

Straight Down Under

By Ellyn Ruthstrom

While traveling alone recently in Australia and New Zealand I realized a couple of things. One was that traveling as a middle-aged woman I no longer have to worry about getting harassed by men in the annoying way that was so common when I was in my 20s and 30s. The younger men pretty much ignored me and I had some really nice interactions with men my age and older.

Secondly, I found that while traveling as a lone woman the hetero norms were easily placed upon me. There was an assumption that if I was married I wouldn't be traveling on my own so I didn't get asked if I was married, but I was often asked if I had children. As a non-parent I was often caught off guard by that question, as it's not something I tend to ask strangers. The reaction to my being child free seemed culturally dependent. The Europeans and Australian/New Zealanders didn't pursue it further, but the Asian women were often intrigued by why I didn't have children and I had many interesting conversations about that.

So, it often felt that I was assumed to be a straight woman who was in between relationships with men. As a longtime bi activist I wear my sexuality on my sleeve and I'm often talking about my sexual orientation and my activist work early on in getting to know someone. While I was traveling I actually enjoyed taking a break from this part of my identity and dropping into the more traditional conversations between travelers. Where are you going, where have you been, how long have you been traveling, what have you seen? It wasn't that it didn't come up at all, but I reserved

my own disclosures for when I was making genuine connections with people.

For the most part, I was staying in hostels in both countries and sharing rooms with between three and seven other women each night. Typically, I'd only interact with someone for a day or two before one of us was leaving for our next adventure. I'm currently single so there was no immediate need to identify a love interest. Only if I spent more time with someone did I feel the need or desire to share my relationship history or my identity with them.

When I was couch surfing, however, it was different. My profile gives people an inkling that I am queer so when they accepted my request I felt comfortable talking about my entire life with them and that was refreshing. I stayed with three different straight couples—one in Australia and two in New Zealand—and had wonderful experiences with all of them. Couchsurfing.org is extremely queer-friendly and if you want to stay with other LGBT hosts you can find them; however, I didn't want to limit myself that way.

I did have my own queer agenda for my trip. I began my journey in Sydney so that I could attend their hugely famous LGBT Pride Parade, which they call Mardi Gras. Before I arrived, I connected with a lesbian couple on the couch surfing website and when I was there they took me to an awesome women's club for a pride party. A half a world away from Boston and I could fit right into the butches and femmes, the baby dykes, sporty dykes and lipstick lesbians (oh my!), all sweating on the dance floor together.

Also while in Sydney I had the opportunity to meet one of BBWN's early founders, Jean K., who has been living there for over 20 years. We were connected through

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Katie Sekelsky is an illustrator and graphic designer living in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.
You can see more of Katie's work at www.ksekelsky.com.

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From Your Editor

The theme of this issue is “Traveling While Bi.” We present you with writing on this theme by Ellyn Ruthstrom and Elaine Kolp. Chiquita Violette and Jen Yockney describe traveling to their respective countries’ seats of government, the White House and 10 Downing Street. Two accomplished and excellent writers, Carole Spearin McCauley and Jess Wells, each describe their travels through life, and we present two poets, Rowan McDowell Thompson and Katrina Chaves, whose work appears for the first time in our pages. There’s also a review of the new bi e-book, *Thicker Than Blood*.

For our “Bi Women Around the World” feature, Mumico writes to us from Taiwan.

And, as always, there’s Ask Tiggy, News Briefs, Letters and our Calendar.

Finally, online readers will notice that for the first time pictures are in color!

Enjoy this newsletter, and please consider adding your voice and/or artwork to the next issue of *Bi Women*, which will focus on “Mixed Marriages.”

– Robyn

Send us a picture of YOU reading *Bi Women*.

Be creative!



Next in *Bi Women*

The theme for the Winter '13 issue:
“Mixed Marriages”

All relationships are arguably “mixed marriages.” Few of us have a partner with whom we share all aspects of identity: sex, gender, race or ethnicity, age, family background, religion, economic status, politics, interests, goals. What’s your situation? How do you navigate differences in your relationships? How do differences augment and/or challenge your relationship? We want to hear from you. Essays, poems, artwork and short stories are welcome.

Submissions for the next issue must be received by November 1st.

Submission guidelines are at:

<http://biwomenboston.org/newsletter/submission-guidelines/>

Send your submissions and suggestions for future topics to biwomeneditor@gmail.com

Upcoming themes may include:

Choices; Moms & Mentors; Bi & Single; more...

If you do not want your full name published, or wish to use a pseudonym, just let us know.

***Bi Women* is online at biwomenboston.org.**

BBWN is an all-volunteer organization. Want to host one of our monthly brunches, be the woman who coordinates the brunches, help out with our website (we use WordPress)? Or, if you’re a student, consider an internship. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Robyn (biwomeneditor@gmail.com).

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.

Bi in Taiwan: Mumico's Story

By Mumico

I am Mumico, a Taiwanese girl who was born in Kaohsiung, the second largest city in Taiwan. I finished my medical degree last year, and this year I will begin a Masters degree in theater directing in the United Kingdom. I will soon turn 27.

My identification journey is somehow funny. I have been fond of boys since kindergarten and had my first experience of being attracted to a girl in high school. The first sexual orientation identity I had was entirely heterosexual. It was not until my fourth year in college (at age 21) that I started developing my bi identity.

This process began at my college during freshman year. My best friend was developing his gay identity, so I started to think about mine. The first girl I liked was a high school classmate who was a butch, and I liked her the same way I liked boys. So I thought myself to be completely heterosexual. Even though I had liked a girl, I liked her in a heterosexual way.

Nonetheless, my best friend really introduced me to the world of gender variety. I felt emotionally close to gay people, realizing when we shared our love stories with each other there was no difference between my gay friend and I. This motivation pushed me to search for more information about gay literature, gay rights and gay movements. Meanwhile, I continued my own process of self-exploration. During my two-year journey from heterosexual to bisexual identity, I sometimes identified myself as gay (female gay) when I was strongly aware of my inner boy aspect. There were times I regarded myself as being somewhat of a transgender, queer or pansexual. These identities all represent parts of me, and I have always been interested in knowing more about

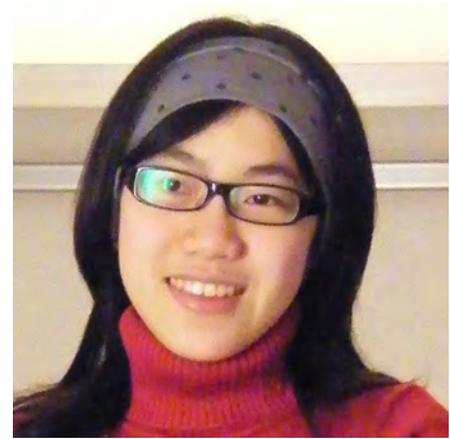
my potential. I came to realize that I could be more than heterosexual when I was attracted to a feminine girl in my third year of college, so I was somewhat aware that I was bisexual. But I wasn't motivated to adopt this identity. I simply accepted who I am, and identity is simply the result of knowing. I embraced my bi identity firmly two years after participating in a bi group. To me, social movement is as important as any other factors that form an identity.

I haven't faced much difficulty when coming out as bi. On one hand, it's probably because I appear pretty heterosexual on the surface and have never dated a girl, so I'm not read as bisexual. Also, people have a limited understanding of the term "bisexual," so they don't know how to feel about it. Most of my longtime acquaintances to whom I've disclosed my bisexuality already saw me as a nice but unusual person, so I don't think they were too surprised when handed this new information. I am fairly out in public, and will let my parents know someday because I am definitely going public to promote bi rights, but I have had difficulty in telling them so far as I am still dependent upon my family.

In terms of religion, the attitude toward gender issues varies among different branches of Buddhism. I am the kind of Buddhist who relates more to its philosophy than to its rituals, and the Buddhist association I attend is supportive of gay rights. In fact, one of the masters of the association was just invited to be the wedding host for a lesbian couple. For these reasons, I see no conflict between my religion and my bi identity.

In 2007, I participated in the creation of Bi the Way, the first and so far only bi group in Taiwan. Before, there was only an online chat board where bi people could meet. Discussions of bi issues increased gradually on the board, someone suggested starting a bi group, and that's how it kicked off. Since then, we have held meet-ups and workshops for bi people, run online bi networks, collaborated with other LGBT groups and offered lectures to colleges and cultural clubs.

In Taiwan, the pressure against LGBT people is not as prominent, and the con-



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flicts less severe than in many other areas of the world. Only recently have we experienced pressure from religious groups regarding gay rights policies. The strongest oppression is from the patripotestal structure. Chinese culture strongly values the family and sees the father as its head, which makes the crisis domestic and recessive. Therefore, some bi people are under more pressure than homosexual people for they are thought to have “the chance to be normal.” But basically, the mainstream media still has a monosexual focus; discrimination against bi people is not that evident, and is mainly hidden within families, couples, friends and communities, making it difficult to gather people to form a movement.

During my five-month visit to the US in 2012, I was grateful to meet bi activists in Minnesota, New York and Los Angeles, and get involved with the local bi community in Los Angeles. I observed several differences between Taiwan and the US. First, I was shocked to know how serious bi erasure is, and how unfriendly the mainstream lesbian and gay culture in the US is toward bisexuals. Mainstream LGBT associations in Taiwan are pretty supportive of the bi movement, despite the fact that they have a limited understanding



Mumico and Robyn at the BECAUSE Conference in St. Paul, MN, April 2012

of bisexuality and would sometimes act against our interest. Second, I found that many identities such as pansexual, asexual and multisexual are specified in the US, whereas in Taiwan we want to break the classification so we don't emphasize the division. But I also learned the advantage of naming: that people can be gathered once they are seen. Third, I was also impressed to see the formation of polyamory groups, for it's still difficult to form any in Taiwan given the stigma.

Though bi people in different cultures face different situations, the erasure of bisexuality is a worldwide phenomenon, and it seems that we share responsibility for challenging rigid frames. I think it is very

important to meet and cooperate with bi people across the world, to discuss shared issues and experiences. I am looking forward to meeting bi people in the UK while studying abroad. These experiences will definitely help us operate our own group and improve not only the situation of bisexuals but also of gender minorities in Taiwan, and I hope that someday I can help others by sharing our stories.

Mumico enjoys visiting bi people worldwide, and would like to invite everyone to visit Taiwan.

Street Chicken

By Rowan McDowell Thompson

The red earth steams from a spring rain
and two truckers ask if I'm married.
I think of how my dinner of chicken with plantains
would be sweeter with you beside me
and answer, "no."
Later in the hospital,
when I believed I would die,
all I could think was that no one would call you
to say I was gone.

Rowan is a sex educator and sex positive activist in Seattle, WA. She writes: "I identify as bisexual or queer. I recently traveled to Buea, Cameroon, in West Africa to teach elementary school students about HIV, Malaria and Nutrition. Homosexuality is illegal in Cameroon so for my own safety I kept my identity to myself. To make this journey I had to leave behind my lover whom I missed greatly."

Amsterdam, 1999

By Elaine Kolp

When I was younger, I was not likely to consider myself a bisexual. Instead, I most often identified with one side of the spectrum or the other, depending upon with whom I had most recently been involved. In 1999, I was definitely identifying as gay and I had that in mind that August when I visited Amsterdam. The main purpose of my trip was to meet up with my brother and his family and travel with them to Hungary to see the total solar eclipse that was to cross Europe on August 11th. But I had an extra few days, and I wanted to see this great city where my ancestors might have lived (my last name being Dutch), and that had such a reputation for openness.

I had decided that I would stay in a gay hotel and do gay things. The Internet was already in the travel business, and I made online reservations at the ITC Hotel, which was reasonably priced enough for my budget. It turned out to be a fine old house located on the Prinsengracht, one of Amsterdam's circular canals. I was in a tiny room under the eaves, up two flights of stairs, with a bathroom down the hall, but I have always had a bohemian streak, so I was content.

On my first full day in the city, I went to the Westerkmarkt, a square on the bank of the Rozengracht Canal. This park is the site of the Anne Frank Museum, the house in which Anne Frank and her family were hidden for more than two years before being betrayed to the Nazis. After I toured the house, I went to the Homomonument right next to it. It is a plaza of three interlocking pink triangles, with the point of one of the triangles formed by steps extending into the canal. The association of museum and monument is deliberate, since during World War II people accused of being gay were rounded up and had to wear pink triangles in the concentration camps.

This monument, and the Pink Point GLBT information booth right next to it, was a surprise to me. Even though I come from New Orleans, which has a reputation for being a liberal, gay-friendly city, it is still a US city, and harbors the same prejudices toward gay life that can exist anywhere else in the country. The flamboyant drag shows in the French Quarter on Mardi Gras are counteracted by grim, silent men marching through the streets on that day carrying crosses and "Repent!" signs. There could be no Homomonument there, or anywhere in this country, and an information booth like Pink Point would be picketed and vandalized. I was glad to see that these places could exist so openly in Amsterdam.

The next day, which was a Friday, jet lag had caught up with me. I managed to get to the Rijksmuseum with its famous Vermeer and Rembrandt paintings, but then came back to the hotel and stayed the rest of the day. I had wanted to go to at least one of the gay bars I had heard of—especially Vivelavie, an iconic lesbian bar—but I didn't.

I was too shy and too tired. Friday night would have been a good night to go to a bar. I am still sorry I didn't go.

I had one more day—Saturday, August 7th. It was not something I had realized, but the first weekend of August is Pride Weekend in Amsterdam. That morning, I began to hear talk about a parade. It turned out to be the Pride boat parade, and it was to come down the Prinsengracht, right past my hotel. It was (and is) a flotilla of decorated boats, with the crews being people representing various gay bars and other groups. Despite gray skies and dull Dutch rain, the parade began. I stood on the hotel's front steps with my gay but very staid hotel proprietor, to watch it. There was the boat float for my bar Vivelavie, with dancing ladies and high-energy music, and many similar floats. Suddenly a boat with a big penis as a prow ornament came floating by. There was a ripple of laughter from the crowd, but the hotel proprietor gasped, "Mein Gott!" and turned beet red. I guessed that it was because I was standing next to him. I decided to leave my perch and went off to wander through the crowd, admiring some of the spectator's costumes, which included a group of drag queens in full Dutch-girl outfits, complete with wooden shoes.

My Amsterdam visit ended the next day. I got up early and took a tram to the station to catch the train for Vienna. My brother picked me up at the station there, and I went to meet my sister-in-law and niece at the apartment where they were staying. I changed gears and became a not-very-out sister on a family trip to see a solar eclipse.

Postscript: This past May I took a trip to see another solar eclipse. I went to Albuquerque and stayed in a Travelodge, and did not do gay things. Instead, I simply did what any eclipse chaser would do: I found a good spot by the side of the road and watched the sun with my eclipse glasses and pinhole camera. I still think of 1999 as one of the best years of my life. My trip is part of that, but there was also the pre-Millennial excitement, the prosperity and optimism of the Clinton years, and the general innocence of those days before September 11th. For me also, at the time, there was the apparent clarity of being gay, of thinking I would know what gender I would be attracted to next—a clarity that was lost forever the next year, when I became interested in and dated a man for a while. I had to accept the fact that I was bisexual and would always be that way, and learn to accept whatever clarity could be found in that self-identity. It has been a long journey.

Elaine is a New Orleans native living in the Tennessee mountains since Katrina. She is a bookkeeper by day and a writer by night.



Bi Voyage!

By Chiquita Violette

I have not done much traveling in my life, but being a bi/pan/fluid activist has certainly taken me places that I never expected to go.

This past January, I went to Baltimore, MD for the Creating Change Conference to co-facilitate a day-long Bi/Pan/Fluid Institute. I had attended Creating Change the year before, in Dallas, my home city, but volunteering at the bi suite occupied most of my time and I was unable to attend the Institute. The Bi institute was both a learning and a teaching experience for me, and I think I did a lot more learning than teaching. About 40 or so people attended the Institute. For me the most exciting part was gathering in groups, brainstorming, creating and showcasing new media videos—and seeing how impacting and empowering they can be.

Most recently, I went to Austin, TX, a place I had not visited in more than ten years, to attend Allgo's 5th Queer People of Color Statewide Summit. This year's event was held at the Alma de Mujer Center for Social Change, located in a lovely unspoiled territory and operated by the Indigenous Women's Network (IWN). The cabin I stayed in was appropriately named "Tree House," literally resting at the bottom of a very tall hill. I appreciated IWN's efforts to leave as little as possible negative impact on the environment. At night, there was no light pollution, and it seemed you could see every star in the sky. It was absolutely beautiful and nothing you would ever get to see living in the city.

What made the summit extra special was that I have rarely had opportunities to be in a QPOC safe-space, very similar to the Bi Institute in some ways except I could connect with everyone on racial and class intersections. The summit welcomes white allies both LGBT and straight, but this year it just so happened that there were none. Having worked in LGBT settings with other activists who were majority white, it was an eye-opener to see so many issues that we people of color face. I learned how pro-LGBT laws—such as anti-bullying—could potentially affect us (especially non-LGBT people of color) negatively in a country focused more on punishment than reform. Concern was expressed about how many activists will remain in the game to work for full equality once same-sex marriage is achieved. And we discussed whether we even want to equate ourselves to our oppressors as well as what "equality" truly means to us.

There were 14 of us in attendance and the agenda was full, as were our bellies. The food was plentiful, beyond delicious and provided by the generous Alma de Mujer staff. Outside of the opening and closing ceremonies, there were ten items for the three-day event. Each topic could easily have taken an entire day to discuss. My favorites were "Liberation through Knowledge," "Remembering and Connecting Ourselves through History," "Analysis at the Intersections" and my absolute favorite, "Creative Sharing," in which—as the name states—we each shared something artistic and creative with the group.



Chiquita at the White House. Notice her bi pride pin!

In between these two exciting events, I attended an event that I had never even imagined going to, and had only recently (just a year ago) learned of: the Annual White House LGBT Pride Month Reception held this year on June 15, 2012. It was already amazing for me to be invited to go, but what made it even more incredible was that not one or two but eight of us bi/pan/fluid activists were able to attend this year: Lauren Beach, co-chair of the Bisexual Organizing Project; Emily Drennen and LindaSusan Ulrich, a married couple from San Francisco, along with their two-month-old foster son; Estraven of NYABN and Bi Request; Denise Penn and Regina Reinhardt, board members of the American Institute of Bisexuality; and lastly, Morgan Goode and myself, board members representing BiNet USA.

In addition to getting to dine on delicious food and sip White House bubbly, there were a few other surreal moments that I would like to note. Here's a nice little countdown:

5) The invitation itself! I know I mentioned it already but, I mean, how is that not cool?

4) Getting to explore the White House and how polite, gracious and welcoming the staff was.

3) There was a band playing and I asked if they knew Hotel California (in my head I thought a song about a surreal experience would match the mood) and was told by the pianist he knew it but they were not set up instrumentally to play it. After the song they were playing ended, and as the rest of the band took a breather before playing the next song, I heard the pianist playing the intro and my favorite riff of the tune. It was awesome.

2) Witnessing a transman get down on his knee and propose to his partner in the Cross Hall. What a perfect place to do this!

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1) Getting to shake the President's hand! I wasn't able to take a photo with me shaking President Obama's hand, but I did take a (poorly shot) video of his entire speech and included as many bi activists as I could (including myself of course!).

With all these lovely and memorable experiences, I look forward to the places my pan/fluid activism takes me in the future.

Bi voyage!

Chiquita is a 27-year-old fluid POC, student, artist and activist living and workin' it in Dallas, Texas.



2012 White House bi contingent.

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Meanwhile, from "across the pond" in the UK...

A Downing Street Bi Breakthrough

By Jen Yockney

On July 24th I had the unexpected honor of being the first person invited to represent the bi community at the annual LGBT Garden Party held by UK Prime Minister David Cameron.

A few days earlier I had received an unexpected note: "The Prime Minister Requests The Pleasure Of Your Company." Well, if he was putting it like that who was I to say no? So to London and to Downing Street. First you meet charming yet obviously armed police at the entrance to Downing Street who check your passport and check if your name is on their list. You pass through scanners and suddenly you're past the security point and stepping onto one of the most filmed places in England, normally the preserve of senior ministers and visiting dignitaries. On the TV it looks like a grand sweeping arch of space but it's a surprisingly small road: they must keep the TV cameras on wide-angle lenses to get the feeling of space.

In through the door of Number 10 (and as a politics geek from a young age, you cannot imagine how hard it is not to bounce off the walls with excitement) and Number 10 staff direct you along corridors lined with portraits of premiers past, down stairs and into the garden of the Prime Minister.

Cue endless canapes and staff making sure your glass stays topped-up; I was wise to go for the fruit juice as I might have had to be carried out if I'd drunk that much wine. There was about an hour of milling about, meeting and talking with around 100 other people from around the UK who do fantastic things in other parts of the LGBT

community. As a bisexual genderqueer woman it was good to spot a couple of familiar bi faces and a couple of familiar trans faces; they were invited for non "bi activist" briefs though. There were many religious figures, all of Britain's senior out-LGBT clergy: the theme of this year's gathering being the UK government's plans to legislate for same-sex marriage.

And then here's Cameron. He speaks for about ten minutes off the cuff, praising the work of many in the crowd, and talks about "gay marriage" and how he thinks the churches are making a big mistake in opposing it. For US readers, imagine a Republican President condemning the church for not supporting same-sex marriage and saying his party had been wrong to be against LGBT equality in the past. He may not be word-perfect on his queer terminology, but this is a man elected seven years ago on an anti-gay rights ticket, so it is great to hear him having come so far in that time.

Then more drinks and mingling and—about 45 minutes after the official end time—the Downing Street staff usher us out. Of course being outside Number 10 means spending half an hour on the doorstep taking photos of one another.

This time there was just me; a great honor to be the first, but the UK has many brilliant and vibrant bi projects: BiUK, Bisexual Index, BiPhoria and more. I do hope next year there are three or four of us.

So that was my 39th birthday. I'm a little worried how to top it for my 40th next year!

Jen is the editor of the UK magazine, Bi Community News and has been a bi activist for a very long time.

"The First 100 Years Are the Hardest—After That, You Get to Lie Down"

By Carole Spearin McCauley

This French-Canadian proverb amuses me because it summarizes my life, especially how and why I learned to be a woman, then a lesbian, then a heterosexual.

As immigrants to the Berkshire mills, like Housatonic, Massachusetts, the French-Canadians controlled my early life—until I could escape.

In Quebec my grandparents had created 11 children in a still-tribal society—elders deserved respect and attention, whereas children were more mouths to feed. And girls were servants in a society that believed, more Calvinist than Catholic, "We're put on earth to atone for the sufferings of Jesus, who died for our sins." Suffering, especially female hypochondria, was cherished because it became the means to gain attention from a large family—not to mention God.

From my earliest years I considered them mostly crazy, including God. What kind of religion was this for twentieth-century America? What God would kill his own son? They also frightened me, especially being left alone with my mother during her Elizabeth Barrett Browning "spells" (lie down on sofa; clutch chest; moan, complain)—for five years following goiter surgery. If human-hood is weird, how does anybody become a functional adult woman?

First Sexual Experience

"Sex is God's joke on human beings."—Bette Davis

My first sexual experience occurred when I was about three years old. While the women drank tea in the family-house dining room, the men, including my father, revved their hormones with beer and whiskey watching TV sports in the living room. One childless uncle repeatedly grabbed and tickled me between his and my legs until I squirmed to pull away in my starched dress, at which all the men laughed heartily. I never saw this uncle grab a boy for "fun."

No one mentioned how or why babies existed until around a daughter's age 11, when some mothers told facts about menstruation. Just the facts—minus information about lovemaking, marriage, or other sex. Of course, I'd already seen cats catting and dogs dogging, which showed what happens—but not why. For that, I needed the nude human photos in *National Geographic* at the Lee library, plus the truly formative experience of my life, which happened when I was eight years old in third grade. This was "attention" from an Irish-Catholic usher, Bill, whom I did not fear because he collected envelopes every Sunday on the girls' side of the church. Because he also worked Sundays at the Lee news store, I gladly sat on newspaper stacks

and free-read the pulp fiction magazines and *The New York Times* he showed me—instead of attending matinee movies where my parents assumed I was. I may be the only child in Massachusetts who was ruined by *The New York Times*! Because he was in his 50s and already had three children, including two girls older than I, he obviously knew much about little women. When he sat me on his lap and tickled between my legs on the back-room cot, I responded to his warmth, especially his gray wool suit. Unlike my uncle he never grabbed or forced me. When he reached from behind and massaged my not-yet-formed breasts, he also cigarette-burned the white pique lapel on my (only) good cotton skirt-suit, which I washed off. Considering my hypochondriac parents (who praised themselves, amid yawning complaints, for the basics—food, clothing, "a roof over your head. Do you know children are starving in Africa?") I—a lonely, only child—responded to Bill's winter warmth and attention. Mostly a re-grope of my uncle?

I've always been tall, pencil-like, with glasses and scant Marilyn Monroe sexual body. No Lolita.

After a certain age, the question is not will-she-or-won't she?—but can-he-or-can't-he?

The next events would be humorous—if they weren't pathetic. On several Sundays Bill unzipped his trousers, massaged, and exposed himself to me by dragging out his limp penis—which remained flaccid as a drowned rat corpse I'd seen at Laurel Lake. How can cats and dogs do such stuff to their own kind, although female cats howl, but this guy just can't make it work? I knew his manipulations applied somehow to making human babies, but it looked so... ineffective (my later adult word, of course). I concluded he was just as dysfunctional as my parents.

Later, as an adult, I realized how fortunate I was—I could have been raped or ripped. At eight years I had no vaginal moisture to facilitate such activities. Anyway, when he left the store in summer (fired? I never learned, except he did try other girls—my friends—who rejected him, not being as lonely as I), I actually missed him! (To show that no good deed goes unpunished, when my parents sold our house, who bought it but Bill's son, whose eventual widow and sister lived there for the next 50 years.) But Bill definitely ignited me sexually during my checkered stagger toward womanhood and femininity.

Lesbian Experiences

"Love is the answer, but while you are waiting for it, sex raises some pretty good questions."—Woody Allen

Carole, continues next page

Carole, continued from previous page

Soon I initiated lesbian contact with my best friend during her rare overnights with me. The immature boys in my now fourth-grade class interested me not at all, nor did teenagers or other older men. Grumpy men, like my father, always wanted stuff—meals, shopping, shiny dishes, starched shirts, car collected at garage—whereas I cared about books, writing, ideas, libraries, astronomy conversations, and school, which I hoped would punch my ticket out of this place to college and the Great Outside.

School had rules that I could fathom and obey, whereas home and family were controlled by moody people complaining about everything. Getting chased, knocked down, bullied by neighborhood boys, unless I hid in the school woods, did not improve my attitude. I still have dirt in one knee, ripped, then scarred from being shoved into a marble curb. My mother's refusal to meet me at school angered me—too much hill for her to climb. Just “run faster”?

SO GLAD that I've lived to see bullying and sexual abuse of children now considered crimes for prosecution. And that children deserve respect, kindness, and, oh yes, being listened to—not first blamed—for whatever problems they encounter.

Years later I realized that my yearning, especially for older women including my mother and teachers, was the source of my lesbian hunger and curiosity. In my mid-20s I happily married an older man, lived in Connecticut, worked in a Manhattan bookstore and in publishing. Although afraid from childhood to be a mother, at about age 40 I birthed and raised a lovely, healthy boy who recently married and achieved a job-with-luxuries—salary, health insurance. I'm now a widow.

About the Berkshire French-Canadians: I've not only outlived 25 of them (“Living well is the best revenge”?) but do realize that, like Nietzsche, “what didn't kill me” made me a stronger woman and human being.

“Nothing risqué, nothing gained.”—Alexander Woollcott

Carole has written 12 books. Some medical nonfiction titles are Pregnancy after 35 (Dutton, Pocket Books), Surviving Breast Cancer (Dutton, Bantam Books) and When Your Child Is Afraid (Simon&Schuster). Her novels include mysteries Cold Steal and A Winning Death, published by Women's Press (UK) and Hilliard&Harris (Maryland). Her stories, poetry, articles, reviews and interviews have appeared in 200 periodicals and anthologies, that include Family Circle, Self, Redbook, National Catholic Reporter, NYTimes, America, North American Review and Women:Omen. Her latest publications are online, and her short work has won prizes in seven national or international contests that include Radio Netherlands Worldwide, Writers of the Future (science fiction) and USA Today.

Chiaraoscuro

By Katrina Chaves

Thank God
for salt water
Impalas
Marlboros
bad poetry:
She said: “Let's get something straight, since I'm not—
and you're only pretending to be.”

There is no such thing as a “civil war/
and you can confuse me with castration, (I've heard it all
before)/

I can be Native and English,
sleeping on
either shore/

Born in the 80s, raised in the 90s,
I breathe as product of neither, for
grains of sand are studied beneath my feet
with the grandmother I honor when ageism runs rampant,
with a lesbian who brags about shooting guns/killing things,
While I burn sage, reduce rage/ let love cross the street.

But highway-trapped hunger can only see signs:
exits
arrows
parallel dividing lines/
So I left him behind/ lay in her bed
Not, as he claimed, to earn “lesbian street cred.”

The taste of burdens lessened
was never 32 flavors of liberation,
or dialogue without conversation/
It was retribution
in silk sheets, ice melting on skin,
in revealing scars and letting fate win.

In uniform or Missouri, distance is kept,
but on Highland Avenue, I could say, Let's
Make love and Leave Iraq: to Save Darfur: to Free Tibet
To heal again, forgive once more, Never forget.

-If only solutions were simple/
when the political is personal,
overwhelmingly human, insistently wet.
So
her fingertips
on thighs
is as political
as this will get.

Katrina lives in Rhode Island. She is a News Editor for Bi Women.

Ellyn, continued from page 1



Ellyn (left), with Jean

mutual friends and she was happy to take me north of the city to a beautiful state park and then to the pride parade that night. Despite the pouring rain, it was quite the spectacle to behold and it was very handy being with someone who knew where to go and how to weave in and out of the side streets.

And while in Melbourne I had dinner and drinks with the fabulous bi group of Victoria (the state Melbourne is in). They were so gracious to have me and we swapped stories about what bi and queer life was like in our different countries. I even got a ride back to my hostel, thanks very much!

Even if I was usually assumed to be straight, I always had

my own gaydar working and tried to find other seemingly queer people. In the Sydney hostel I connected with an English lesbian who was there on business but was trying to enjoy some pride events as well. I shared a bus ride from Sydney to Canberra with an adorable baby butch from Taiwan who was all excited about her Mardi Gras experience and showed me photos of her travels around Tasmania with a bunch of other women.

While on Kangaroo Island I met a very quiet German woman who set my alarm off and tried to connect with her, but she was content with concentrating on riding her bike from Melbourne to Adelaide (over 500 miles) and didn't enjoy small talk. I also had a fun evening on a boat in Milford Sound on the South Island of New Zealand sharing a meal and some good laughs with a lesbian couple from Sydney who invited me to stay with them another time.

Was I closeted as I traveled? I didn't feel that way, though, like I said, I didn't constantly disrupt people's hetero assumptions about me. There is an anonymity accorded travelers as they meet along the road; you don't have to reveal everything about yourself if you don't want to. And I found that anonymity a rather unexpected perk to the whole journey.

Ellyn is the President of the Bisexual Resource Center and Bi Women's Calendar Editor.

Bi Sci Fi: Thicker than Blood

By Robyn Ochs

When Avery Vanderlyle decided to get serious about writing erotica and romance, she looked for small presses with calls for submissions. "Rather than submit a novel and hope the publisher would like it, I searched on the web until I found topics that interested me for planned anthologies," she explained. "As a bi woman, I was especially excited that Storm Moon Press had a bisexual anthology planned. The theme was post-apocalyptic stories. I love writing science fiction, too, so I submitted a story called "Thicker than Blood" about nanotechnology."

The editor contacted Avery and told her there hadn't been enough interest to proceed with the anthology, but they wanted to publish the story as a stand-alone e-book. Storm Moon Press is a queer-owned press committed to publishing bi and trans erotica and general fiction as part of their catalog.

"Thicker than Blood" was released on August 3rd and is available from the publisher and other e-book retailers in various electronic formats. The story follows David, who has kept his secrets all his life: not only is he bisexual, but he was born with nanobots that give him increased intelligence and creativity. David's life is changed forever when he meets Ayana, a performer with nanotechnology tattooed onto her skin.

Read more and purchase "Thicker than Blood" at <http://www.stormmoonpress.com/books/Thicker-Than-Blood.aspx>. You can follow Avery's other writing exploits at averyvanderlyle.wordpress.com.



The See-Saw Family

By Jess Wells

At long last, here are the final three parts of Jess Wells's nine-part story, I hope you enjoy them as much as I have.

“See-Saw”

We had been arguing about the kids' comings and goings, about schedules and being notified of things because I'm a planner and Simon's plan-phobic.

Simon hates to plan. He doesn't know what he's going to do at the end of the day, even after morning coffee. He never makes a reservation for anything and he thinks even the smallest calendar or note pad with dates on it is giving in to The Man. Weekends that I thought were scheduled with the kids, weren't. I assumed it was because his wife (count-down to the divorce) was running the show, but it isn't. He just admits to having a serious deficit in the time-management skills department.

But life takes planning, I argued. It doesn't, I know, but I'm a professional project manager. Gant charts, spreadsheets, rolling deliverables and all. I can only “be here now” if I have a plan of action for immediately after “now” and a backup plan for that plan, just in case.

Simon went seven years after the separation without dating at all and I think that after he dropped his kids off at their mother's house he would just fall into a stupor, as if life was on hold until they returned. He never wanted to go anywhere until his kids came back: things didn't matter unless they could be shared with the kids. Life on pause. The see-saw tips, he's stuck at the bottom.

When an opportunity came up to be with them, even if it was a spur-of-the-moment change of the family constellation, he would jump at it. But that means that he'd go off to Marin to drop off the kids and come back with one. Or walk through the door (when I had dinner for three in the oven) with two extra mouths to feed.

Finally I put my foot down, pointing out that putting everything on hold until his kids returned made me feel like my son and I didn't count. And if he's not going to plan ahead or let me know when they're going to be around, I can't schedule things only for the weekends that they're there.

It was my “life goes on” speech. Which was a bit ridiculous of me because I am incapable of being without my son. That's why I'm a single parent by choice: better do it all alone than have to have him just half-time.

That's when the “oh my gawd” moment came and I could see things more clearly. Simon was talking about how difficult it is for him to be without his kids, how painful it is for him to only see his kids half-time.

And I could see it in his face: more than the demise of his marriage, the central pain in his life is his separation from his kids. Relationships come and go but if you want pain, take a parent away from their kids. That pain overrides all schedules or menus, that's for sure. Simon now tries harder to let me know what's going on, and he's getting used to doing things with just the three of us. In return, I cook for five, almost always.

^^^

“Single Parent by Choice”

I am a single parent by choice—rare, I know. Not a “broken family” or a it-didn't-work dream. Single parent by choice because I figured that if there's a 50% probability of divorce among heterosexuals then there has to be a 75% chance of divorce among lesbians. And I just wasn't going to have my son living out of a suitcase, shuttled back and forth. I've seen too many disorders generated by that uncertainty. My son would come home to the same house and sleep in the same bed every night, regardless of whether I had to incur the huge karmic debt and my ex- bear the huge emotional scar of my refusal to co-parent with her. Besides, I am a mom who wants to be up to her elbows in motherhood, so there just wasn't enough kid to share. Fifty percent parenting wasn't enough parenting for me. I suggested she have one as well (so handy, this lesbian parenting) but she declined.

So I walked into this relationship with a divorced father with a deeply held dislike of the see-saw lifestyle. I need order and stability.

The fluctuating cast of characters was difficult for me because the see-saw was tipping. It caused a couple of hours of the oldest mouthing off at his dad (read: transition behavior) or the young one talking incessantly (read: transition behavior). I faced rising panic every time I knew they were about to arrive (transition behavior) and would need to retreat to my room and close the door to have some control. Everything changed. My son never spoke at the dinner table when Simon's kids were there, as if we were watching someone else's dinner theater. If he did speak, it was to make outlandish claims as if he had to open with a zinger of a punchline (transition behavior). And for the first year there was nothing I could do to keep my son at his homework or on his usual regimen because Simon's youngest was there and there

Jess, continues next page

Jess, continued from previous page

were video games and the Simpsons. I lost my son to the pack whenever Simon's kids arrived.

And Simon, so hungry for their company, would walk down the street shoulder to shoulder with his oldest, the rest of us trailing behind. Waiting our turn.

Then Simon would fall into a funk when they left and put life on pause while my son would get wacky and out of control to fill up the space the other kids had vacated.

Up and down. Up and down.

^^^

"Cave of the Clan Bear"

The joy, of course, is that all things balance out in time. I am blessed to be in a situation in which the care of children takes primacy. Simon and I recite the litany of sporting events and play dates that will keep us jetting around town all day Saturday and there's no resentment or inequality. There's no issue if I work all evening with my son on his homework

and it's assumed that Simon will play guitar with his oldest, go to dinner alone with his kids after aikido, and go to the swim meets of his youngest. At 10 p.m. every night it all shuts down and it's time for the two of us (gosh, a whole 30 minutes). We try to get away every couple of months for a weekend, and once a week we grab a few hours when there are no children in the house at all. I think it's pretty healthy. No one is left behind. Neither of us is lonely or neglected. And we get along even better when the kids aren't around, which we recognize as a darn good thing because in a short seven years the house will be empty. We're in a clan now, and it doesn't make any sense to pretend we're alone in a couple, or that the configuration is any different than it is. Some of the clan members move more than others, but we're a clan anyway, trying to be careful and kind.

Jess is the author/editor of a dozen volumes of work, including the novels The Mandrake Broom (historical fiction), The Price of Passion (lesbian erotica), and AfterShocks (modern drama). She is the recipient of a San Francisco Arts Commission Grant for Literature and a four-time finalist for the Lambda Literary Award. Her work and workshops can be found at www.jesswells.com.

Letters

I always love it when *Bi Women* arrives. It's full of voices that sound like mine, which is empowering. It's a publication I always relish. Keep doing the grounding, inspirational work that you all do!!

—Fiona Carey

Last night I went to a meeting at the local Pride Center. One of those present was a bisexual woman taking a break from teaching English abroad. The others present were curious about what life is like for the LGBTQ community in the countries where she has taught. When she had finished, I mentioned the book *Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World*, edited by Robyn Ochs and Sarah E. Rowley. The woman said that she'd been reading it, so I suggested she subscribe to *Bi Women*, giving her the web address. I also gave the address to a straight woman who is a master's student in counseling and is trying to become more familiar with LGBTQ issues. Thanks to *Bi Women* for being a wonderful source of information and connection for bi women and our allies!

—Catherine Rock



And here is an image, found on the Internet, that I just could not resist sharing with you, dear readers. -RO

What do YOU have to say? We'd love to hear from you. Write to us at biwomeneditor@gmail.com.

Ask Tiggy

Dear Tiggy,

I'm a 21-year-old female in college studying abroad. I'm unsure if I'm actually bisexual and not knowing makes me really upset.

I've noticed that aside from a certain kind of guy, there's also a certain kind of girl I'm attracted to. Right now, there's a girl in my abroad program who I'm crushing on pretty hard but my self-consciousness will likely get in the way of me doing anything about it. I don't know if that "qualifies" me as being bisexual.

On the one hand, I feel oddly guilty, as if because I've been an LGBT ally for so long this is just an attention-seeking attempt. On the other, I have no one who I feel comfortable confiding in, especially no one who I think could help me. Coming out also seems like an incredible impossibility—I'm not even close to that step yet.

I guess my main question is: how do I deal with these feelings and when does something that should feel natural become obvious to me?

– Actually Quite Curious

Dear Curious,

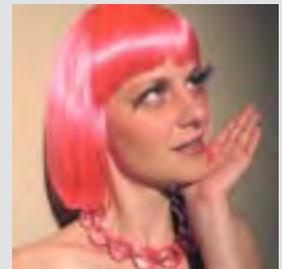
The *Ask Tiggy* webpage on the BRC website says: "No question too bisexual or not bisexual enough." Do you know why I put that there? Because for the last 15 years, I've met person after person who thinks that they don't "qualify" as a bisexual. I'm talking about folks who have loved men, women, trans people, and genderqueers; friends with sex partners of all of those genders; bisexual activists; and I don't even know who else.

There is no qualifying exam to be bisexual. There is no road test. There's no election. And if there's a Queen of Bisexuality who arbitrates membership, then goddamn it, it's me. And I say you're in, if you want to be.

The fact that you're making yourself guilty about this shows that you've thought yourself into a spiral. (How can something that no one else even knows about you be an attention-seeking attempt?) I suggest that for now you not label your sexuality. Just decide that you won't let gender be a defining factor in who you relate to romantically or sexually. Be a "No Label" person. I think that'll take off some of the pressure that you're putting on yourself.

"No Labelers" are open to adventure, so I've got three dares for you. 1) Find out whether the foreign school you're attending has an LGBT group, and show up to a meeting. 2) Immediately read *Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World*, a book of true accounts from real bisexuals all over the world. 3) Flirt with that girl in your program. A lot.

–Tiggy



Are you a bi lady in need of some good advice? Write to Tiggy Upland at tiggyupland@gmail.com. This advice column is for entertainment purposes only. The columnist reserves the right to edit the letters for any reason. Find more Ask Tiggy on www.biresource.net.



Tiggy and Robyn, shortly before speaking at the Dyke March

And speaking of Tiggy Upland, she and Robyn Ochs were the two keynoters at the 2012 Boston Dyke March. (Two bis on one stage!)

The next day, at Boston's annual LGBT Pride March, the Bisexual Invasion organized by Ellyn and other folks from Bisexual Resource Center—was out in full force, with an enthusiastic contingent in the Parade. Following the Parade, at City Hall Plaza, the bi booth was visited by a constant stream of people.



Deb, Ellyn, Gina and Melissa after the Parade at Boston City Hall.

News Briefs

By Robyn Ochs
and Katrina Chaves



President Obama made history once again by coming out in favor of marriage equality this May. In an interview with ABC News, he became the first sitting President to endorse marriage for same-sex couples.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault has announced that gay couples in France will be allowed to get married and adopt children, beginning in 2013. "Our society is evolving, lifestyles and mentalities are changing," he said in a speech outlining the new Socialist government's agenda.

Over 71% of incoming freshman in the United States support same-sex marriage, a 6.4% jump from just two years ago when the survey showed 64.9% support. The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) and UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) have been surveying incoming first-year college students across the country since the 70s. Their results show the steady increase in young adult support for equality.



Rep. JoCasta Zamarripa

On July 24th, Wisconsin State Rep. JoCasta Zamarripa came out as bisexual in an interview with the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. She is the only Hispanic member of the Wisconsin legislature and now its third openly LGBT member currently serving. As a young woman in her 20s, Zamarripa says that she didn't even feel safe enough to write about her bisexuality in her personal journal. "When Ellen (DeGeneres) came out that was when I felt I could write in my journal about it," she said in an interview with Denis Dison for Gaypolitics.com. "It's also more difficult to come out as the "B" in the LGBT acronym. ... It's tough for people to wrap their minds around that, but it is a reality and the truth," she said.



Mary E. Gonzalez

And Mary E. Gonzalez, a candidate for the Texas legislature, came out as pansexual this week after winning the Democratic primary. With no Republican candidate on the ballot in her El Paso district, Gonzalez is considered certain to win the election in November.

Danielle Morantez, 26, a former Salvation Army case-worker in Burlington, VT claims that the Burlington Corps of the Salvation Army fired her because she is bisexual. According to Morantez, she was fired in July after she raised concerns with her supervisors about sections in the Salvation Army employee handbook relating to sexual orientation and employment discrimination, coming out as bisexual in the process. In a [personal statement](#) given to [Truth Wins Out](#) and posted in partnership with the LGBT blog *Bilerico*, Morantez noted that her employers gave her every indication that her work was exemplary, but that after they learned she was bisexual, they terminated her immediately and ordered her supervisors to escort her

And just as a reminder and because we *love* Bilicious: it's that time of year again! Bilicious will return to Boston on October 6, 2012 for its third annual bisexual-themed variety show, in association with the [Bisexual Resource Center](#). If you're a dancer, singer, drag artist, musician, (and interested in performing), visit www.biliciousproductions.com for more information.



Calendar, *continued next page*

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street in Boston, behind Club Cafe. Call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

Come to our monthly bi brunch! All women are welcome! See calendar for dates.

2nd Tuesdays:

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting. 7-9pm at the Bi Office. All are welcome.

2nd Mondays:

Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. 7pm. Email kate.e.flynn@gmail.com for more info.

1st Wednesdays, 3rd Thursdays:

BLISS: Bisexual Social & Support Group.

2nd Thursdays:

Younger Bi Group. For bi folks 20-29. 7pm Info: Kate at youngblissboston@gmail.com.

3rd Saturdays:

Biversity Bi Brunch. 11:30am at Johnny D's, Davis Square, Somerville.

Boston-area women:

Keep up with local events. Sign up for our email list! Send an email to: biwomenboston-subscribe@yahoo.com.



Bi Women wants you!!!



SUBSCRIPTION RATE

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BBWN, P.O. BOX 301727, Jamaica Plain,, MA 02130 or online www.biwomenboston.org

CALENDAR

September

Wednesday, September 5, 7-9 pm, Bisexual Social and Support Group (BLISS) meets monthly 1st Wed. at the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope Street, Boston. All bi & bi-friendly people of all genders & orientations welcome. Meetings are peer-facilitated discussion groups, sometimes with a pre-selected topic or presenter. Info: bliss@biresource.net.

Sunday, September 9, noon. BBWN Annual Potluck Brunch & Book Swap at Ellyn's in Somerville. The book swap has become one of the highlights of the BBWN brunch circuit as women come to socialize and take home a few good books. Along with bringing a dish/drink to share, feel free to bring a few books that you'd like to pass along. There are three cats in the home so medicate accordingly, but we'll probably be on the back porch. Adults only, please. RSVP to Ellyn at elruthstrom@comcast.net by Sept. 7th.

Monday, September 10, 7 pm, Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. A peer-led support group for women in a straight marriage/relationship struggling with sexual

orientation or coming out. Meets monthly on 2nd Mon. Contact kate.e.flynn@gmail.com for location.

Tuesday, September 11, 7-9 pm, Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting. All bi and bi-friendly community members welcome to attend. Info: Ellyn at president@biresource.net. The meeting is at the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. near Back Bay station on the Orange Line.

Thursday, September 13, 7-9pm, Younger Bi Group. If you are in your 20s (or thereabouts) and identify somewhere along the lines of bisexual/omni/pan/fluid (or are questioning in that direction), please join us once a month for a few hours of discussion and support. Meet at the Eastern Bank's community room at 250 Elm Street, Somerville, on the Red Line. We'll meet from 7-9 pm and then, if people are interested, we can head to a local Davis Square establishment for more discussion and/or merriment. All genders welcome! Info: thewriterkate@gmail.com.

Saturday, September 15, 11:30 am, Bi Brunch. A mixed gender bi group. Meets 3rd Saturdays at Johnny D's on Holland St. in Davis Sq. in Somerville across the street from the Davis stop on the Red Line. Great

Calendar, *continues next page*

Calendar, *continued from previous page*

way to socialize and find out what is going on locally in the bi community.

Thursday, September 20, 7 pm, Bisexual Social and Support Group (BLiSS). The 3rd Thursday meeting for BLiSS is a one-hour discussion and then a social outing. Info: bliss@biresource.net or www.biresource.net/bievents.shtml.

Friday-Saturday, September 21-22, Out in the Park, Six Flags in Agawam, Massachusetts. Have a fabulous outing with the LGBT community in the state's largest amusement park. Two days for the price of one. Besides the usual rollercoasters, rides and games, there will be music, comedy and drag performers. Info: outinthepark.info/index.html.

Saturday, September 22, Rainbow Riverfest at Holyoke Canoe Club, Holyoke. Sponsored by the LGBT Coalition of Western MA, the day's entertainment will include Melissa Ferrick, Sister Funk, Bitch and much more. Info: www.rainbowriverfest.org.

Sunday, September 23, 14th Annual Celebrate Bisexuality Day (CBD). An annual day to honor and acknowledge our community around the world. To find out the details of how the Boston community will be marking it this year, visit the BRC at www.biresource.net or their Facebook page.

October

Wednesday, October 3, 7-9 pm, Bisexual Social and Support Group (BLiSS). Bisexual Resource Center, 29 Stanhope Street, Boston. (See September 5th)

Saturday, October 6, 7pm, Bilicious Boston, Club Café. Don't miss the third year of Bilicious Boston! This year will be another great selection of bi performers to celebrate our community's creative spirit—comedy, music, poetry and more! Come early or stay late to Club Café and get 20% off your meal if you mention Bilicious. Info: www.biliciousproductions.com.

Monday, October 8, 7pm, Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. (See September 10th)

Tuesday, October 9, 7-9pm, BRC Board Meeting. (See September 11th)

Thursday, October 11, 7-9pm, Younger Bi Group. (See September 13th)

Thursday, October 18, 7 pm, Bisexual Social and Support Group (BLiSS). (See September 20th)

Saturday, October 20, 11:30 am, Saturday Bi Brunch. (See September 15th)

Friday, October 26-Sunday, October 28, Transcending Boundaries, Springfield, MA. A weekend of education, social activism, research and support for persons whose sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, sex, or relationship style do not fit within the binary confines of male or female, gay or straight, monogamous or single. Info: TranscendingBoundaries.org.

Sunday, October 28, noon, BBWN Brunch in Arlington at Linda & Maura's. We will have a Halloween theme this month so people should wear orange or some other costume to commemorate the holiday. Please bring a potluck dish and/or drinks to share. Directions/RSVP: Linda at maurahalbert@hotmail.com or call 781-777-1146. A great opportunity to meet other bi and bi-friendly women in the Boston area.

November

Wednesday, November 7, 7pm, Bisexual Social and Support Group (BLiSS). (See September 5th)

Thursday, November 8, 7-9pm, Younger Bi Group. (See September 13th)

Monday, November 12, 7pm, Straight Marriage, Still Questioning. (See September 10th)

Tuesday, November 13, 7-9pm, BRC Board Meeting. (See September 11th)

Thursday, November 15, 7pm, Bisexual Social and Support Group (BLiSS). (See September 20th)

Saturday, November 17, 11:30 am, Saturday Bi Brunch. (See September 15th)

Sunday, November 18, noon, BBWN Brunch in Arlington at Steph's. The theme will be Thanksgiving and fall foods. Please bring a potluck dish and/or drinks to share. Directions/RSVP: Steph at smiserlis@gmail.com. A great opportunity to meet other bi and bi-friendly women in the Boston area.