

LAMBDA

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From the Editor

Before you read further, I ask you to answer the following questions: When did LGBTIQ-identities (yours or someone else's) become acceptable to you? When did you begin to understand the components of identity? Did art have something to do with your understanding?

For me, art, and those who create it, were the primary means by which I began to understand identities outside my own. Identity wasn't something I gave much thought to until high school, when the courts were battling over whether or not scout troops had the right to dismiss gay scout leaders. A scout myself, I had to choose a side. Forming my own opinion eventually forced me to consider gay artists—Allen Ginsberg, Freddy Mercury, and Tennessee Williams—whose work I had profound respect for: to accept their work but not their identity struck me as hypocritical. Although their actions or beliefs sometimes contrasted with my own, I understood their fundamental self to be no better or worse than anyone else's.

My acceptance of these artists' identities acted, to some degree, as an incorporation of a gay identity into my own, without converting me (as many people believe happens) to a "homosexual lifestyle" or causing me to become gay or even bisexual. Instead, I found that incorporating identities into my own was a way to expand my repertoire of empathy and experience. Reading *Giovanni's Room* and watching *Brokeback Mountain* put me behind the eyes of characters I was without actually being, and the art became more potent.

It happened that gay artists moved me to accept identities other than my own; nevertheless, acceptance of bisexual, intersex, lesbian, and transgender identities followed. A larger world has become available to me, and I have art to thank.

It inspires me that for two years now, LAMBDA has been able to put together an art and literature issue. While art led me to become an ally, it has helped many more accept their own identities and eased the coming out process. Still, there is always more to understand, more facets of identity to be explored. Please page through, enjoy, and as you consider the many identities included in these pages, let art and growth happen together within you.

In Unity,

Daniel Cothran

Mission

LAMBDA IS UNC-CHAPEL HILL'S LESBIAN-, GAY-, BISEXUAL-,
TRANSGENDER-, INTERSEX- AND QUEER-AFFIRMING PUBLICATION,
PROVIDING A PROGRESSIVE OUTLET FOR NEWS, ANALYSIS, OPINION AND DIALOGUE.
AS SUCH, WE ARE INHERENTLY COMMITTED TO A FEMINIST, ANTI-RACIST AND
HISTORICALLY CONSCIOUS PERSPECTIVE IN PURSUIT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL PEOPLE.

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*Special thanks to
Robert Wells
for helping with layout*

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LAMBDA is a project of the Gay, Lesbian,
Bisexual, Transgender - Straight Alliance



This publication is funded at least in part by student fees, which were appropriated and dispensed by the Student Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

LAMBDA is printed in Benson, N.C.,
by Benson News Printing.