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Out and About, March 2011

Colgate University. Office of LGBTQ Initiatives

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March, 2011

Inside this issue:

- An Update from Jamie Bergeron **1**
- “Normal” Book Review -Melissa Melendez **2**
- “What Does it Mean to be an Ally” -Casey Macaulay **3**
- LGBTQ Research Projects **4**
- Upcoming Events **4**

Out & About

Spring Update

The year 2010 went by in a flash, and 2011 is bound to do the same! Thankfully, we have much to look forward to in the year to come as students seek many new opportunities, plan innovative programs, and spread support for LGBTQ issues across campus.



Students & Staff at Creating Change in Minneapolis, MN

In February, LGBTQ Initiatives sponsored four students to attend the Creating Change conference, hosted by the National Gay and Lesbian

Task Force. Creating Change provides us with access to the most current research on LGBTQ lives, and opportunities to network with academics, activists, and organizers making waves throughout the community. Students will share their experiences on April 12 at the WMST Brown Bag event entitled "Activist Perspectives on National Conferences and Organizations." Check out Executive Director Rea Carey's "State of the Movement" speech on YouTube for more information about what we learned!

LGBTQ Initiatives and Advocates are in the midst of planning for *Queerfest: Celebrating All Identities* on March 25-26. Formerly known as Big Gay Weekend, *Queerfest: Celebrating All Identities* will continue the tradition established in 2006 of a weekend dedicated to providing LGBTQ and Ally students from the New York area an opportunity to network, socialize, and learn with their peers at a two-day extravaganza of speakers, workshops, and social events. Advocates held an open forum and member vote to change the name of the event in an effort to use inclusive language and to represent the range of LGBTQ topics presented by the discussions and workshops. We are thrilled to feature Rev. Irene Monroe to speak on "Alliance Building: Talking and working across our varied identity politics" and celebrity drag queen Pandora Boxx to host the annual Drag Ball!

We look forward to alumni participation in all upcoming events, please visit Colgate's official calendar of events at www.colgate.edu. Go Raiders!

Sincerely, Jamie Bergeron

Check out our updated website!

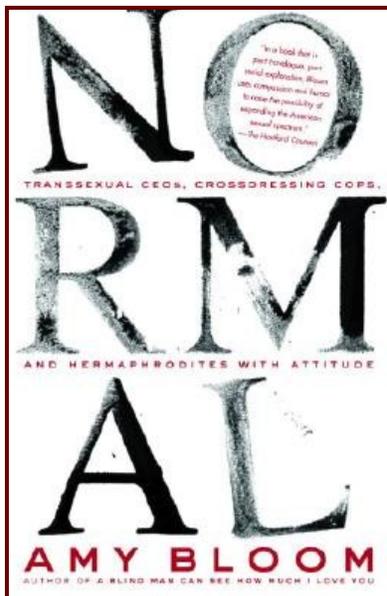
Last semester we undertook a huge project: overhauling the entire LGBTQ website. After months of assembling information, we have compiled a resource with past publications, current programming, updated photos and relevant resources. Visit <http://www.colgate.edu/lgbtq> and let us know what you think!



Normal: Transsexual CEOs, Crossdressing Cops, and Hermaphrodites with Attitude

By: Amy Bloom (2002)

Review by Melissa Meléndez '14



Bloom explores the lives of “people who reveal, or announce, that their gender is variegated rather than monochromatic.” She begins by highlighting the stories of female to male transgender people. The first interview is with Lyle Monelle from Montana who started hormone treatment at the age of 14 and whose parents spent their entire life savings to pay for his transition so he could be happy. She spoke to another transsexual who had considered himself a lesbian before he transitioned. He explained that he did not feel accepted in the lesbian community because there was something more about him than being attracted to females, it was the feeling of being a man himself. Bloom also writes about the commitment and understanding required by the partners and wives of heterosexual men who cross-dress. I loved the way these personal stories helped to make sense of the differences between sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual identity.

One woman who is in a relationship with a FTM transsexual said, “I never had a lesbian relationship and I still haven’t had one. I like guys, I love this one.” Another person in a similar relationship said, “We make love to each other, after all, not to organs.” I think this was my favorite line in the book because it was fascinating to see that both transgender people and their partners understand the difference between sex and gender. However, what really helped me clearly identify and understand differences between sex, gender and sexual identity was when Ira Pauly, a transsexual psychiatrist was interviewed and spoke about Louis Sullivan, a gay FTM transsexual. “Sullivan was rejected by clinics because he not only knew that despite his female anatomy he was male, he knew he was a gay male.” Sullivan reached out to Pauly for help in educating people about the sometimes confusing reality of sex, gender, and sexual identity.

All of this is found in only the first section of Bloom’s book. The other two sections discuss heterosexual men who cross-dress and intersexual individuals. Bloom shadows heterosexual married couples on a cruise and channels what she’s learned about all the people she met through her writing. With the last section, she continues this pattern of getting insight from personal stories. She interviews intersexual people with families and normalizes their lived experience.

I know I am an ally to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and that I will always speak up and fight to create a safe space for people to be themselves. But how could I do that without educating myself about the people within that community? This book inspired me to learn more about sex, gender, sexual identity, transsexuals, bisexuals, legislative cases, cross-dressing, people’s individual experiences, hardships and beauty. I recommend this book to everyone because the language is straight-forward and it is definitely worth reading.

Calling All Alumni!

Are you interested in being featured in the next Out & About newsletter? Email us at [LGBTQ@colgate.edu!](mailto:LGBTQ@colgate.edu)

Queer Corner: What Does it Mean to be an Ally?

By Casey Macaulay '12

Last semester the first Straight Ally Appreciation Week was celebrated on campus. Allies across campus wore buttons of support as well as being a part of the Ally Photo Project. The following article was featured in The Maroon News on that week.

Happy Straight Ally Appreciation week! Confused about how to celebrate? Time to come out of the closet (relatively speaking) and come out as an ally.

I came out as an ally to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community a little over a year ago. I say this because while I've considered myself to be a supporter of the LGBTQ community for most of my life, coming right out and saying it is a different matter. But the true meaning of being an ally is something far more complicated than simply supporting people, friends, family; it is a quest for a broader understanding outside of the accepted norm of what the human experience can be.

At the beginning of my sophomore year, a queer friend of mine shared a story with me that prompted my decision to become a more vocal advocate of LGBTQ issues. They had been participating in diversity leadership training, and in a room of about 150 Colgate students, no one chose to identify themselves as an ally. My friend knew a sizeable amount of people in the room, and was shocked at the fact that people he thought were supporters, chose to remain silent.

We postulated as to why this might have been the case – perhaps people didn't know what being an LGBTQ ally meant, or were afraid of the stigma that might be associated with being identified as one? But the feeling of being alone and not accepted by our student body that my friend experienced resonated with me and motivated me to end my own inaction.

After joining Advocates, Colgate's gay-straight alliance, I soon realized how few "out" allies our campus has; the majority of members were queer. I also learned quickly how little I knew about LGBTQ issues, I was hardly familiarized with what the letters in the acronym stood for. I started to grapple with what being an ally truly meant; could it be as simple as having a gay best friend? Or does it mean staging a hunger strike until the entire campus has gender-neutral bathrooms?

The conclusion I've come to, and I'm far from fully defining what being an ally means to me, is that similar to the LGBTQ community, there is a spectrum for allies as well. Wherever someone may fall between the extremes, the key ingredient to being a true ally is having the willingness to accept, understand and advocate. To accept that not everyone may have the same views as you, attempt to understand where they might be coming from and when necessary advocate for them.

Although my initial decision to become a vocal ally was to show my friends within the rainbow community that I support them, since then I've internalized it and made it part of who I am. I accept that not everybody is going to be as passionate about being an ally as I am, and I understand that sometimes it is difficult to be vocal about it. But it is likely that you, either knowingly or unknowingly, are connected to someone who identifies within the LGBTQ community, and I can only hope that more people take the ally pledge. We should let our friends know that they are not alone in their fight for equality.

Queer Corner is the LGBTQ commentary column in Colgate University's student newspaper: The Maroon News. For more articles search the Maroon News website at <http://www.maroon-news.com/>



Students and Faculty at the Door Burning during Coming Out Week

A NEWSLETTER FOR COLGATE
LGBTQ ALUMNI

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Upcoming Events

Family Dinners: Informal gathering every Tuesday, 6:00-7:00pm Frank Dining Hall

Expanding the Circle Conference: March 3-6, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA

Film Showing "Happy Together": March 4, 7:00pm in Golden Auditorium

WMST Brown Bag Lunch: **"Queer Identity & Religion":** March 8, 11:30am-12:30pm, Center for Women's Studies

Queerfest: Celebrating All Identities: March 25-26

Northeast LGBTQ Conference: April 8-10 at Binghamton University

Lavender Graduation: April 26, 4:00-6:00pm Donovan's Pub

Senior LGBTQ Research Projects

"Struggles for Inclusivity: Observing the Process of Multi-Identity Activism"
by Kendra Opatovsky '11 ~ SOAN Senior Thesis Fall 2010

This study investigated identity and group dynamics in a social justice organization through participant observation and interviews. A review of the literature and theory shows that oftentimes organizations seeking to fight some inequality actually end up replicating inequality in their group dynamics. The principal theoretical framework was intersectionality, which claims that social justice efforts cannot organize around a single identity, as individuals occupy complex positions in the matrix of oppression. Thus, this study asked: how do group members negotiate power and identity in order to create inclusivity and work effectively across difference? The organization selected for the purposes of this research was a group centered on LGBTQ advocacy and fostering queer-straight alliances. Research found that the biggest conflict among group members was the balance between serving the diverse needs of the LGBTQ community, and appealing to the wider community of potential allies. Students of color were largely the voice of an intersectional framework, though these concerns did not always materialize. Ultimately, results confirm Jane Ward's (2008) notion that a sound organizational structure~ such as legitimized power in the hands of marginalized groups ~ is critical for successful "multi-identity activism."

"Evolutions in the Terminological Treatment of Same-Sex Love in China"
by Benjamin Pollok ~ East Asian Language Honors Project

This study explores the terminological treatment of same-sex love throughout China's transition from dynastic society to its present-day form. In order to plot the timeline of Chinese words and phrases associated with same-sex love, the research draws from a number of media sources to select those stories and films which have been most influential in establishing a concept of same-sex love among the 'educated' (and largely urban) Chinese. Whereas the study relies wholly on literary sources to provide metaphorical references to same-sex relationships during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, it draws from both literary and film sources in order to demonstrate changes in terminology throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The study pays particular attention to periods in which popular word choice referencing same-sex love changed from one form to the next, as was the case when tongxinglian (同性恋) was replaced (in informal discussion) by tongzhi (同志) in the 1990s. The study finds the terminology associated with same-sex love to be indicative of the treatment of same-sex relationships in the society contemporary to the referenced work, and uses the evolution of the Chinese language as a means of elucidating the changing attitudes towards same-sex love in China.

ing the changing attitudes towards same-sex love in China.

"Queer State, Sexual Extraction, Regimes of Control: The Project of the Prison as a Nexus for State Replication"
by Eugene Riordan Jr. ~ Peace and Conflict Studies Honors Thesis

This paper examines the project of the prison in relation to state (i.e. governmental and institutional) power, using sexual violation within prisons as a focal point to elucidate larger processes at work. The state is required to legitimize itself, does this by identifying populations which are queer in reference to itself, and thus establishes itself as the anti-queer, norming agent. This article reviews literature and statistics on sexual violence in prison, as well as theories relating to extraction, sexuality, gender, state power, and the body. The United States Federal prison system is used as a case study on governmental response to the occurrence of sexual violence within prison systems, and this case shows that the most important and overlooked relationship is that between the social understanding of what occurs within prisons and the state's role in dictating and shaping the constructed ideas of rape, violation, and power abuse. This paper further argues that the performance of bodies reveals the status and situation of those subjugated, and prison becomes an area for genderplay, forcing the sexuality and gender of prisoners to compete in order to establish a hierarchy in a condition of subjugated equality - equality constructed through the use of subjugation rather than citizenship. This compels the state to control prisoner sexuality as a way to fully command the utilization of prisoner bodies through which to operate its power, as power comes through the violation of the body of the prisoner.