

## What I Did on My Ten-Year Vacation

by *María Christina Blanco*

I recently attended a BBWN brunch – the first bi community event (except for Pride) that I'd been to in nearly a decade – and was warmly welcomed by long time and new members alike. After playing tug-of-war with our hostesses' new baby over the latest issue of *Bi Women*, I read the 25th anniversary edition with great interest. When Robyn asked me to write on "Children in Our Lives," I remembered the last time I was published in *Bi Women*, in 2000, and I thought about how much things change and how much they stay the same.

A headline in that issue announced the legalization of same-sex marriage in the Netherlands, the first anywhere in the world. Now, equal marriage rights in our own state, Massachusetts is yesterday's news, while tomorrow's big stories will be about the fight for marriage equality in states that have overturned or banned it in November: California, Florida, and Arizona. Back then, I was among those of us in the community who identified as multiracial or multi-cultural and submitted articles reflecting on our realities for the theme "Bicultural, Biracial, Bisexual." And as I predicted in my piece, entitled "Complex Lives," here I am in 2008, still wrestling to integrate and validate all the aspects of my identity on a daily basis, LOL.

A picture ran with my article of me holding my infant daughter in my arms. It was taken by my daughter's father, whom I lived with at the time, and would later marry and eventually divorce, after going through drama that rivals that on my favorite TV show, *Ugly Betty*! In addition to being a new mom, I became a family caregiver after he sustained a brain injury, I saw him through an immigration appeal, attended college while working and with a toddler in tow, I moved nine times in the first six years of my daughter's life (interspersed with stints of couch-surfing), and I struggled to keep my sanity through betrayal in my relationship and the trials of having a loved one with addiction issues. Meanwhile, I became a community health worker, moved along slowly toward a college degree that I hoped would lead me into the public health field, and raised my daughter essentially as a single mother. Today, I am very proud of my strong, smart, healthy, loving almost – (gasp!) – nine year old. I am blessed to own my own home now. I hope to finish college soon, and start my own business.

For the better part of this decade, I have been MIA in the bi community. But I never stopped affirming (in ways large and small) the integrity and beauty of the diversity of human love, relationships, and sexual expression. During stretches where my mental health suffered under the strain of all the drama, I have felt MIA in my own life – there have been times when I've questioned whether I even had a sexuality at all, let alone a sexual orientation! But I never stopped honoring the fluidity of my own attractions, responses, cultural ties, and relationship history. Coming back to BBWN feels like coming full circle. I realized that day at the brunch – as I struggled to explain my seemingly on-again/off-again relation-

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## Kids Keep me Closeted

by *Lacey Louwagie*

I heard from a very credible source (OK, it was actually an episode of *Queer as Folk*) that our sexual orientation is determined by the time we are six years old. This makes me think of receiving my sex education from my older sister when I was five, complete with a definition of the word gay. That education also included a peek at some naughty calendars: one with erotic pictures of women, and another with erotic pictures of men. When I was alone, I'd sneak peeks at the calendars, equally fascinated by both of them. I didn't have the words for my fascination, and I wasn't old enough to judge my curiosity as perverse. It simply was what it was.

Now that I'm an adult, kids have become an important part of my life. I'm godmother to twin girls whom I adore. They just turned seven. They seem so young that it's hard for me to believe they could possibly be old enough to know anything about sex, let alone have a definitive sexual orientation. Yet, my own memories paint a different picture of childhood than the one I feel comfortable projecting onto kids as an adult. When my sister and I cleaned out our old toy room a couple years ago, one of my goddaughters eagerly adopted all the female Barbie dolls, but refused to touch the males with a ten-foot pole—even after much urging from her mother. As someone who sees so much of the world through a queer lens, I couldn't help but wonder.

Although I've always been bisexual, I came out late in life – at the age of twenty-two – after I'd been living alone in a new city for an entire year. Having no friends or family around projecting their expectation of straightness upon me was key to my ability to accept who I really was. One of the benefits of coming out so late in life was that I had the confidence – and the security, since I was no longer dependent upon parents or other adults – to be out in most areas of my life. I came out to my closest friends a month after coming out to myself; I was out in my workplace, to my sisters, and to my mother within a year. I have no qualms about checking "bisexual" on dating and social networking sites – in fact, I won't use dating sites that don't allow me to check bisexual – or letting my sexual orientation slip into conversation with new people I meet.

*Kids continues on page 5*



Bisexuals having our quiche and eating it too at the October brunch!

## HONOR ROLL

Debbie Block-Schwen  
Carla Imperial  
Megan Jewett  
Deb Morley  
Ellyn Ruthstrom  
Lisa  
Lisa Silveria  
Gail Zacharias  
Robyn Ochs  
Anne Stanback  
and  
everyone who  
wrote for this  
issue.

And many more  
fabulous people!  
You know who  
you are!

Bi Women is  
published quarterly.

Editor:  
**Robyn Ochs**  
Arts & Culture  
Editor:  
**Lisa Silveria**  
Calendar Editor:  
**Ellyn Ruthstrom**

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## From your editor

**I** am so swamped between work, school, and parenting that I never got around to writing something. I really did want to – but life gets away from me sometimes. —Nora

I received several emails similar to this from women who had intended to write something. Several others, when asked to write, responded, "Great topic, but I'm just too busy. I do intend to find time to read the newsletter though!"

Since the theme of this issue is "Children in Our Lives," I wasn't too surprised.

But luckily several women were able to find time to write. And what a packed issue this is! In addition to several excellent essays on this issue's theme, we offer various other features, including a recap of the November elections; a report from the APA conference; and an interview with Myriam Brito, a leader in the Mexican bi movement.

Remember: this is your forum. Please write in. Tell us about your life. Share your stories. We welcome poetry; short fiction; book, film, art and performance reviews; interviews; letters to the editor; artwork, and more. Our email address is [biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com).

Finally, if you can afford to help out, we could use your financial support. We send newsletters to community centers, youth and college groups. We give out newsletters at events. We have a policy of sending *Bi Women* to any woman who wants it, regardless of her ability to pay. And it costs quite a bit to do all of this. You can support bi visibility by sending us a donation, or simply by becoming a paid subscriber.

Bi for now,  
Robyn



October brunch at Carla & Megan's

## Next in Bi Women

The Bi Women theme for  
upcoming issues:

**Mar/Apr/May: ALLIES**

What does it mean to be an ally?  
How can gay/lesbian/bi/trans people  
support one other? Are allies impor-  
tant to you? Do you have any heart-  
warming stories to tell about non-bi  
people standing up for bi people, or  
vice versa?

**Deadline: February 10, 2009**

Upcoming themes will include:

The Youth Issue; Trans/Gender; Fantasy;  
Choice; Out at Work; and more.

*Send your suggestions for future topics to  
[biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com)*

## Please Submit to Bi Women!

Send articles, calendar entries,  
letters, black-and-white art, news,  
and views to:

**Bi Women**

P.O. Box 301727

Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

or via e-mail to  
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published, please tell us.

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newsletter are copyrighted by the  
authors and artists.

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay and transgender people within the larger society.

## Bis Around the World: Myriam Brito, Mexico City

by Robyn Ochs

Myriam, 35, was born and raised in Mexico City, where she has lived her entire life. Her life partner is a “wonderful” man with whom she has been involved since she was fifteen; they married six years ago. They have no human children, but they do have canine ones: Coco, a Schnauzer, and Camila, a Cocker Spaniel. Myriam loves reading, especially poetry, playing with her dogs, spending time with her husband, drinking beer with her friends, and sleeping. She also enjoys studying: she completed a bachelors degree in sociology and a masters in political science, focusing on political theory, feminist theory, gender and sexual diversity. She works as a researcher in a center for gender studies. I interviewed Myriam for *Bi Women*:

RO: Please tell us your coming out story.

MB: When I was 24 or 25, I attended a workshop on body emotions and there I recognized that in addition to men, I was attracted to women. When I looked at women, I not only “admired” how they were dressed or how they looked; they evoked in me something more: erotic desire. At the time, I was at university studying sociology, and I had begun to explore feminism. I was in a group of friends who got together to read about feminism and share our experiences. At one of these meetings, I shared mine. They accepted and respected me. For this reason, coming out wasn’t hard for me. On the contrary, I enjoyed it a great deal! By that time, I already knew that I was not a “normal” person.” I studied sociology, became a feminist, came out, slept with whom I pleased. It wasn’t a big deal, nothing strange or foreign. On the contrary, I came out as bisexual with great passion.

RO: When did you first become a bisexual activist, and what caused you to get involved?

MB: After coming out as bisexual, I set out to find a bisexual group. I knew perfectly well that I wasn’t a lesbian because I continued to be attracted to men, and so I wasn’t interested in joining a lesbian group. By that time, I knew that every year there was a “lesbian-gay” pride march in my city, and I decided to attend. There I found a group called Caracol: Mixed Bisexual Group. They handed me a flyer with information about their meetings and I began to go to them. Even though this group didn’t last long, I met Angélica Ramírez and Natalia



Anaya, who later founded another group called Sentido Bisexual (Bisexual Feeling) in 1998. I joined this group and was able to share my experiences, ideas and yearnings, and with this group I joined a march for the first time. It was an amazing experience! I felt happy and proud to say that I was bisexual.

This group dissolved in 2000. I missed it a great deal and knew, as did many others, that we needed a bi group, so three years later, together with Natalia and two other women, we founded Opción Bisexual (Bisexual Option) and I have been involved in this group ever since. It was very important thing to us that there be a space where we could discuss bisexuality, and where nobody would question our bisexuality or challenge our existence.

We meet the first Sunday of each month. We also have a website, offer workshops, discussions, meetings and get involved in political issues that we consider important to bisexuality, together with other LGTTTI (lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual and intersex) groups.

RO: Are there other resources available to bisexuals in Mexico and in Mexico City?

MB: Unfortunately, not many. There is almost no information about bisexuality in Spanish, and what there is in English is hard to obtain. Obviously, there is the Internet, and thankfully, we know about bisexuality in other parts of the world. There are almost no groups where people get together in person. There is only Opción Bi, and there are some virtual groups online. Nor are there spaces like cafés or bars for bisexuals. Bisexuality here, like in most of the world, continues to be invisible and subject

to a great deal of prejudice.

In Opción Bi, we try to have activities about and for bisexuals (and also for those interested in the subject, even if they aren’t bi. One change we have seen is that some LGTTTI events now include bisexuality, and we are sometimes invited to participate in them.

RO: What value, if any, do you see in international activism, in keeping in touch with bi activists in other countries? Do you think the movement in Mexico City was inspired/influenced by movements in other countries? Have you – to your knowledge – inspired activists in other countries?

MB: I consider international activism and contact with activists from other countries extremely important. Here in Mexico, we are most familiar with the bi movement in the USA, including the work of Fritz Klein, and your own activism. We have read some of your essays in books that we have been able to get hold of here in Mexico City.

RO: Why do you continue to participate in bi activism? What keeps you involved?

MB: Being a bisexual activist has helped me to grow as an individual, and has taught me about myself, the times in which I live, my society and the world. For me, it is very important to work toward changing and improving my society. I consider the fight for the rights of bisexuals and the rest of LGTTTI community essential, and the movement that I have chosen is that we call here sexual and gender diversity.

It certainly hasn’t been easy, above all because of the prejudice and discrimination that exists against bisexuals, not only from the “heterosexual world,” but also from gays and lesbians. In Opción Bi, we realize that in addition to sensitizing and educating the outside world, we first have to do the internal work with lesbians and gays. The problem is very serious, because bisexuals, along with trans folks, are the rejects among rejects, that is to say, those who suffer discrimination (lesbians and gays) discriminate

Myriam Brito, continues on next page



**Myriam Brito**, *continued from page 3*

against bis and trans folks. It is for this reason, at least here in Mexico City, that Opción Bi allies itself with transsexuals, transgender people and transvestites, and works together with them whenever possible. It seems to me that we are closer to the trans communities than to lesbian and gay ones.

And then there's the larger society. In Mexico there have been cultural changes, but not enough, our society continues to be profoundly conservative with respect to everything that has to do with sexuality, the body and gender, especially among rural populations. In the cities, people are more exposed to sexual and gender diversity, but people are still uncomfortable with this: they would prefer we didn't exist. A large part of

Mexican society is uncomfortable with our LGBTTTI diversity. There is a lot of work to be done and I want to be part of it. Besides, I have to confess that I have a great passion for activism, and I I am able to combine it a bit with my work as a feminist researcher.

**RESOURCES:**

México:

Grupo Opción Bisexual [www.opcionbi.com](http://www.opcionbi.com)  
[opcionbi@yahoo.com](mailto:opcionbi@yahoo.com)

Colombia:

Sentido Bisexual [sentidobisexual@gmail.com](mailto:sentidobisexual@gmail.com)

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## Election Day Whiplash

by *Ellyn Ruthstrom*

If you are a queer citizen, the day after Election Day 2008 was certainly one of both elation and consternation. "Yes, We Did!" rang out across the land as we celebrated a new hope for change in the White House. But as word spread that there were setbacks in certain states on anti-GLBT initiatives, the election high was tempered with the reality that our struggle continues regardless of who moves into 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

As always, you must start with the good news. Openly bisexual Rebecca Kaplan won her bid for a place on the Oakland, California City Council. Kaplan has ties to Massachusetts, as she went to MIT and back in 1991 conceived the second course on bisexuality in the U.S. (which BiWomen editor Robyn Ochs taught!) Small bi world, eh?

Jared Polis, a Democrat from Colorado, became the third openly gay member of the U.S. House of Representatives, joining Barney Frank (D-MA) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). Benjamin Cruz was elected as the first openly gay Senator at Large from Guam and out lesbian Kate Brown became Oregon's Secretary of State, winning 59 percent of the vote. Pacific northwesterners can be proud of also electing the first openly gay mayor in Portland, Sam Adams.

Jason Bartlett's reelection to the Connecticut House is important to note because he came out since his first election and the voters were obviously happy to return him to the State House. He is also one of very few openly gay African American legislators around the country.

John Perez became the first openly gay person of color elected to the California State Assembly, winning with about 85 percent of the vote.

In 2004, Lupe Valdez became the first woman, and the first Latina, and the first out lesbian ever elected as Sheriff in Dallas County, Texas. Despite being targeted by the Republicans as a post they were determined to regain, Valdez was re-elected by her community in November.

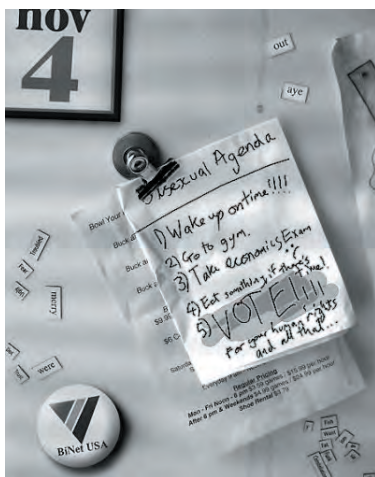
Now for the bad news. I'm sure by now you are aware that Proposition 8 passed in California, which again made it illegal for same-sex couples to marry in that state. There will be court cases to challenge the results, but though new nuptials will be prevented, it looks like the same-sex couples that did marry may retain that status. Arizona and Florida also passed anti-marriage equality propositions, with Florida going a step farther by restricting partner recognition to unmarried straight couples as well. Arkansas voted by a 57-43 margin voted to ban all unmarried cohabiting couples (straight or same-sex) from adopting or serving as foster parents.

There is great sadness when those in our communities continue to see us and our families as deserving of less than equal status and protection. In analyzing the failure to vote down Proposition 8 in California, some say that there was complacency about it, an assumption that other people would get out and vote against it. From looking at the election results, 11 million Californians cast a vote in the presidential election, 62 percent for Obama. Only 10 million cast a vote on Proposition 8. If those one million voters were motivated enough to get to the polls to vote for a progressive candidate, then it was a missed opportunity to not have gotten them to also see the importance of voting on Proposition 8. It was a huge loss for California, but we can always learn from a political loss to be better prepared in the future.

To end on a high note, there was good news from my home state of Connecticut. The voters soundly rejected the idea of holding a Constitutional Convention that could challenge the court decision granting marriage equality earlier this year, and the first marriage licenses were issued on November 12th. New England is a trailblazing region on this issue, with Massachusetts and Connecticut granting state marriage rights, and Vermont and New Hampshire granting civil unions to same-sex couples. Rhode Island has been working hard on the issue and there may be some movement on it in 2009. Maine currently has a ban on same-sex marriage, but local activists are working behind the scenes to work for future change.

Social change takes time and effort. Speaking out, knocking on doors, donating, talking to neighbors and friends, voting, writing letters, calling our legislators, and taking to the streets are all part of the long process of shifting opinions in a democracy. We are the ones that make it happen. And we are the ones that will witness even more great change in our lifetimes. The sea change has already begun; let's keep it moving.

*[Ellyn is a former editor of Bi Women.]*



## Learning from BobBI

**BobBI Keppel is a long-time bi activist and BBWN member who lives in Maine. She was the subject of a homily given by Rev. Elaine Bomford at the First Unitarian Universalist Society in Burlington, VT. With BobBI and of Rev. Bomford's permission, we share Rev. Bomford's words with you:**

Twenty-one years ago this Society celebrated the first Coming Out service here in Burlington. For those of you who have been here a long time, this celebration has become part of the familiar rhythm of congregational life. For me, and perhaps for others who are new to the congregation, this is the first Coming Out service I have ever been to. So it seems to me to be an extraordinary event. The radical blessedness of this morning's service is fully in my awareness. The blessings of being who we are, in all our human diversity, and the blessedness of being together in mutual respect and appreciation, are epitomized in this gathering. How much richer, more interesting, and more beautiful life would be if all places were free of the ignorance which so often smothers the blossoming of the human spirit.

I'd like to share with you a story from my own life about "Coming Out" – it's a story I'm still celebrating because I'm still learning from it. Several summers ago, a woman who has since become my close friend, BobBI Keppel, and I sat down together because she said she had something to tell me. I already knew I liked BobBI – I liked her sparkling eyes and glorious grin. I enjoyed her humor, and the fascinating stories she told of her long life and many adventures, her commitment to the struggle for social justice, her rich knowledge of folk music and musicians, the way she played the autoharp and sang in a warbly true voice. I liked the way she rolled her eyes when some unfortunate soul said something off the wall. I appreciated the way she really listened, and the way she didn't seem at all afraid to speak up.

But when we sat down for the conversation she had requested we have together, she was hesitant to speak. Her eyes sparkled, not with characteristic mischief, but with tears.

"I want to tell you something, and I hope you will still want to be my friend after I've told you," she said. I was already well on the way to opening my heart to her as a dear friend. I couldn't imagine what might give her such qualms. But I just said "OK – what is it?"

She told me about her life as a wife and mother, and how, 25 years ago, when she was about the age I am now, she realized she is bisexual.

I sighed with relief, because for me, it was a no-brainer. "Of course I still care for you!" I

said. "It doesn't matter to me at all! I like you for who you are – whether you are straight, or lesbian, or bi – it doesn't make any difference to me."

"Ah - but it DOES make a difference to me," she said. "Because being bi is an essential part of who I am."

She didn't want me to care about her regardless of her sexual identity. She wanted me to care about her as a person with the sexual identity of being bisexual. When she said this, a light went on for me. I was humbled, because I realized how insensitive my way of being "accepting" had been before she opened my eyes. It was as if my ability to appreciate the different colors of flowers in a garden had been heightened. Of course it matters whether the flowers are golden, or delicate pink, deep red, vivid orange. Of course it matters whether a person is bisexual, lesbian, gay, transgender, queer or straight. And further, my friend opened my eyes to the fact that there are as many shades of sexuality as there are individuals – each one of us is unique. Because her essential nature as a bisexual woman matters, and she made me see that, my capacity to appreciate beauty in a multitude of expressions has been enhanced.

She has taught me much since that conversation when she "came out" to me and I "came out" of my bland and easy acceptance of sexual diversity. Some of what I have learned has been about what it means to be, as she puts it, a bi woman who is "gray-haired and above suspicion." Most of what I have learned through our friendship is what it means to be fully human – like all true friendships, we discover who we are as we see ourselves reflected back in each other's eyes – reflected back a little better than we are, often, so we have room to grow in spirit.

But I will never forget how her eyes looked when she first disclosed her bisexuality, or the passion in her voice when she said, "Oh Yes, it DOES matter." She did not want mere acceptance. She wanted celebration – and my life has been made richer because of her insistence.

As we observe "Coming Out" Sunday today, I find myself wondering about the difference between acceptance and celebration as it plays out in the life of this congregation. Does this service signify that it doesn't matter what your sexual orientation is, you are loved and respected here? This is an important and healthy affirmation, I believe. Too often in wider society we are confronted with situations where sexual identity should NOT matter, but it does. It shouldn't matter when it comes to weighing the essential worth and dignity of a person; this is and should be a "no-brainer." We stand together as one people when we struggle against oppression. This Society is a beacon of hope and solidarity in the struggle for justice and equality.

*Kids, continued from page 1*

Yet, when it comes to kids, my internal homophobia rears its ugly head. My goddaughters' mother doesn't know I'm bisexual (although I think most of my extended family could guess that I'm not the straightest stick on the tree if they gave it a little thought). I haven't come out to her, even though she's one of the most important women in my life, because I have a nagging fear that she wouldn't trust me with her daughters if she knew. Although I worked with kids as part of my job for six years, I was never out to them. I wasn't afraid of rejection from them; in fact, we worked very hard to create a space where homophobia of any type was not tolerated. Yet, that wasn't enough to wash away my own internal homophobia. I couldn't bear the thought of parents taking their daughters out of the program if they knew I was bisexual.

When I was first coming out, I read *Free Your Mind* by Ellen Bass and Kate Kaufman, paying special attention to the chapters about working with kids. Although I was on track for the most part – I didn't allow homophobic jokes, didn't shy away from the subject of sexual orientation, proactively created a GLBTQ safe space – I didn't rise to the challenge of one of the most important parts of creating a safe space for GLBTQ youth.

*Kids, continued on page 9*

However, within the safety of the loving relationships and mutual respect which characterize this congregation, we may venture to do more than accept one another. There are beautifully diverse ways of being and qualities of energy that are grounded in our sexual natures. How do we acknowledge that sexual orientation does matter, and should matter? How might we more fully appreciate all the colors in the beautiful garden that grows when the human spirit is encouraged to blossom?

May we look to each other for the answers, as we each come out, and come into our own. I pray each one of us will be blessed with courage gained from the sure and certain knowledge that we are loved, this day and always. AMEN

*[Elaine Bomford is a UU minister who has served congregations in NH, MA, and presently, Burlington, VT. She's also a singer and conductor, mother, bird lover, gardener, and on occasion rescues senior canines.]*

## What I Did, *continued from p. 1*

ship to the organized bi community – that existing in a state in which your personal life is suffocated by unresolved issues can make it impossible to stay engaged with formal organizations, networks, and activism that center around sexuality and relationships. But that doesn't mean that people aren't actively contributing to sexual and gender justice and liberation in their own ways during these stages of life.

Becoming a parent and dealing with life's challenges has definitely broadened my conception of activism and of my own identity. You have a new role in your community that brings you into contact with schools, other parents, youth organizations, and the healthcare system. You have new perspectives and priorities. Most of all, you have a chance to shape a new person who will grow up to live life on their own terms – as a friend, a lover, a partner, a neighbor, a consumer, a voter, a leader. The saying goes, "We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children." In the same way, I knew instinctively when I had my daughter that, like all human beings, she was meant to contribute important things to the world; this beautiful gift was on loan to me for a limited time, so I'd better do the best I could!

I've taught her about pride in your own identity and respect and appreciation for others. This applies to race and religion, which are easy concepts for her to understand, as well as to gender expression and sexual orientation. I happen to have a lot of transgender and gender-queer people in my life, and my circle is pretty mixed in terms of people with same- or opposite-sex partners, or both. I normalize this for her in the language I use and the openness I model. I also show her that I value and belong to queer communities as well as mainstream ones: in the music we listen to, the performances we see, the events we go to. I play Ani Difranco along with Lila Downs. We see Zili Misik at the Keshet Purim Party, and Mariachi Veritas at the Día de los Muertos Fiesta. The Boston Pride parade is an annual event we go to just like the Jamaica Plain World's Fair. I don't have to accept segregation or feel ghettoized in one community or the other. This is a way I pass on my values on without preaching; the same way I demonstrate any other value, such as environmentalism, in that recycling and composting are just things we do automatically in our house.

Of course, I've also taught my daughter about standing up for ourselves and our rights. I don't gloss over the reality that

people have conflicting ideas and beliefs. That doesn't mean we demonize others; but it does mean we have to speak up for ourselves. I show and explain to her all the ways we have power in our lives: who I vote for and vote against, what I buy and don't buy, what the newspaper says and doesn't say and how we can write letters to the editor – or better yet, write our own articles for alternative media! These decisions are about supporting those who share our values, or who at least respect our right to self-determination, including our love lives. She tagged along with me to the State House and helped lobby legislators on economic justice issues during the budget-cutting days of the Romney administration. She learned to march and chant in the big anti-war protests of 2003, and the big immigrant rights rallies of 2006. (This one backfired on me, though – one day at summer camp on a field trip to the zoo, the sight of the animals caged up prompted her to start marching and shouting protest slogans like "El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!") She saw me call and email my legislators thanking them for their support of same-sex marriage rights over the last several years, and understands that I believe in this as a part of human rights for everyone, and also because I want these rights to be there for me if I ever need them. (Not that I have any plans to ever go there again with anyone of any gender at this point, though!)

As she gets older, there are more and more ways I can affirm her right to develop into her full self – whatever her orientation ends up being – and celebrate all the possibilities ahead of her. It's a challenge that's both daunting and exciting. One way to rise to the challenge that many parents forget about is to devote energy to developing and healing ourselves. Being a parent pushes you to get to know yourself, grow as a person, and learn to use your voice in ways that you probably would have avoided if there weren't someone else counting on you to be a positive role model and guide to young people. And though I would have often loved to have avoided it, it is helpful to make the time, when needed, to reflect on and process the baggage that gets in the way of healthy sexuality and relationships in your own life. I have a feeling that very few of us have not been affected by personal trauma, homophobia and biphobia, or rigid gender socialization.

Another way to support our children is to get involved in the schools. My daughter has several classmates from two-mom families, one of which includes her first-grade teacher. I very much enjoyed volunteering in her classroom that year, and letting her

know that I accept and appreciate her and her family. Our School Parent Council formed a "Climate Committee" to address issues of respect and bullying, particularly around homophobia, and I attend the meetings when I can and suggest resources. I also volunteer in other ways and am active in the school community in general, because like all parents, I'm much more than just my sexual identity.

Finally, I'm trying to be more open and forthcoming with my daughter about sexuality in general than my parents were with me. In particular, her generation – even more than mine – needs to be mentored on media literacy, especially the girls! Interestingly, watching *Ugly Betty* together has prompted great conversations between us. I definitely don't remember my mom explaining contraception to me when I was nine – or ever! I still struggle for the language to talk about sex in a non-heterosexist way, but matter-of-fact media representations of diverse sexualities are a big help. Kids are amazingly perceptive – my daughter picked up immediately on the age-old complaint of queer media critics: even if network TV shows have sympathetic gay/bi characters, they never get to show affection or attraction with their same-sex partners in ways comparable to the straight characters. When the fashion-conscious character Marc tried to pass off his boyfriend as a "friend" due to embarrassment about being seen with a non-model, she piped up "I think he's just a friend too, because they don't kiss or go to bed like Betty and her boyfriend." So I explained to her how I thought they were meant to be boyfriends on the show, but because some people don't think men should be with men or women with women, most TV shows don't show how two men in a relationship actually treat each other, and added that I wished they did.

And with that, I conclude my report on "What I did on my ten-year vacation." For me, motherhood IS activism. So bi motherhood = bi activism. Hey, I think now I know what T-Shirt I'm wearing to the Pride parade this year! See you there!

*Maria Christina is a Jamaica Plain mother, maternal-child community health worker, researcher and onetime BRC Board member (1996-1999). She has become contrary in her old age (of 31) and now tends more towards the "I Refuse To Label Myself" camp, but she will always feel at home in the bi community. Look for her at Pride in her "I can't even label my leftovers, let alone my sexuality" T-shirt.*



# My Journey to Momhood

by *Carla Imperial*

I'm standing in a field. Alone. In the distance I see the ocean, and its vastness makes me feel empty.

I came here to search my soul, to dig deep and uncover truths that have been embedded in layers of fear. I am hoping that somewhere beneath the muck I'll find some peace in what I am about to embark upon.

Parenthood.

I wish I could claim youth or a failed condom that got me into this predicament. On the contrary, I'm here by very thoughtful and deliberate actions. When two women decide to have a baby together, every step is considered and hashed and rehashed. Who will carry the baby? Who will be the sperm donor? How will we inseminate? No, there is nothing unintentional about what is happening. And this isn't about getting cold feet before the bambino arrives. Or about second thoughts. Truth is, I didn't want to have a baby in the first place.

When we got married ten years ago, I was in a different space. I was thirty-five and it seemed like having kids was the logical next step. But then shit happened. Major life blows. Relationship challenges. Loss of a beloved parent. Before I knew it, I was forty and life was whizzing by. Grab on, a voice said. So I did. And suddenly I was in a gloriously self-indulgent place. My relationship was healthy, I was finally pursuing my dreams, and I was exactly where I wanted to be. Wouldn't you know it, that's when she brings up the kid thing again. And wasn't it a shock to her ears and a crushing blow to her heart to hear that I no longer wanted to be a parent.

I tried. I really tried to change my mind. I spent countless hours trying to embrace the idea. But each time I ended up with the same mindset. Scared shitless. How do two people who love each other deeply, one who wants a child desperately and one who is undeniably certain that she doesn't, resolve this impasse? Tears. Hard talks. Ultimatums. Lots of visits to the ocean. During this particular visit, I explore all of the reasons that I don't want children, once again. The permanent responsibility. The loss of freedom. The financial burden. Feeling old. Being the non-biological mom. An intense ache that my mother won't be around to be a grandparent. And suddenly the answer comes to me.

Faith.

And with faith, I am able to go one step towards my partner. We agree to take everything one step at a time. Let fate decide if we'll be parents. Let things fall into place as they will. It was clear who would carry the child. I've never had that maternal yearning. When we find an anonymous Filipino donor whose baby picture looks just like me, it's clearly a sign. When my wife gets pregnant on her first try, on the outside, I am thrilled for us.

On the inside, I am panicking.

She's pregnant.

Hurray for her.

Fuck me.

I remember to breathe. I remember about faith. I remember how happy my wife is. I take baby steps to let go of the fears, one by one. At the first ultrasound, I cry tears of joy. The first heartbeat we hear, my own heart expands. My wife is the glowing, perfect pregnant woman. All the while, she has been gentle and gracious with me. Her gratitude toward my going on this journey is apparent. As we watch her belly grow, I am slowly falling in love with what's inside. The day before our due date, I see my mother's reflection in the mirror as I sit in our empty nursery. And then comes the day. January 16, 2008. Our daughter is here. By god, she looks like me.

There are changes of the heart. Then there are transformations of the heart. In the short ten months that my daughter has been on this earth, I have been taught more patience and grace than throughout my entire lifetime. She is miraculously a mix of my partner and me, and I have no idea how we did that. And sure enough, my capacity to love unconditionally was under all that dirt, and although the dust settles every once in awhile with old fears and longings, I have zero regrets. None.

I'm standing in a field. My arms are open wide, and my daughter, who has just learned to walk, is running toward me. As I scoop her up in my arms and feel her soft cheek on mine, I cannot imagine feeling more complete.

*[Carla is a bi Filipina writer, living in Jamaica Plain, MA with her partner of 14 years, Megan, and their 10-month old daughter, Kai.]*



## Brunch Coordinator Invites You to Host

BBWN potluck brunches are a great way to meet other bi women in the Boston area. We try to hold a brunch in a member's home each month so that people can relax and share food and experiences in a safe space. Deb Morley is the brunch coordinator, so please contact her at [debmo345@gmail.com](mailto:debmo345@gmail.com) if you are interested in hosting a brunch. And check out the calendar on pages 11-12 for activities coming up this fall. Hope you can join us.

## Do You Know Web Design?

We're looking for someone to get [biwomen-boston.org](http://biwomen-boston.org), our new website, up and running. If you are interested, please contact Robyn: [biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com). It's the perfect volunteer job, as you can do it from home, in your pajamas, or even in your birthday suit.

# Baby Mama

by Rosemary Van Deuren

I was nineteen when my girlfriend Claire got pregnant. I demanded to know who the father was, since it clearly was not me. Nothing she said at that point would've surprised me, although the man in question did turn out to be the one most likely. And ironically, I had been concerned that my girlfriend was cheating on me – with that man's female friend.

Claire had done an impeccable job of convincing me that she was a lesbian. Not that it mattered to me – I didn't care if she was gay, or bi, or just 'special.' And after we broke up, I used to wonder why she went so far out of her way to convince me of her rampant lesbianism, and why she outright lied about her past male lovers. I have since realized that she wasn't trying to convince me she was gay, she was trying to convince herself. And at ten years her junior, I was

little and green, and ripe to be duped in almost every way. For I was the only girlfriend Claire had ever had, and my youth was the chief allure I held for her.

At nineteen, I had no interest in having a child. But I would've stayed with Claire if she'd asked me to; something that fortunately never came to pass. Our May-December relationship had been a train-wreck of misery, and its tumultuous end mirrored this in both messiness and drama. I lost ten pounds in ten days, and my empathetic gem of a bookstore manager put me to work stocking the back room so I could sob all the way through my shifts. Claire came raging into the bookstore and tried to attack me, but only once, because at that point mall security banned her from my workplace.

I correctly predicted the inevitable separation of Claire and her baby's father, who split before the child was even two. I also correctly predicted that this was inconsequential to Claire. She had gotten

what she wanted, and the means by which this came to be just didn't mean much. Claire had been planning this unplanned affair, a secret kept not only from me, but also from her soon-to-be baby daddy. He no doubt noticed that she had shaved her armpits in preparation for their 'spontaneous' interlude. But what he didn't know was that six weeks prior, she had also stopped taking the birth control pills she used to regulate her endometriosis.

But years before that, many years before I entered her life at all, Claire had been briefly, and unhappily, married to her high school sweetheart. This man had strong-armed her into an abortion when she was nineteen, just the age I was then, and it was decision she'd always regretted. This time she became pregnant at twenty-nine, an age where a woman's susceptibility to childbearing hormones is especially high; although I wouldn't learn that until I became twenty-nine myself.



## REVIEW: Two Sexy, Soulful Books by Gina Ogden

by Julie Ebin

Many books on sexuality and desire seem to zoom in on the physical how-to or on specific worlds – sex tips, aspects of kink, tantra, and reproductive health, to name some specifics. Few, if any, focus on how women specifically make meaning of sexuality and desire, and how they are intertwined with our lives beyond the bedroom. Gina Ogden's recent books, *The Return of Desire* and *The Heart and Soul of Sex*, are a refresh-

ing exception.

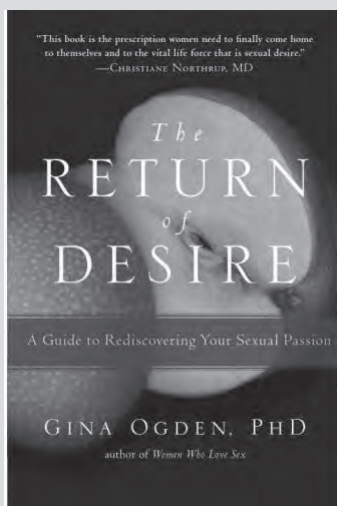
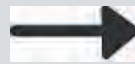
Both books draw on a unique model Gina developed, called the ISIS circle, which draws from her research on the connections between sexuality and spirituality, her many years of practice as a sex therapist, and her study of shamanism. The model uses multiple entry points into exploring sexuality, rather than a how-to formula. The books are written in a conversational style that invites in, not at all clinical or medical in tone. They are easily accessible while still spelling out both concepts and practical exercises.

In *The Heart and Soul of Sex*, Gina first sets the stage with a review of books and popular messages related to women's sexuality. Next she discusses her nearly 4000-person online survey on women's sexuality, including the wealth of responses to the survey that showed the relationship between sexuality and spirituality. Although I enjoyed reading the background and survey responses (especially the amazing quotes from the survey responses), I was also a bit impatient to get to the good stuff – how was this book going to help me personally? Finally, in the third part of the book, she discusses the ISIS circle model in detail, including a theoretical framework, and yes, reflective questions, suggested activities, and meditations that I could do

on my journey.

In the book Gina lays out the ISIS circle, which describes four quadrant aspects of sexuality: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Gina invites us to explore how we relate to each of these aspects, and how they interplay within us as well. Through any or each of these four elements, she explains, we may journey to a sense of sexual connection with ourselves, a partner, or the broader universe. This book spoke to me because it went beyond looking at just one aspect of sexuality (like a lover focused only on certain key areas!), and instead took a holistic approach. The book is also egalitarian about the gender of the reader's partner(s), and makes no assumptions.

*The Return of Desire* also uses the ISIS circle to help us understand our sexual desires, or what gets in their way. The book is a transformative starting point for examining our sexual selves in the context of our whole lives, including the context of Western society. For example, Gina writes how one client's solo sexual experience changed the rest of her life, "[S]he's now less prone to judging others or trying to control them. Having so fully experienced that most intimate of sexual partnerships – with her-





In the months after we broke up, I'd see Claire haughtily pass by my bookstore window, not looking over but knowing that I was watching her. Amidst my sadness and anger, there was a wave of relief, and not only for myself. As badly as she'd treated me, and as much as she had preyed on and manipulated my youth and inexperience, I remembered how sad she had been when she spoke of the teenage abortion she'd never wanted to have. Had been forced to have. So as I watched Claire walk by, day after day, and her hair growing longer and her body becoming – pregnant – I thought, "She'll have the baby she always wanted. Good for her."

Before giving up my key to Claire's apartment, I tearfully rifled through the photo boxes we'd filled, lamenting all the trips and memories chronicled there, and stealing some of my favorite pictures of her, including some of the nudes she'd never let me see because she thought they were

'unflattering.' By this time, the framed boudoir nudes of me that she used to keep next to her bed were turned facedown and shoved in drawers, and I wondered what would become of them once she entered motherhood. Would she bury them in a keepsake box, on a bed of my old love letters? Or would she just throw them away? Would this child of hers ever go snooping through his mother's things, and discover that she'd had a teenage lover – who did try to love her – at the time he was conceived? Or would he go through his life thinking his mother was straight?

As is typical of nineteen year olds, I overestimated my importance in a love triangle that left me negated once it had created a human life. Which was exactly as it should've been. For this child – Claire's child – was at the mercy of all three of us, and it was his needs that were most important. But my desire then to leave some sort of permanence in Claire's iconology

was understandable too; she had been a much more singular, detrimental force in my development than I had ever been in hers. And as a grown woman now, considering children myself, I no longer think about or even want any sort of presence in Claire's life. When I think of her now, I think of the son she is raising, who turns eleven this month. And more than anything else, I hope she is a good mother to the child she always wanted.

[Rosemary lives in Michigan, and has worked as a freelance illustrator, sculptor and painter. She is currently pursuing a career in writing, and has just finished her first novel and her first poetry collection. More on her accomplishments can be found on her website: [www.rosemaryvandeuren.com](http://www.rosemaryvandeuren.com).]



**Review** continued from previous page

self – she says she's able to reach out more confidently and compassionately into the world around her. Gina leads the reader through various challenges to desire and how to address them, from giving birth and raising children, to gender differences, abuse and trauma, and losing oneself in a partner. She outlines other considerations relating to desire as well, such as polyamory, same-sex attraction, and comfort with oneself. The book is organized in such a way that you can skip around and pick and choose the topics that are most relevant to you.

While much of *The Return of Desire* seems to be written with female-male relationships in mind, Gina frequently reminds us that most of the same principals apply to same-sex relationships, and includes a chapter on "Living Curly in a Straight Culture." This chapter not only gets into the usual Kinsey framework but describes the impact on your love life of questioning your sexuality, the myth of lesbian bed death, and most importantly, quotations and descriptions of the power and amazing joy that being lesbian and separately, being bisexual can bring. She describes one bi woman's experience. "For her, this sexual blending of female and male was more than the physical pleasure, or the novelty, or the thrill of bending rules. It was a true wrinkle in time – as if she had stepped into a realm beyond her knowing. And the experience transformed her life." Much of the book also includes information and exercises relevant to women who are single.

I highly recommend both books for anyone who is interested in a new approach to understanding and improving their sense of sexual connection. Happy reading!

[Julie is a bi poet, dancer, and health advocate living in Cambridge, MA. Her poetry has appeared in *Bi Women*, *Getting Bi*, and *The Fence*.]

**Kids**, continued from page 5

I didn't come out and give them the opportunity to see a successful, happy, adult bisexual woman.

I realize that I'm not being fair to the kids I worked with, or their parents, or my goddaughters' mother. I don't have a shred of evidence that the adults in these kids' lives would cut me out if they knew I was bisexual. In fact, I have evidence to the contrary: the parents I worked with expressed nothing but support of our efforts to build a GLBTQ safe space, and the mother of my goddaughters once said that she "wouldn't mind" if her daughters ended up being gay. Still, my fear remains strong. Perhaps it comes from awareness of the stereotypes and assumptions that people attach to the word "bisexual," and my weariness to be an ever-present "educator" about "real" bisexuality. Perhaps it comes from my inkling, not entirely unfounded, that being gay is OK but being bi is not. (When I was a child, an important adult in my life told me, "There is nothing wrong with being gay, but those bisexual people will sleep with anyone." Perhaps that has something to do with my self-imposed celibacy). Perhaps it comes from watching too many TV specials in the nineties about teachers who were fired because of their sexual orientation. Perhaps it comes from reading too many homophobic letters from adults in response to anything that exposes kids to the reality of various sexual orientations.

Still, I like to dress my fear up with nobler causes. My mother, a public health nurse, tells me that all it takes is one adult who cares about a child to give that child a chance at success. I've extrapolated from that that the more caring adults a child has in her life, the better. I've had the opportunity to be a caring adult in the lives of many extraordinary girls. And although my guilt over remaining closeted with them is strong, my fear that I'd be cut out of their lives is stronger. It's unfair that we live in a world where sexual minorities are viewed with fear and suspicion, but it would be more unfair to deprive a child of an adult who cares about her. I justify my closeted state in this way.

Last week, I went out to lunch with a girl I used to work with who has now grown into a confident, brave young woman (they have

**Closet**, continued on page 10

# The Tupperware Lady

by Fennel

It was the Tupperware lady who got me thinking about the role of women as wives and mothers in our North American culture. About five years ago, I invited one of these "ladies" over to help organize my kitchen. I told her I was single and described the kinds of things I needed to organize, to cook and store (beans, chocolate chips, and the like). This woman couldn't listen and couldn't break out of her woman as mother and wife mindset. Whenever I mentioned my single status, she blithely ignored it and went on to describe which containers I would use to pack lunch for the kids, and which I'd use to make meals for my family. Well, I was a family of one. The experience left me feeling left out of our culture.

Another time I felt left out was in a women's spirituality group I belonged to for many years. There were about ten of us, and we all started out single. Fast forward a few years, and every woman married and had children except me and one other woman. Eventually, being in that group became too painful, and I left. I decided to seek spirituality elsewhere in place that felt more inclusive of a range of different choices. Not having children never felt like a decisive choice to me. It was more a blend of fertility issues, timing, ambivalence, and not having the right partner at the right time. Also, on the light side, I once told my mother, "I think I'd like kind of a quiet life." And she said, "Then don't have children!"

Yet children have a big role in my life. I teach kids, am an aunt to four boys, a Big Sister, and I have an active role in my friend's kids' lives.

I think women who don't have kids are left out in a certain way and are forced to forge their own path through the proverbial Robert Frost woods!

I once had a spiritual experience at a retreat center. I connected with this young girl, and she with me. We were at a bohemian Shabbat Service. I had this transcendent experience, as if I were getting to feel what it would be like if she were my child. It brought tears to my eyes, and I took many walks pondering whether I could handle being a mother. I was afraid that I could not, and therefore would be doing a disservice to a child. I think that is why I choose to be a Big Sister. I know what I can commit and what my limits are. This way, no one is disappointed.

The book that inspired me to write this article is Betsy Israel's *Bachelor Girl: The Secret History of Single Women in the Twentieth Century*. It is primarily, as the title suggests, a book about single life, but I pressed on to see what she might want to say about children.

She writes, "Older single women are, in the span of one afternoon and three conversations, first cool pioneers figuring out how to live singly, or make communities, and have children, or else they are unbelievably pathetic losers. People who waited. People who were deluded by feminism. People who will have nasty experiences with Pergonal and Clomid. And depending on the circumstance – the speaker – 'old' can occur at 30 or 35 or 40, 50, or 27." (p.246)

One night last year I was visiting my best friend from college, who had just adopted a baby from Russia. At 2 a.m., in their living room on the pullout couch, I had an existential crisis. A dark night of the soul came over me and I was awash with questions: What had I done with my life? Was this a huge mistake not having children? What had I been thinking and could I never go back? Though this feeling faded with the morning sunrise, uneasiness about my life and my choices remains.

The feelings are not simple: they are convoluted and perhaps mysterious. I'm blessed with the richness that children in my life bring. And when I'm stressed out in the supermarket and someone's kid is screaming, I feel bad for the kid and the mother, but sometimes when I feel overwhelmed enough with life already, I'm glad that's not me. People always say you feel different when it's your kid. Sadly, I may never know.

Someday, I hope to become a stepmother, but in the meantime, being a good friend to my friend's kids, my students, and my Little Sister seem enough for now.

*[Fennel is a long-time member of BBWN who has lived in the Boston area since 1990.]*

Closet, continued from page 9

the habit of doing that). Without preamble, she told me how difficult it was for her and her girlfriend to be the only out lesbians at her school. Although her stories "outed" her to me, it was so clear that it was not a calculated decision on her part, that she wanted to share what was happening in her life with me, and being an out lesbian in high school was part of that. There was no dramatic, "Oh, and I'm

gay," just the thread of that reality in every story she told. I felt affirmed that, even though I hadn't been out to her when we worked together, she still knew being out with me was safe. And in the course of the conversation, I shared with her my own experiences of coming out. I know that this is also the choice I would make if my goddaughters ever came out to me or asked me about my sexual orientation outright. In the meantime, I'm working hard to foster a relationship where they understand that my love for them is unconditional, and I'm staying aware that there may come a time when coming out to them is the only ethical thing to do. Although the closet door is still closed, I refuse to lock it.

*[Lacey, 27, lives on the shores of Lake Superior and is a freelance editor and writer. In her free time, she likes making mix CDs, devouring books, cuddling her kitties, and pondering God.]*

**BECAUSE '09 Conference**  
Bisexual Empowerment Conference  
"IMAGES"  
KEYNOTE: ROBYN OCHS, AUTHOR & ACTIVIST  
Coffman Union - U of M  
PO Box 18143  
Minneapolis, MN 55418  
tcbop1@yahoo.com  
APRIL 17-19, 2009  
www.becauseconference.org

**CALENDAR** *continued from page 12*

this remarkable man who led a movement of progressive, peaceful women and men that has brought us to this incredible moment in history.

Thursday, Jan. 22, 6:30-8:00 pm, Boundless presents Perfecting the Craft of Women's Health: New Provider Party. Stop by Fenway Community Health at 7 Haviland Street and meet some of the new women's health team. Have some dinner, try for some great door prizes, build your cup-size cupcake (come on, who wouldn't want to do that?!), decorate a speculum (ditto!), and more! Contact Gillian for more info at [gconolly@fenwayhealth.org](mailto:gconolly@fenwayhealth.org) or 617-927-6028.

Sunday, Jan. 25, BBWN Potluck Brunch, 12-4 p.m. at Fennel's in Watertown Square. This will be a Poetry Brunch so bring a poem you love to share and read. In order to achieve a diverse mix of food, please bring one of the following and let Fennel know when you RSVP: drinks, salads (fruit and green), entrees, desserts. For those interested, if it's nice outside we can also take a walk. Fennel is lucky to live right across the street from the Charles River Bike Path. Email [resourcegoddess@comcast.net](mailto:resourcegoddess@comcast.net) (preferred) for RSVPs & directions, or call 617-875-9082.

February

Wednesday, Feb. 4, 7 p.m. Bisexual Social and Support Group (BliSS). (See Dec. 18th)

Friday, Feb. 6, National Wear Red Day. Help raise awareness about the impact of heart disease on women by wearing red today. Check out [goredforwomen.org](http://goredforwomen.org) for more info.

Monday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m. Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. (See Dec. 8th)

Tuesday, Feb. 10, 7-9 p.m. BRC Board Meeting. (See Dec. 9th)

Friday, Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m. Mouthful: An Open Mic for Open Minds, Center for New Words, 7 Temple Street, Cambridge. (See Jan. 9th)

Saturday, Feb. 14th, 6:30-10:30pm. BIG MassEquality event: GAYLA (the political party everyone can agree on) at the Roxy! [www.massequality.org](http://www.massequality.org) for details.

Thursday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m. Bisexual Social and Support Group (BliSS). (See Dec. 18th)

Saturday, Feb. 21, 11:30 a.m. Saturday Bi Brunch. (See Dec. 20th)

Sunday, Feb. 22, BBWN Potluck Brunch, noon at Jen's in Cambridge. Please bring a potluck dish or drinks to share. You can contact Jen at [jbonardi@hotmail.com](mailto:jbonardi@hotmail.com) or 617-767-1981 for directions, and to let her know you are coming.

On the horizon:

January 28-February 1, 2009: Creating Change in Denver, CO. There will be a bi caucus and a bi dinner, and some bi content in the program. For more information: [creatingchange.org](http://creatingchange.org).

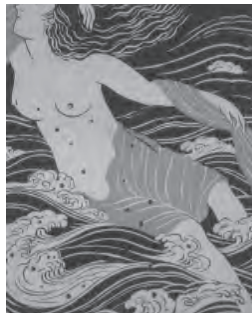
April 17-19: The 15th BECAUSE (Bisexual Empowerment Conference: A Uniting, Supportive Experience) will be held at the Minneapolis campus of the University of Minnesota. Workshop proposals due January 2. For more info: [www.becauseconference.org](http://www.becauseconference.org).

Tell Us All About It...

Do you have events that you want to make sure get publicized in BiWomen? Drop an email to the Calendar Editor, Ellyn Ruthstrom, at [nellythrustmor@comcast.net](mailto:nellythrustmor@comcast.net) by the deadline below to be included in our quarterly calendar. If you miss the print deadline, don't fret, send along the info and request that it be sent out by email to local bi women's groups.

- Feb. 10: March / April / May
- May 10: June / July / August
- Aug. 10: September / October / November
- Nov. 10: Dec. / Jan. / Feb.

**Bi Women** wants you!!!



SUBSCRIPTION RATE  
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BBWN, P.O. BOX 301727, Jamaica Plain,, MA 02130



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## The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

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### Ongoing Events

#### Last Fridays:

**Bi Women's Rap.** 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

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#### 2nd Mondays:

**Straight Marriage, Still Questioning.** Email kate.e.flynn@gmail.com for more info.

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#### 1st Wednesdays, 3rd Thursdays:

**BLISS: Bisexual Support & Social Group,** 7-9 p.m. The group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

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#### 3rd Saturdays:

**Biversity Brunch,** 11:30 a.m. at Johnny D's, Davis Square, Somerville.

**Sign up for our new email list! Send an email to: biwomenboston-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**



# CALENDAR

## December

Monday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m. Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. A peer-led support group for women in a straight marriage/ relationship struggling with sexual orientation or coming out. If interested in attending, contact kate.e.flynn@gmail.com. Meets 2nd Monday of each month.

Tuesday, Dec. 9, 7-9 p.m. Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting. All bi and bi-friendly community members welcome to attend. This is the board's annual meeting to look back at what we've accomplished in 2008 and look ahead to a new year. We will be voting on board members for 2009. If you are interested in learning more about the BRC or about becoming a board member, contact the current board president, Ellyn Ruthstrom at nellythrustmor@comcast.net for more info. At the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. near Back Bay station on the Orange Line.

Friday, Dec. 12, 8 p.m. The Slutcracker: A Burlesque. Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Square, Somerville. "With a vastly talented cast including some of Boston's best performance artists, an enviable creative team, and a story that'll make a person, laugh, cheer, shiver, groan, and maybe even moan (after the show, at least...), This season's most sexy-freaky holiday zeitgeist spectacular!" Also on Dec. 13 at 8:00 pm and Dec. 14 at 2:00 pm (including a Q&A with cast and director). Tickets: \$16 in advance, \$21 at door.

Sunday, Dec. 14, doors open 9 p.m., show 9:30. TraniWreck: Wreckage at The Milky Way, 405 Centre Street in Hyde Square, Jamaica Plain. Cover: \$8 ages: 21+. TraniWreck has spawned "Wreckage: the contest show" that is also a contest with 'amateur' performers and celebrity judges. Performers compete for \$200 in cash. Wreckage will mix performances by the TraniWreck crew and other non-competing performers and special guests with numbers by the competitors and also witty remarks (à la Gong Show and American Idol) from the celebrity judges.

Thursday, Dec. 18, 7 p.m. Bisexual Social and Support Group (BliSS). Meets on the 1st Wednesday and 3rd Thursday of each month at the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope Street, Boston. All bi and bi-friendly people of all genders and orientations are welcome

to attend. 1st Wednesday meetings are peer facilitated discussion groups, sometimes with a pre-selected topic or presenter. 3rd Thursday meetings are 7-8 p.m. check-ins, discussion, and announcements followed by social time at a nearby restaurant. Only want to socialize? Meet the group at or shortly after 8 p.m. in the lobby of the Boston Living Center.

Saturday, Dec. 20, 11:30 am. Biversity Brunch (a mixed gender bi group). Always the 3rd Saturday of the month at Johnny D's on Holland St. in Davis Sq., Somerville. The Red Line's Davis stop is just across the street.

Sunday, Dec. 21, 3-6 pm, Keshet's BIG Hanukkah Party! Temple Ohabei Shalom, 1187 Beacon St., Brookline. Fried food, dreidels, and sing-alongs for the whole family. RSVP by Thursday, Dec. 17 to Elyssa at elyssa@keshetonline.org or 617.524.9227. Keshet works for the full inclusion of GLBT Jews in Jewish life. www.keshetonline.org

## January 2009!!

Wednesday, Jan. 7, 7-8:45 p.m. Bisexual Social and Support Group (BliSS). (see Dec. 18th)

Friday, Jan. 9, 7:30 p.m. Mouthful: An Open Mic for Open Minds, Center for New Words, 7 Temple Street, Cambridge. Meets every second Friday of the month. Come to read or come to listen: the goal is to build a community of writers and readers that supports women and their allies. \$5 donation requested.

Monday, Jan. 12, 7 p.m. Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. (See Dec. 8th)

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 7-9 p.m. BRC Board Meeting. (See Dec. 9th)

Thursday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m. Bisexual Social and Support Group (BliSS). (See Dec. 18th)

Saturday, Jan. 17, 11:30 a.m. Saturday Bi Brunch. (See Dec. 20th)

Monday, Jan. 19, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday. If Dr. King had lived, he would have turned 80 this year. One day before the inauguration of the nation's first African-American president, this holiday will be particularly meaningful. Participate in local celebrations of

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