

ACTIVIST

-anonymous

Why do I do what I do? Because as long as people will turn away from injustice, we must fight. Seeing so many people walk past our booth in memory of Matthew Shepard, and stare, as they continue to walk, really scares me, saddens me, and enrages me. How dare they simply walk by!? How do they NOT care? I want to shout out to them, "Next time, it might be you!" It's such a small step to take really — take a ribbon in memory of a man who was brutally murdered. Can they not care for the thirty seconds it takes to put on a ribbon? We're not asking them to lobby, or become an activist, we are asking them to put on a pin. Every person who walked by, every person who stared and didn't stop, has a hand on the pistol or the rope that killed Matthew Shepard.

If people will not take a pin in memory of a brutally murdered man, to what extreme will society have to degrade to get people to notice and act? How can we expect or hope for more when there is apathy even in the face of such a tragedy? Those of us who care must make-up for all those who do not. I am an activist because there is still injustice, intolerance, and oppression. I am an activist because our work will never be done. And if my whole life I changed only one person's opinion — even as little as making them think about why use they use the word "fag" — it has all been worth it.

I've always wanted to "be someone." I've always wanted to leave this world a better place. In everyday life, I find it hard to be important or to move or affect my world. I love activism because we are making a differ-

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-ence. After years of complacency, I am finally standing-up for who I am and what I believe in. Only through working for a change and fighting injustice, can I learn to respect myself and learn to be proud of who I am.

Strange

By Mala Kaplan

When your nickname is "SuperDyke," you know you're out. Especially if you've shaved a rainbow triangle into your head and wore a rainbow flag for National Coming-Out Day. And for me, I did all of this without a thought. I didn't care about sporting my freshly painted scalp into class, nor wearing my superdyke get-up into Lenoir. But despite the sign pinned to my rainbow cape, which read "Queer Athlete and Proud," the one moment that gave me pause that entire day was walking into Kenan field house to lift. In terms of being vocal, I'm pretty fearless, but the night before, when my hallmate had finished doing my hair, I suddenly worried. I thought, "Oh my gosh, I lift tomorrow!" I wasn't shy or embarrassed. I was scared. But I wasn't even afraid of anything specific. It was this strange, elusive fear, shrouded by the silence that permeates the sports world. In any other situation, I feel that political activism is never out of place, but that morning when I lifted, I felt that my silent visibility didn't belong. The morning passed without incident, but it was impossible not to confront my own discomfort. Despite the open support of my team, there still exists such a persuasive silence in