Coming up next term (finally):

**Spring into PRIDE...**

- Spoken word poet Lenelle Moise (Tuesday, April 3rd)
- LGBT organizing panel (Thursday, April 5th)
- HIV/AIDS activist, Michael McColly, (Tues., April 10th)
- Q&A house potluck (Friday, April 13th)
- Outfront Lobby Day! (Thursday, April, 19th)
- Artist and activist Keith Lewis (Thursday, April 19th)
- Pride Banquet (Friday, April 20th). Seniors, contact lysc to help organize or host!
- Queer theorist & writer Judith Halberstam (Wed., April 25th)

**OTHER SPRING TERM EVENTS:**

- Test Fest (Saturday, April 14th). Contact paulk to participate!
- Female Orgasm: sex educators invite orgasm aficionados and beginners of all genders to come learn about everything from multiple orgasms to that mysterious G-spot. (Thursday, May 3rd)
- WA House presents: Smitten Kitten Advanced Class (Harnesses, Butt Toys, and a little bit beyond lusts...)

**OUT OF THE BASEMENT**

**GSC Staff**
Kaaren Williamsen-Garvey, GSC Director
Kristen Askeland, OIL Secretary
Emi Upadke, GSC Advisor

**Center Associates**
Lawrence Dykeman, Ben Egerman, Jedda Foreman, Em Harris, Lea Ruth Jermil, Michael Lane, Cindy Lys, Elizabeth Nguyen, Julia Nicol, Katie Paul, Sarojini Rao, James Sanna, Justin Smith, Liz Snider-Lotz, Dominic Vendell, Derek Zimmerman

**CONTACT INFORMATION AND EDITORIAL POLICY**
The Gender and Sexuality Center publishes this newsletter monthly for the campus community and friends. Information in the newsletter is based on the best available information at the time of publication. Items in the newsletter are provided for informational purposes only, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Gender and Sexuality Center or its employees, nor do they represent the views of the students, staff, faculty, or administration of Carleton College.

Please submit articles, calendar entries, letters and news to the Gender and Sexuality Center or via email vendell@carleton.edu. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and space.

Newsletter Team: Dominic Vendell, Lea Ruth Jermil, Katie Paul, Jedda Foreman, Derek Zimmerman

By Lawrence Dykeman '09
By Em Harris ’09

So, here you are in Minnesota. Perhaps you started out here, or perhaps you started out on the other side of the globe. Maybe you’ll just be here for four years, or maybe you’ll never leave. Either way, Minnesota state politics affect you here and now, and in the time it takes you to wait for your order at the snack bar, you can make an impact.

Step One: Know Your Legislators

You have two legislators, a representative and a senator. Here in Northfield, your representative is David Bly and your senator is Thomas Neuville. Let’s get to know them a little bit better…

David Bly, a Democrat, was elected in 2006. Because he was elected recently, he has not yet had the opportunity to vote either way on any GLBT-related bills. Across the board, he holds very liberal positions, but his website makes no mention of any GLBT issues. This makes our efforts even more important, as he needs to know that the GLBT community needs his support. You can call him at (651) 296-7065, email him at rep.david.bly@house.mn, or learn more about him at www.davidbly.com.

Thomas Neuville, a Republican, has been our district’s senator since 1990. He is not a friend to the LGBT community. Last year he authored the bill proposing an anti-marriage amendment to the state constitution. (The bill was defeated by the Judiciary Committee in April.) He has voted anti-GLBT positions on every bill since his election. Despite this track record, we can’t just ignore him. Remind him we’re here by calling (651) 296-1279, by emailing sen.thomas.neuville@senate.mn. His website is www.tomneuville.com.

Bringing GLBTA voices to the local level

By Katie Paul, 08

This year’s “Vagina Monologues” were a tremendous success! Between the Vagina Monologues and the Pink Party, Carleton students raised more than $2700 for the HOPE Center in Faribault. This year the show incorporated more people than ever as the Pink Party participants all brought their dates and sat in the first few rows.

However, one issue still seems to be in dispute and as a producer of the show, I would like to personally give some insight into the motivation behind “naming the vagina”. Naming your vagina may seem silly, frivolous, or unnecessary. However, naming or not naming your vagina is obviously a matter of choice. To use myself as an example, whether or not I make the decision to dub my vagina “Princess of Everything” or simply “Katie’s Vagina” should come from an empowered, proud place.

Hence, our objective in asking the women who participated to name themselves down there, think about your vagina, acknowledge your vagina, feel proud of your vagina, and appreciate what your vagina is and what your vagina is capable of doing. Perhaps some fail to see the significance or the need to do such a silly thing as name the vagina. But perhaps those do not realize how many women have never even looked at their vagina, are ashamed of it, find it ugly. Many of Eve Ensler’s monologues reflect the experiences of women who have finally grown to accept and value their own vagina. These stories are real and they speak so strongly to women because they represent nearly universal themes.

The show, and our purpose in asking women to name a vagina to their vagina, was simply to encourage all of us to take pride in this essential part of who we are as women. When we asked women to explain the names they had chosen their eyes would light up. Talking about our names was a very unifying force within the show. I hope, for all the women involved, that it led us each to a place of recognizing the wonderful power of our own vaginas and what we share as women.

It is not about the name (whether it be “Aunt Sally” or “Ruby” or “Me”), it’s about the idea behind the name, that our vaginas are part of who we are, and we will not allow anyone to make us ashamed, shut us up, violate us or tear us down. And if naming the vagina empowers one person to move towards a place of acceptance and appreciation of the vagina, then that is truly a wonderful thing.
Let's Talk About SEX...

This advice column is produced by an alliance of SW As and GSCAs in order to bring you the most up-to-date and comprehensive information about anything and everything you ever wanted to know about sex. Have sex questions of your own? Thought you’d never be able to have them anonymously—and thoroughly—answered? Well, place your questions in mailbox 1422 or 1143, and we’ll try to have them answered in the next newsletter.

Q: There is a lot of stigma around anal sex, what’s the deal?

A: Anal sex has a lot of negative connotation. Let’s start off by dispelling a few myths.

1) Not all gay men have or want anal sex. In fact, “oral sex and mutual masturbation are more common among gay men in long term relationships” (goaskalice.com).

2) Straight men can like anal sex. Desiring anal sex, being curious about anal sex, or having it, does not mean that you are gay.

3) Women can also desire anal sex.

Basically, we’re trying to tell you that anal sex and male homosexuality are not equivalent. Actually, “25% of heterosexual couples have had anal sex at least once and 10% regularly have anal penetration” (goaskalice.com), and all lesbian sex books talk about anal penetration as well. Desiring anal stimulation is natural, pleasurable, and a common way for people to explore their sexuality. But it doesn’t have to be the way YOU explore your own sexuality. Like every sexual act or desire, there is a huge range of personal preferences and individual differences. The important thing is to acknowledge your own desires, be honest with your partner, and not feel constrained by societal standards or stigmas.

Just like with all sexual acts, there are physiological reasons why anal sex is pleasurable. There is a number of nerve endings in the anus that can feel really good to be touched. Additionally, many men experience pleasurable prostate stimulation during anal penetration, and some men can orgasm through prostate stimulation alone.

If you’re going to try anal penetration, here are a few to ensure a more pleasurable (and safe) experience:

- Use lots of lube. The anus, unlike the vagina, can never produce enough natural lubrication to make anal penetration pleasurable.

- You may want to start with something small, like a finger (clean and with well-trimmed nails), then move up to sex toys (make sure they are designed for anal play, or are soft and flexible) or a penis.

- Having anal sex face down can decrease anal pressure and increase pleasure.

- Go slowly and make sure the internal sphincter muscle is relaxed. Make sure to communicate with your partner about what feels good and when to stop. Pushing through pain can result in fissures and other things that sound bad.

Condoms. Always. You should know this one already.

www.goaskalice.com

Step Two: Know Your Legislation

For the past three years, anti-marriage bills have been proposed and defeated. This year, GLBT-friendly legislators hope to move forward, instead of just trying to avoid sliding backward. There are many proposals that would give GLBT couples more rights. It’s not marriage, but it’s a stepping stone. Here are a few examples:

Hospital visitation and medical decision making bill: This would establish that, should your partner be in the hospital, you cannot be excluded from visiting them, or vice versa.

Wrongful death bill: This would establish that you could file wrongful death actions following the death or injury of your partner.

Crime victim services bill: This would establish that you would be recognized as the next of kin following the death of your partner, making you eligible for crime victim services currently provided to spouses.

Those aren’t very cheery. One more:

Fishing Licenses: This would establish that you and your partner would qualify as a “household” under MN law, getting you a discount.

Step Three: Make Your Voice Heard

Now you have phone numbers and email addresses of your legislators. What should you do with them?

Good: Write an email asking your legislator to support the GLBT community by voting for bills that give us more rights.

Better: Call your legislator! Talking to their staff can make a difference, too, but try to get them on the phone for at least a few minutes.

Awesome: Meet with them. It may take time to get a meeting, but it will be worth the wait. Bring your friends. You can also meet with them at...

LOBBY DAY
Thursday, April 19

Look out for more info next term! Get excited!

New studies support benefit of calcium for women

By Leahruth Jemilo ’08

In the words of Cindy Lyu, “Bone up, Ladies, and not in that hetero way!”

A study conducted at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, Illinois, found that women taking higher-than-recommended doses of calcium and vitamin D supplements had fewer stress fractures than women who were given placebos. 3,700 women (ages 17-35) participated in the study. Half of the women were given higher amounts of calcium and vitamin D over an eight-week training period and the other half were given placebos. The women taking the vitamins had fewer stress fractures than the women taking the placebos.

This find is an important, especially for female athletes involved in sports that involve a high risk for getting a stress fracture such as cross country and track. It’s no secret that calcium is vital for a healthy body. But many women don’t realize the importance of getting enough calcium at an early age when bones are still growing and getting stronger. The Mayo Health Clinic reports that four times as many women are affected by osteoporosis than men. Starting at the age of thirty women begin to lose bone mass, which is why it is vital that at an early age women pay attention to their calcium intake.

Another benefit of a diet rich in calcium is its benefits for weight loss. A two-year study at Purdue University involving 54 women between the ages of 18-31 found that women who had at least 780 milligrams of calcium daily had either no increase in body fat or lost body fat over a two-year period. The women in the study who had less than 780 milligrams a day gained weight during the two year period. The report stated that, “both exercisers and couch potatoes seemed to benefit.”

Other studies have found that after the age of fifty any increases in the intake of Calcium or Vitamin D fail to have a substantial effect on bone density. This makes it even more important for young women to be getting the Calcium they need now, before it’s too late to make a difference.

As women enter into adulthood, the recommended amount of daily Calcium intake ranges from about 1200-1500 milligrams. Why risk a broken bone at an old age when it will take much longer to recover? Start increasing your Calcium and Vitamin D intake now and your body will thank you later!

Resources:
Chicago Sun-Times. February 15, 2007
“Calcium, vitamin D cut stress fractures in active young women:study”
Discovery Health “Women’s Health”
http://health.discovery.com/centers/women/calcium/calcium.html

Happy International Women’s Day

“A Gay in the Life” will return when Derek finishes his comps. Hey Derek, congratulations!

GSC Book Review

Come check out the GSC library to find this book and others. Lots of others.

By Sarojini Rao ’09

Published in 1987, Lesbian Passion addresses lesbians on a wide range of emotional, physical and social issues. It’s supposed to be about how lesbians can develop and maintain self confidence in a homophobic world. It’s a lot more.

From ‘Healing the Child Within’ to ‘The Lesbian Date’, from celibacy to sex toys, this book provides an intriguing perspective on what it meant to be an “out” lesbian in the United States in the 1980s. Some material is clearly dated, but it’s humorous to imagine how outré this must have been way back then. Like spending time looking at your vagina!

Many topics are still relevant today, such as body image issues, recovery from sexual abuse and incest, and the importance of friendships in keeping ourselves sane.

Well, I don’t know if I’m surprised by that. These themes do tend to cut across barriers of space and time! While some parts get pretty “touchy feely” (think “heal your inner child”), the tone of the narrative is usually light with some hilarious lines to watch out for. Don’t be surprised if you pick it up and find yourself laughing and nodding at the things she says; it’s that kind of book.

“You’re going to have a child? I didn’t know lesbians could get pregnant.”
“Yes, I still have a uterus. It’s amazing. They didn’t take it from me at the border.”

“Revolutionary feminism embraces men who are able to change, who are capable of responding mutually in a subject-to-subject encounter where desire and fulfillment are in no way linked to coercive subjugation.”
— bell hooks

Women’s Moments in History

December 18, 1979: The UN’s Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) opens for signature; the US is the only developed nation that has not signed.

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