

The Front Page

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Out of the Closet And into Print —

Author Perry Dean Young on the ethics of disclosure

by Bonita Becker, *Washington Blade*
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The decision to "come out" as a Gay man or Lesbian has traditionally been considered a personal one.

Both the legal concept of privacy and an unwritten "Gay Code" support the notion that no Gay person should ever bring another Gay person out of the closet against his or her will.

Yet Perry Deane Young, in his recently released book, *God's Bullies*, breaks with tradition as he describes an alleged homosexual encounter between a federal employee and Terry Dolan, head of the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC).

An excerpt from the chapter describing the encounter was reprinted by *The Washington Blade* in its October 1 issue. At that time, the paper noted that Dolan has denied that he is homosexual.

Young's book, a refutation of the New Right's practices, details the hypocrisy of the new breed of political activists/religious figures who make up the "moral majority."

In an interview, Young discussed his background and beliefs and explained why, after much soul-searching, he finally decided to include the information about Dolan in his book.

"In a moral crusade [such as that being launched by the Moral Majority]," asked Young, "what could be more important than the truth? When I first began to do research for this book, I used the New Right's definition of who their leaders are." Richard Viguerie, their self-proclaimed founder, said in his book that "Dolan was one of the four rulers of the new social conservatives in America."

Young noted that Dolan is a member of the advisory committee of the National Defeat Legal Services Committee. "While this group was set up to seek the destruction of the entire program of Legal Services, one of its specific complaints was that the group aids homosexuals and homosexual groups. Also, NCPAC's National Conservative Foundation has challenged FCC license of the Pacifica radio station in Washington, and among the complaints listed is that the station broadcasts

programs by and for homosexuals." NCPAC's money has been used to defeat candidates who disagree with these views.

Further investigation by Young, he said, showed that Dolan was also among the leadership of many of the other major New Right organizations, including the Moral Majority, American Conservative Union, and Young Americans for Freedom.

After speaking with Dolan, Young said, "he convinced me that he was closer to [Moral Majority President] Jerry Falwell and [Texas evangelist and major New Right leader] James Robison than anyone. Dolan told me he spoke to them about three or four times per week."

Young includes in his book an example of the direct mailing being sent out under Falwell's signature which shows a "Declaration of War" against a list of "evils," including homosexuality. He also quotes Robison as saying of Homosexuals, "You say, 'Don't you care about these people who have the problem?' Yes, I do. But the cure to cancer is not to ignore it—remove it."

Meanwhile, Young said he knows several people who had been to Gay parties with Dolan, some of whom had been Young's close friends for years. He also said he is a friend of the man with whom Dolan had the alleged sexual encounter.

Yet in his interview with Young, Dolan denied being Gay, and tried to "double-talk" his way around his thoughts on Gay rights. Wrote Young in his book, "Every other sentence, it seemed, Dolan was with me, then, in the next one, he was against me. The clear impression he gave on the one hand was that it was all right to be Gay, with the implication that he was; then he would counter that with an explanation that contradicted the previous impression."

Young described another interview with Dolan—this one conducted by Larry Bush for *The Advocate*. Young said that Bush also told him of attending Gay parties with Dolan.

According to Young, the Bush interview contained "the same kind of confused double-talk" that he had received himself.

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Author Perry Dean Young at home.

Photo by Jerry A. McCoy

An Excerpt:

God's Bullies, by Perry Dean Young. Holt, Rinehart and Winston (383 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017), 1982. Hardcover, 356 pages, \$13.50.

Liberals hear the words of Moral Majority, Inc., and see a monster. I see only a stern old stick man who lived his life without humor or music in solemn service to the Lord Jesus and who was known to me until very recently as my grandfather. He had caused my real grandfather to be sentenced to the chain gang for a very natural act of love that produced my mother. My journey of self-discovery began many years ago with an attempt to understand what sort of man this tyrannical Baptist preacher was who had such a profound influence on my mother's life and in turn on mine. The hatred I felt for the old bastard and everything he stood for was enough to have altered my own life at one time. I had to understand him and "where he was coming from," as we phrased it in the 1960's, or I would never figure out where I had come from and wanted to go.

I was caught between the mind-crippling force of fundamentalism on the one hand and the promise of freedom and life through

learning and education on the other. By facing up to and overcoming the very real hatred I felt for my preacher "granddaddy" and his kind, I was able finally to understand and love those people, my people. When I speak of rednecks and all those the "moral majority" claims to represent, I'm not talking about exotic figures in a foreign land. I mean the people I know best, my family and myself.

I was born on a hilltop farm a few miles north of Asheville, North Carolina. The farm came to mean only hard times and bad feelings for me, but it was picturesque to outsiders who envied our "simple" life-style and wished they had our view of the mountains.

The people in my world thought mainly of clawing their way out, and never mind which of their brothers and sisters—or parents—got stepped on in the process. I'm the youngest of thirteen, a fact that never fails to bring a warm smile from those who automatically envision "one big happy family." Would that the sequence of adjectives were always appropriate. There is no photograph of my several brothers and sisters together; we've never been in the same room or even in the same building at one time, except briefly in

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