other religions and those we designated heretics, as well as gay and lesbian people.

Life moves on. As the poet James Russell Lowell once put it more than a century ago: "New occasions teach new duties, Time makes ancient good uncouth." I am ready now to claim the victory. I will from now on assume it and live into it. I am unwilling to argue about it or to discuss it as if there are two equally valid, competing positions any longer. The day for that mentality has simply gone forever.

This is my manifesto and my creed. I proclaim it today. I invite others to join me in this public declaration. I believe that such a public outpouring will help cleanse both the church and this nation of its own distorting past. It will restore integrity and honor to both church and state. It will signal that a new day has dawned and we are ready not just to embrace it, but also to rejoice in it and to celebrate it.

- John Shelby Spong (Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark for 21 years before his retirement in 2001)

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