



Heart Beat

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays



PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Issue 64 July-August 2004

Fringe

By Bekah Cardwell

My original idea for this article was to write about politics. I have kept the title of my original article idea but the subject is a little different. I have been thinking greatly about the concept of the fringe of our societies. In recent weeks we have been shown some barbaric images of what is going on far away from ourselves, our cozy selves. I have been deeply disturbed and I would suggest our collective conscience is also deeply disturbed by these images.

Barbaric behaviors toward others is easy given the idea that "they" are different. So who are "they?"

I had the pleasure of visiting my mother for Mothers Day. My mom was born in 1933; we have seen two different worlds and we think in much different fashions. My mom is a fundamentalist Christian. I will admit that while growing up I thought that my mother's wisdom was all that I needed. During this visit my mom and I engaged in a discussion about capitalism and socialism. We agreed that Jesus was not a Capitalist based on his reaction to the salesman that lined the holy temple. Jesus was angered by the people turning the temple of worship into a market place for wealth seekers. We then agreed that according to the story of Ananias and Sapphira early Christianity was a primitive form of socialism. Early

Christianity considered that each of us are to take care of the other, that property was everyone's and no one's at once. There was no need to hold power over anyone. The conversation turned to the example of Christ. I said that his example is hard to find in this world of ours, where most things that the Christ taught are blasphemed, turned inside out and embraced as a bizarre religious truth. (We see that today in our science of economics, the capitalist defender.)

Our semi-educated conversation took a drastic and devastating twist when my mom said that blacks, homosexuals and Indians (Native Americans) are rising up and causing trouble and chaos. She said that we are being used as instruments of the devil. Subtle racism and bigotry indeed. Suddenly, I became "them." I then asked her who we (I'm gay and part Native American) are rising up against. She had no answer for that. Upon seeking equality we have become "them." We have become different because we have the intelligence to understand oppression, to see it used subtly and without regard. One would think that by this conversation I, the queer and part native, am out of touch, that I am the fringe of society.

Of course I gave thought to this

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▼ SUNDAY, JULY 11, 2-4:30 PM

Domestic violence 201

Max Walsh from the Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse will present a program on domestic violence and talk about a new program they have started called FAR Out (Friends Are Reaching Out), which she describes as "a proactive look at how do we/can we talk with our friends and family about the relationships in our life."

▼ SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, 1-5 PM

Once again it's time for our annual picnic. It's potluck. Bring food to share and drinks. The board will provide some essentials and a big cake for dessert. You're more than welcome to invite friends and relatives.

We'll be in the shelter at the Rose Garden in Priest Point Park. To get there from I-5, take the "City Center/ Port of Olympia" exit. That will put you on Plum St. Plum crosses 4th Avenue and then State Avenue. At State it changes to East Bay Drive. Follow East Bay along the water and watch for signs to the park on your right. Note that we start an hour earlier than our regular meeting time.

The PFLAG Mission

To promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends through:

- ▼ support, to cope with an adverse society;
- ▼ education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and
- ▼ advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

A special thank you

We offer a hearty thank you to our members who have unselfishly given their time and effort to PFLAG. Especially those who have worked on the Our House project and spoken to school groups, and those who helped set up and run our tables at Super Saturday and Pride. We also want to thank those who have brought snacks for our meetings. You are all very special to PFLAG-Olympia.



PFLAG

Olympia, Washington

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

MEETS at 2PM on the second Sunday of each month at First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE, Olympia. It is handicap-accessible.

DIRECTIONS: From Sylvester Park on Capitol Way and Legion Way, go 12 blocks east on Legion Way to Boundary Street. Turn left around the church. Park in the lot at 5th Avenue and Boundary and enter through the glass doors.

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Letters, articles and requests for literature are welcome.

Mailing address:

PO Box 12732; Olympia, WA 98508-2732

For information or to discuss personal matters with an understanding parent and experienced PFLAG member, CALL the PFLAG-Olympia HELPLINE:

(360) 866-0511

Email: info@pflag-olympia.org
Website: <http://www.pflag-olympia.org>

Fringe

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out-of-touch notion that my mom brought up. I realized that I sit in the do-nothing-chair of human kind, my ass is glued to it. I watch in horror as the peoples of this world judge, condemn, hate and kill one another. I feel that my Mother's soul is so easily white washed with a pseudo faith that seems to give acceptance to violence, a faith that truly has been turned on its head and stripped of reason. A faith that once taught love and selflessness, that cared about the poor and was itself poor. Those of us who are quite common in our communities become the other, the great sinner who has no redemption. These same movements encourage accumulated wealth and greed, the very thing that Jesus said would keep one out of "heaven." The wealthy enjoy power and with this power they become more wealthy. They control governments which in turn control the people. These governments then start illegal wars that lead to barbaric behaviors toward those that are different from the government that waged the war.

We are convinced that if we are black, homosexual, Native, Wiccan, Muslim, poor, unemployed, not able bodied, etc. that we are different, that we are the fringe. According to definition, fringe is something marginal, secondary, or extreme in relation to something else. My conclusion is that I am not part of the fringe. The fringe is ruled by a minority of fundamentalist, ideological nitwits (whom my mom votes for) that need to force us to believe that we are the "other," the "them." I will admit, the tactic is good, it keeps us busy worrying about how to be something that we already are.

I love my mom. I feel lucky to have the love that she gives. We just don't agree on how we are to be. What my mom considers fringe is me. We both become each other's idea of fringe. The ideology that I support is one that says we all have a right to exist and flourish. It seems to me that the majority of human kind feels the same way.

"A 'normal' person is the sort of person that might be designed by a committee. You know, each person puts in a pretty color and it comes out gray." — Alan Sherman

NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Please check the membership types you prefer:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Educator \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student/Low Income \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate \$500 |

New Renewal

Active (attend when I can) or Supporting (seldom attend)

Membership \$ _____

Add this amount as my tax-exempt gift \$ _____

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AND GIFT \$ _____

I want Olympia's bi-monthly newsletter *HeartBeat* (which is mailed in an envelope with no identified return address).

I want the national quarterly *PFLAGpole* newspaper (which is not mailed in an envelope).

DATE: _____ PHONE: _____

Signed _____

PRINT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

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PFLAG is a tax-exempt non-profit 501(c)(3) organization not affiliated with any political or religious institution.

HeartBeat

is a free publication of the PFLAG chapter in Olympia, Washington, published six times a year. The editors are Alec & Gabi Clayton.

Unsolicited articles are welcome and are due by the 15th of even-numbered months. The editors reserve the right to reject or edit material.

The deadline for the next issue is 6/15/2004

Mail submissions to:

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Or email to: newsletter@pflag-olympia.org