

OUR VOICES

BI-LINES: An Introspective View on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues

by K. Alex Dombronovich

As we quickly approach a hauntingly mysterious millennium, we find ourselves engaged in ongoing political battles that continue to rock this nation with a lion's fierceness. And as civil wars rage on everything from abortion and welfare to the eternal quest for green men on Mars, it sometimes seems that old oppositions have fallen aside in exchange for newer concerns that, surely, deserve more attention.

But appearances are often deceiving.

Interestingly enough, issues surrounding homosexual and bisexual lifestyles are still boiling to the top by way of heated political exchange. The list begins: Homosexual Education in the Classroom,

Same-Sex Marriages, Insurance Benefits for Same-Sex Partners, Adoption, Gays in the Military, and continues to lengthen as homophobic paranooids run into closets of their own seeking shelter, if not answers, in the dark.

But homophobia is nothing new.

Few people within the history of Western society have been more scorned, feared, and stigmatized than homosexuals. Many people seem to think that such behavior is strangely abnormal, ugly, and wrong. What needs to be understood however, is that as with heterosexuality, gender identity and sexual preference of the homosexual is also distinct. Most gay men and lesbian women have no confusion about their

gender identity; they simply prefer partners of the same sex.

Such a distinction from the norm of society however, is not enough to classify homosexuals as abnormal. In 1973 even the American Psychiatric Association officially removed homosexuality from the list of mental disorders, thus endorsing the view that the choice of a sexual partner of the same sex is no more indicative of mental illness than is the choice of a sexual partner of the opposite sex. It is frustrating to see that the bulk of society adheres to the continual transference of a notion that homosexuality is an immoral act. Thus, due to unwar-

ranted hostilities of the larger community, homosexuals must often live double lives,

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"gay" at home and "straight" on the job (another issue that rest assured, will find its way to this column).

I implore individuals to acquire the truth, shift their public attitudes, and allow gay rights laws to fairly make their way to an open, public forum in America. After all, homosexuals are no more alien than any of their heterosexual counterparts. They are who they are

- no different from you. They are college professors and pediatricians, welders and writers, and politicians, entertainers, attorneys and members of the clergy, cops and nurses and mothers-to-be. They are proud - too. They are productive - too. They are indeed, America - too.

Perhaps the most important question of all is no longer why we are the ways we are but rather to merely contend that we are, all of us, wonderfully different from one another. Is that not, after all, our strength and our beauty? So in the spirit of humanness, which lends itself to the theoretic ideal of peaceful coexistence, we should seek not to reproach, but to engage, enlighten...and press on.

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