

The Bisexual Transgender Gay Lesbian And Straight Supporters
Proudly present the FIRST EVER

COMING OUT BOOK

A Prideful collection of coming out stories, poetry, and art from SU students like you.



Coming Out Book

This Coming Out Book is a collection of coming out stories, poems, and artwork created by BT GLASS members describing their journeys and experiences in the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community. We invite you to invest an open mind in reading this book, and to take part in the trials and tribulations the writers and artists have experienced; in hopes that from it you take away a piece of understanding of the struggles we in the LGBT community face in our daily lives.

Who We Are

The purpose of Bisexual, Transgender, Gay, Lesbian and Straight Support (BTGLASS) is to promote the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in the community. One of the goals of BTGLASS is to provide a safe and supportive environment for LGBT people and their friends and families. Through the organization we passionately try to make this campus and its surrounding community aware of current issues surrounding LGBT people.

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Sam Porter

What a Ride My Life Has Taken

As I look back on the twenty years that I've been on Earth, I can't help, but wonder how I ended up being the way that I am. Liking women had never crossed my mind growing up. Of course I was a tomboy and I had my gay moments as a kid, but that's all it was.....moments. As I grew older, those moments became distant memories, never to be thought of again. But would it stay that way? In my mind yes because I thought that I was young and I didn't know any better. Besides, I had so many boyfriends that what I did as a kid was out of sight and out of mind to me. I just knew that I wasn't gay, or never even considered that lifestyle. I guess that you can never know who you are until it hits you right dead in the face, or in my case.....the heart.

Life had passed so quickly and before I knew it, I was in sixth grade. I was so eager to meet the new challenges that I would face, since I wasn't in elementary school anymore. I also couldn't wait to meet new people. When the first day of school was over, my older sister Shekia had introduced me to one of her friends. Her name was Wednesday, well Annie to her friends. She was a pretty girl with a beautiful smile that I've never seen before. Of course at that point in time, I wasn't thinking of her as a beautiful girl with a beautiful smile that I've never seen before. She was simply someone that I just met and she was a cool person. Months had passed and I and Annie were the best of friends. We were always hanging out and having fun. I don't know what happened because all of a sudden, I really started wanting to be with her all the time and she seemed to always be on mind. It got to the point where I couldn't think of anything else, but her. What did it all mean though? I contemplated back and forth in my mind all the possible answers, but only one really stuck out.....I had to be gay.

Once I realized that I was possibly gay, I still would try and deny it. I mean, I still liked guys, so I guess that made me bi-sexual. I didn't know what to think or what to do, but I had to figure out if I wanted to tell Annie how I felt about her. The only way that I could tell her was writing about her. I guess around seventh grade, I went through a poetry phase. All the feelings that I had, all that I wanted to say to her went into those poems. There were times that she read the poems that I were writing to her and I would just hoped that she knew that I was writing about her. She made me feel something that I had never felt before. Damn, just thinking about it makes me feel like I'm in seventh grade again and just so madly in love with her. Anyway, even though Annie didn't know that I was talking about her in my poems, she knew that I was talking about someone. So Annie and Shekia would hassle me all the time because they wanted to know who I was talking about, but I didn't tell them. The hassling kept going on and two week later, I caved. I wrote a letter to Annie telling her how I felt. I felt so nervous because I didn't know how she was going to react and I didn't want to lose her friendship either. I was relieved because in the note that she wrote back to me, it read that she wanted to be with me too. I was happy because I had the girl of my dreams and all was well. Shekia found the letter that I wrote to Annie and I think that she was upset with me. I guess she felt that I was taking Annie away from her, but that wasn't the case. I guess after awhile Annie just wanted to be with guys again. We stopped dating probably a week after we started dating.

Even though we remained friends, we still did things together as if we were together, but it didn't get any further than that. Well after that was over, it was back to boysville for me.

I dated a few guys before my true love came, which was a guy I have to add. It was ninth grade and Mike had just transfer from a school in Connecticut. He was a sweetheart and he was very loving and caring. He was simply everything that I wanted in a guy and in a husband. We were together for more than a year, before those thoughts of girls came back. I and Mike had gone to a drama show at my high school and one of the girls named Candice that was in the show caught my eye. I don't know why she stood out to me, but she did and I just had to get to know her. I wrote her a letter telling her how I felt about her and she gave me her number, even though she was with someone else. When I got home, I contemplated what to do with the number. Call it or burn it.....I didn't know what the hell to do. I knew that if I called her, only trouble would result from it. If I didn't call her, then I would have regretted it.....so I called her. I got to know Candice better and I even joined the drama club so that I could be close to her. Problems began to start because I started wanting more from Candice. I would write her more letters and just wanted to be with her. I even kissed her at one point and I felt happy, but I felt guilty because of Mike. I didn't know what to do after that. Should I leave Mike or forget about Candice? I didn't have to answer the question because it was decided for me.

It was the end of my sophomore year of high school and we had a book signing for this book that my class had made. It was the end of the school day when my friend Sugar came up to me with bad news. She said that Aaron, Candice's brother, had found the letter that I gave to her and gave it to Mike. She also said that Mike was cussing Candice out saying how could she mess up our relationship. So I went to confront him and he was crying so bad. Even though I felt bad, in my mind at the time, I definitely wasn't going to show it. He was so furious that he pushed me and when I started walking away because I wasn't having that, he pulled me back. I couldn't even look at him because I was so mad. I didn't even know why because I wasn't the one who got hurt. I was just so over talking about the situation that I just stopped talking. So he pushed me against the wall slowly and said "if you love me, then talk to me". Even though I loved him, I didn't say a word. He then threw the chain that he gave to me that said Mike's Love on it and walked away. As he walked away, I could just feel my whole life just shatter. I picked up the chain and just cried. I was mad at myself for what I had done, but what could I do? I couldn't change the past. Mike didn't talk to me for about a week. Everyone at school knew what had happened and was shocked at what I had done. I felt like an outsider, but luckily, I still had my friends. When I and Mike finally talked, it was a long conversation about what made me do what I did and among other things. I was surprised that he still wanted to try again, but in my mind, I just couldn't. I didn't want to hurt him again and I felt that I needed to figure myself out so this wouldn't happen again. So I told him no and I could see that he was hurt that I said that, but it was for the best. Even though we stayed friends, it was always hard for us sometimes because we still loved each other. I still love him now and I know that will never change.

Well Mike and I were over, so I spent my junior year trying to pursue Candice. I had changed my whole appearance and my whole being just to get her attention. It was like I suffered from dissociative identity disorder because I was one way with her and myself with others. I thought that she liked me because of the way that she acted when I was with her. She had me wrapped around her finger. In my mind, she was like a drug I just had to have. I should

have definitely listened to my friends when they told me to leave her alone. She ended up hurting me real bad and as I think about it now, I know how Mike feels. After that, I promised myself that I would leave her alone and that's exactly what I did for the rest of my junior year.

Senior year had come quick, fast and in a hurry. I left Candice to herself and did what I did best and went my merry little way. A few days into the first week of school, Candice came to talk to me. She started talking about how she was sorry about how she had treated me. I thought what she was saying was truly sincere, so I forgave her. We started hanging out again after that and once again, she drew me in like a little puppy. This time was different because I actually had the opportunity to get with her and of course I did. I was so happy about finally being with her and that I was staying the night over her house that weekend. That was my first time being intimate with a woman and it was a wonderful experience. I felt good to be with her and everyone at school was ok with it. Of course there were some of my friends that didn't like it, but I didn't care. Everything was good between me and Candice, but when the fifth day came, she told me that she couldn't be with me anymore. She wasn't ready for me because she just broke up with her ex not too long before getting with me. So there I was, crushed once again by this girl. I was serious this time; I wasn't going to fall for her manipulating ass again. Probably like four weeks later, my friend Redz came up to me saying that I must be a playa after all. I'm thinking to myself what the hell is she talking about? She told me that Candice said that I fucked her and then dumped her. I'm thinking that doesn't even sound right because why would I dump her, when I wanted to be with her for so long. That was some bullshit, but I got exactly what I deserved though because I was stupid. I couldn't take trying to be with people anymore, so I didn't and it stayed that way for awhile.

So now it's my freshmen year at college and I'm bi-sexual and no one knows. I didn't tell anyone, not even my roommate because I didn't know what to expect. All my girl friends thought that I was straight because that's all that I wanted them to see. Even though I was playing the straight act, I wanted a girlfriend so bad. Surely, I found no luck because all the girls that I was crushing on were straight. There were many guys that wanted to get with me, but I wanted interested. So I was a big loner my freshmen year. Once my sophomore year came, I was very hopeful of finding someone. Even though I didn't find anyone to date, I wanted to join an organization that supports LGBT people. So I looked and found BTGLASS. I was so excited to sign up for it, but of course I was a little hesitant because what if people recognized me. Then I started thinking about it and I didn't care what people thought, so I signed up. I have to say that BTGLASS has been the best thing that has happened to me so far during my college experience. I've met so many wonderful people that have impacted my life greatly. I feel so safe with everyone in BT and I know I won't have to worry about being judged in any way.

BTGLASS has also been a factor in my coming out process to my friends and family. We had a panel one semester, where fellow students would ask questions about LGBT topics and issues. As I really listened to the questions and the answers, I started thing about if I wanted to be open about my sexuality. And after watching the panelists being open about their sexuality, I thought that I wanted to be that way as well. I felt as though that I was living a lie and wasn't being true to myself and those that I cared for. I also thought that if my family and friends really loved me, then they wouldn't care and would love me just the same. I'm happy that I got the reactions that I wanted. My family and friends still love me, so that's all that matters. BTGLASS has also helped me in finally dating someone. Even though it was only for a little while, I believe

that it was worth it. I met this incredible girl on one of the BTGLASS's movie nights. I don't know why, but she caught my eye. She was beautiful and funny and we hit it off just like that. Of course it was a complicated situation because she was a senior and that really affected everything. In the end, she only liked me as a friend, which was a bummer because I really cared for her. I guess it was best for us to end it then because we would have had to do it anyway, so it's all good. Even though I didn't get what I wanted out of our relationship, I still think that she was the best thing that had happened to me. I've learned a lot of things from her. One thing that I've learned is not to date seniors ever again in my life. I mainly learned not to wait so long to care for someone again. Everyone deserves to be cared for even though you've been hurt before. Lastly, to be honest with others because what others don't know, can hurt them in the end. For these lessons, I'll always be grateful to her and I wish her happiness.

I've been through good time and bad times, but there is always something to gain from those experiences. As I think back on my life, everything that I've done was worth it because it has helped me grow as a person and I'm living a happy life. I don't think that life is all about doing traditional things like getting married and things like that to make life worth something. For me, it's been the people that I've shared my life with because those are the people that have made my life so much easier and spectacular. So I want to thank my friends, family, and BTGLASS for making my life so much more pleasurable.

Anonymous**Casualties of Coming out**

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day,
 Like some sweet line of Shakespeare's play,
 But oh how life's colors turn to grey,
 Once I have uttered the words.....Mom, Dad I'm gay....

I am not completely gay I guess you could say. I am bisexual and from what I would consider as a standard guy. I don't like pink or wear tight jeans so you can put your mental torches and pitchforks away now. I guess I just consider my possibilities and surroundings more than most.

I know most guys immediately tense up at the knowledge of their friend being gay. Their mind most likely goes through every single memory they shared to check if he was hit on. But we are not going to pounce you just cause you accept we are gay, or in my case bi. At least, we shouldn't try to sway you one way or the other. This is a personal decision, and although I am not one for coming out to my friends in that way, I understand why people feel they have to tell someone. If you are reading this feeling shaken or unsure let it be known that your opinion should be respected as well. I am not saying that verbal or physical abuse is allowed but you could ask for them to not bring their lover around if it makes you uncomfortable. Compromises save friendships.

I personally have a very conservative family. My cousin was thrown out of her house when she admitted she was a lesbian. I am a year older than her but still did not tell my parents till just recently. They took it better than I expected but I take measures to not really make them uncomfortable.

When it comes down to it this is your personal life, a personal choice on who you take to bed at night. It does not have to be public to everyone, but if you really feel it is necessary I hope you do not force it upon the people you love. This whole "Accept me now!" attitude is a complete mockery on what the GLBT community is trying to achieve in reference to being considered normal. If you want to parade down Main Street in a neon pink thong, go ahead but you should know that every conservative family uses that rebellious image to spread hatred and lies to their children.

If your largest argument is religion then at least you picked your strongest support. The Bible says that a man should not lie with a man the way a man lies with a woman. If you have not already guessed, I am a practicing Roman Catholic. I go to church every Sunday usually and try my best to leave this world better than I found it. Am I a hypocrite for being Catholic when the idea of sleeping with a man does not disturb or disgust me? I do not think that I am, but I would hope not. But if I am condemned by God for loving someone I cannot help but wonder what he will do to all the people who hate people like me.

No one is better than anyone else. Love is universal. Leave the world better than you found it.

Robert Cogdell III

Pray the Gay Away

INTRODUCTION

I'm inspired by stories and the history of my people, the LGBT community. I look at anti-gay legislation, paragraph 175, proposition 8, the death penalty- in some countries. The genocide of gays in the holocaust, the stonewall riots, Oscar Wilde, Lawrence King, Brendon Tina, Mathew Sheppard, and all the others just like me, who were persecuted and murdered. It would be a lie, if I didn't fear that one day I would be murdered or gay bashed because of my sexual orientation and the truth is I might. Even that doesn't keep me from being true to myself and fighting for something I feel I was given at birth to fight for.

THE EARLY YEARS

Although I can't recall everything mapped in the history of discovering I was gay, my mother has pointed out some noticeable and "odd" behavior in my child hood, where it could've been expected. For instance, putting a scarf on and pretending to be Cinderella around age six and putting on a make-shift skirt to re-created a scene in Thumbelina sometime later.

I suppose you could say I was an obedient child, god fearing, always doing what my mother and father told me. I'd accepted Christ in first grade on a playground in Odenton, after hearing a sermon about hell, and little did I know, that decision at 6 years old would set the course and many obstacles and struggles for the rest of my life.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

It was underneath the slide, that I had my first "experimentation" with the other kids. The boys would pull down their pants and girls would lift up their skirts, and never once, do I recall looking at the girls. I even remember playing Power Rangers with my best friend and being the pink ranger hoping that Tommy would save me. My best friend, I would later find out via facebook, identifies as gay as well.

A couple years past and I was in fourth grade. After seeing movies like "Now and Then" I finally knew what a crush was, although I'd never had them on a girl. I did however crush on another friend of mine named Scott, and then Eric. Fast forward, and there's me and my fourth grade girlfriend Ashton kissing on the school bus. It was that bus I first heard the term gay, and after, I turned to Ashton and told her "I'm gay" only to take it back the next day. Even without fully understanding it, I knew it wasn't something you talked about openly and thus I kept my crushes between myself and my journal. I had dreams of other boys, dreams I was a girl, and other feelings that I remember telling my mom, and I was told to pray to god and ask that they be taken away. Prayer and faith then, seemed like the perfect answer to everything, and it sufficed until puberty.

I can vividly recall looking up books on homosexuality in the library; I was eleven and my family was stationed in Misawa Air Force base, Japan. I remember my heart racing and my sweaty palms as I turned page by page. What was I looking for? Answers probably. I didn't know why I was feeling an attraction for males, but I had the slightest inkling I knew how to find out. The only thing was I didn't. For some reason I knew this was something I couldn't share with anyone, not my friends and certainly not my religious mother. I was even too scared to

check out the library books I'd found. So every day I would back to the same place, the same books, and skim to say the least. I was extremely paranoid that everyone could see the cover of the book I was reading, almost as if they could read *me* as well.

There was a gym on the military base where I took swimming lessons and although the lessons were for pre-teens, the locker room was an adult locker room. One time, as I was waiting for my father to finish his workout, I found myself standing on a bench peering over the lockers and looking at the men as they changed. When my step-father caught me I quickly searched for the little white lie that I was looking for him. I'm still not even sure if he believes me to this day, and I'm not even sure if he remembers, but even that instance didn't make it any easier to come out.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Two and a half years and four bad report cards later I found myself in the suburban town of Bolingbrook, Illinois. My parents had already been divorced for 12 years and this marks the first time I actually lived with my father while going to school. I was fresh from Japan and popular upon arrival. Little did I know, there was absolutely no room for a gay boy amongst the popular kids and soon I would be a target. My pre-teen heart was soon captured by another 8th grader named Kasey. He was also in band, played the trombone, and was popular. One day after band practice, and after many days of contemplation, I decided to give him a very subtle note with my telephone number, asking him to call me. It was right before health class and I remember my heart pounding as I approached Kasey at his locker with his posse standing around. In one swift motion I'd handed him the note turned around and walked off to class. All of about two minutes later before class had begun, this girl Erica came up to me, and asked if I'd handed Kasey a note, and although I answered truly fully I had no idea what was to come. From then on, aside from being called fag, being threatened, pushed, and laughed at; I was completely humiliated and "outed" to say the least. I could rarely eat lunch without having something thrown at me. I'd consulted teachers, but only so much was done to prevent it. Even my home life wasn't the most accepting.

Once, as I left home early to help my homeroom teacher decorate her door for a contest, I was reprimanded by my father, and even today I remember what he said verbatim. "Girls decorate and boys play football" - Robert Cogdell Jr. His idea of football was having his 9 year old son run around his apartment complex in the dead of an Austin Texas summer, throwing a football up and down-the, penalty by a spanking if I stopped. He was a military man and still is. I feel he must have seen femininity in me to have been broken at a young age. Even as a divorced father he'd regulate my toys being limited to G.I. Joes, cut my hair every time I grew it out, and who's cure for toughening up a weak son, was to throw him in the deep end of the pool.

One weekend my father, step sister, and I were driving to see a movie. I was sitting shotgun and he'd told me to "make my voice deeper so people won't beat you up." Even then I was religiously optimistic and told him it was up to god to change my voice. I was slapped and told not to bring god into the conversation. Another time, while driving to PA I was forced to sit hours with my head leaning over the center console for about two hours because he couldn't hear me.

I was relieved to know that when my mother was stationed in Maryland, I could live with her, and come summer of 2002 I did.

HIGH SCHOOL

Where my father beat me physically, my mother fought a spiritual battle. Ever since I had mentioned being gay at age twelve she'd called it my "situation" and constantly prayed with me and for me, that god would deliver me from my thoughts and feelings. I had prayed the same prayer for years. I was told that with faith of a mustard seed I could move mountains, and I didn't know what other kind of faith to have. I had dedicated my life to god since age 6 and I was losing a war I shouldn't have fought in the first place.

Sophomore year epitomized me religious oppression and emotional depression. I was taught that god would use us and that we all had a purpose. At one point I bought what my mother had told me and thought that I would be delivered from homosexuality and used to testify on behalf of god to others with my "situation". I had even gone so far as to venture into gay chat rooms to tell other gays they were going to hell. I too feared the same fate, but it felt better and easier persecuting others. After years of praying I figured that maybe I wasn't supposed to act on my gayness, but when that failed, I felt I had to take drastic measures for punishment for disobeying the word of god. I began cutting. I highlighted every biblical passage on homosexuality; I even put my blood on it as a kind of self penance. I knew suicide was out of the question, but I was dying for answers that weren't being answered. Why was I like this? Why wasn't prayer working? Since those answers were coming and since I was falling into the sins of homosexuality I *had* to punish myself. It wasn't until my brother saw my arm bleeding that he told my mother and I was sent to a psychologist.

Thank god for psychologists though. Many sessions later, I was able to find meaning behind anti-gay biblical passages and was, for the first time in my life, taught how to think for myself, and also think analytically. In this, I was truly able to survive high school, aside from the occasional "fag" or push. Early on, without the disapproval from my father, I was able to join SGA and looked forward to college and a community of gays where I didn't feel alone. In high school, we had a GSA that disbanded around the same time I became depressed and I never went.

COLLEGE

When I arrived to college I was never prepared for the things I was going to face. In senior year of high school I was put on anti-depressants which carried through to freshman year of college, and I began cutting again. I naively thought college would be full of adults who knew who they were and that I would fit happy in an openly gay community. BT GLASS was active then, but I never wanted to go for some reason. I guess I'd expected more, and as a result, I flaked on a couple of meetings and even got into legal trouble after vandalizing and writing homophobic slurs in public places. If nothing else helped, it certainly didn't help I became emotionally involved with Caucasian guy who told me "I'd date you if you were white". (This wasn't my first gay rejection based on race, as a previous guy had sworn never to date "black, feminine and fat gays" and I was clearly two out of three. This racial rejection within the gay community I longed so much to be a part of was something I'd experienced even in high school.)

I was crushed and should've taken that as a warning sign, yet moth to a flame; I clung to stupidity and dove head first into danger. That summer I'd lived in him and when the queer hit the fan and I was outed to his father. I was told to leave or have everything I owned tossed into

the streets and was told no “faggot” could live in that house. Unlike the average college student who only takes essentials to college, I’d brought my life—my two guitars, clothes, television, life’s drawing etc. I didn’t have any mode of transportation to get me to a place I could stay before nightfall. My parents lived just as far away as his father and by the time they would have arrived, I would have literally been on the streets and who knows what else. Twenty plus dollars, an ATM trip, and a taxi later, I was safe and on my own again living in Dogwood for the summer. It wasn’t later that I suspected I was outed in order to protect someone else being in the closet, and since then I’ve come to realize that more often than not, being in the closet was never an option for me and seemed to cause more problems than it seemingly temporarily resolved.

Another instance where being gay hindered housing opportunity was when I decided to look for off campus housing with a friend and two other roommates. In a discussion, where I wasn’t present, my friend had told the two roommates that I was gay. In turn one of the girls told her boyfriend who had threatened to break up with her if she let me live there, due to sexual abuse he’d experienced as a child. It’s times like these I wonder, just how many people group and associate gays with child molesters and such? And I further wonder, do they do that with everyone who has hurt them? I can’t even begin to think or explain those biased and illogical fears associated with my race, let alone my sexuality. Long story short, that friend lived there I didn’t.

Two years and many counseling sessions later, I would find myself in bliss. During the winter I’d traveled to a city called Edinburgh about 6 hours away from where I was born and seven away from London. It was in this wonderfully gorgeous city, I met my first gay married man and was giddy with joy. I’d had even made friendly acquaintances with other gays and lesbians who really took both my friend and I out and showed us Scottish gay culture. It seemed as though race didn’t matter and even the heterosexual men dressed as I did, and it wasn’t until I returned, that I realized how far America as a country had to go, and I was largely inspired to make a difference and be a part of the advancement of my people and take gay history by the horns.

A FEW UPDATES

My father is currently stationed in Iraq and we’ve come very far since my early years. I’m positive he doesn’t agree with homosexuality as he tells me, but he also supports me and loves me. Much like with my step father, it’s mostly never brought up, but I’m still happy to have a splendid non-abusive relationship with them. My mother is very supportive of me and even she doesn’t accept homosexuality, but she too has grown loved watching B Scott and RuPaul’s Drag Race.

Although I’m agnostic now and don’t believe in an ultimate and divinely driven purpose, I feel through my experiences I can ultimately help others and relate to the struggle of other gays and lesbians and continue to learn and grow within the LGBT community, and contribute until we are given equal rights and not treated as something to be cured, treated, and/or prayed away.

Lisa Heinrich

Coming Out Story

I was never familiar with the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) community before I came out, so to speak. I was 15 years old and a rather typical teenager who did well in school, played sports and participated in clubs. However, my sophomore year of high school changed my life completely. At lunch I slowly started to notice this girl who I had never met before. I would see her walk by with her lunch and sit with her friends. There was something there, something that would not let me take my eyes off of her. Something attracted me to her like never before. A few months later I met her at softball tryouts for the school. I could not play due to shoulder surgery and I decided to help manage the JV team instead of Varsity. Jess and I slowly started speaking at tryouts and practice. I was thrilled that she made the team. I felt on cloud nine even though I still barely knew her. We started hanging out outside of practice during the week and weekends and by the end of the season we were practically best friends, hanging out and learning everything about each other.

Then, the first week in June arrived and we were spending the night together but this time that night changed everything. It was one of the most incredible nights in my life and I knew it was a start to something. The following days we acted a little odd, not sure how to address our bond, our closeness. Finally we came out to each other, expressing our love and feelings for one another. It was hard, awkward and slow but we both felt the same. I had never seen myself with a female before then, I had never really been aware of the possibility. I guess I was slightly sheltered regarding that but I can look back at times earlier in my life where I knew I was a little different. I had dated guys before and even after Jess as I was bisexual, but nothing compares to being with a female.

I knew something big would change in my life the first day I saw Jess in October in that cafeteria. We became inseparable, hanging out every chance we got, as most couples did. We began to know everything about one another, family, history, everything. We molded into the same group of friends and eventually came out to them mid-summer. They all had thought we were together anyway, and one guy was gay and another transgender. That summer was the start of my awareness of a whole new world, the gay community. I learned everything I could, read online, watched movies and talked with friends to become more informed. My junior year I was active in the Gay-Straight Alliance and my girlfriend was president.

Stepping back though, we both came out to our families that first summer. We could not hide it any longer and we wanted people to know how we felt. I hated people asking my about boyfriends when my insides were screaming that I was in love with this beautiful girl. Jess and I had discussed it in depth before and came out to our moms on the same night. My girlfriend came out to her mom and her mom took it rather well. Her mom had thought something was going on between us anyway, as I stated we always were together or talking on the phone. She was very supportive. Then, I came out to my mom. My mom took the news okay, she was not completely surprised but she didn't quite understand. She thought this would just be a phase and that I wasn't sure what I was doing. That is never a good feeling, when others tell you that you don't understand what you're doing and that it's a phase. It was not a phase. My mom did help me come out to my dad because I could not bear keeping it inside and

my dad is rather conservative and can have quite a temper. We arranged to have a talk the following week.

The night came. My mom, my dad, and I sat in the living room. My mom did an introduction saying I had stuff to talk about, and then I came out with it. "I'm dating Jess, we're happy, and I can't hide it any longer". Tears ran down my face as he told me was disgusted and would never look at me the same again, as his daughter. He yelled all these threats, saying she was never to come around, I wasn't allowed to see her, that she had turned me this way. He stopped talking and walked away from me, he left. I left the house and stayed at Jess's house. My mom had convinced me into coming back home several days later saying dad had 'cooled off'. I barely would speak to my father, nor would he speak to me. Silence in the morning and the evening as we passed each other in the kitchen or living room. He never again addressed the issue with me and here I am almost 23 years old.

After about a month we started small talk because my mom was frustrated. I was dedicated to softball and he was one of the coaches so we had to start communicating as I practiced and played year round. It was very uncomfortable and I tried not to be at home that often, for a while. I always went out with friends, stayed at their houses outside of school. By the middle of my junior year I started having people over my house and my family just ignored the issue that I was gay. My mom was more understanding and would let me do things for my girlfriend at the house. She and dad would go out for the night so I could cook dinner and celebrate our monthly anniversaries alone but of course my dad did not know the real reason, or never chose to acknowledge it. My dad set out rules, saying that she was only allowed over two nights a week, she couldn't sleep over, things of that nature but they were actually not heavily enforced, thank god.

I continued to do well in school; straight A's and was very active so I always used that against my parent's saying that they cannot restrict me if I am still a successful student. However, my relationship was affected greatly by my parent's reaction to everything. My girlfriend felt so uncomfortable in my house and I didn't blame her one bit, but it was hard and we would fight about it. It would still be a little uncomfortable for her to be in my house even several years later after we broke up. My sophomore year and junior year were filled with many changes as I struggled facing surgeries and illnesses; I started to not care about school and then fell in love. Coming out to myself as well as others had taken a toll on me. I chose not to deal with it really; it didn't matter because I loved her. However, things would come up such as realizing how harsh life is, how mean people are and how limited I was for not being a heterosexual. I did abuse alcohol often as well as went through heavy periods of depression for the remainder of high school.

Junior year in high school, as I stated I became very active in the GLBT community. I would go down to D.C. and Baltimore for events and stayed informed through current events and policies. My mom was aware of my actions and she also became worried. The beginning of my senior year I had some damage done to my parent's property. Jess and I had been dating a little over a year now and we were open in school most of our junior year, constantly together, exchanging notes, hugging and even snuck kisses at times. I could have cared less what other people thought. I am pretty sure I know who damaged my parent's mailbox but never did anything about it. The kids wrote 'Lezbo' and 'Dyke' on it in red paint. My parent's got a new mailbox and my mom spoke with me getting a little concerned. I just said to ignore it, although

they did it again writing those words in paint and my parents bought a third mailbox. Luckily they did not have to buy a fourth. It shook Jess and I a little bit but I used it as encouragement to continue what I was doing, being informed and promoting diversity.

The end of my senior year was rough, as my girlfriend struggled with her sexuality some and almost went back in the closet. She did not want to be as open, which hurt me and led to many fights. The very end of the school year at about our 2 year mark, she broke up with me. It was more than rough for me but you live on. She was a turning point in my life, the love of my life of whom I do owe very much. I learned about myself and about my sexuality. After we broke up, I said I was bisexual and I dated girls and guys but had no successful relationships with guys. I did date different girls, a few of which I really connected with and dated for a while. The way I feel towards women is indescribable and I do not have that towards men. I do not hide the fact that I am a lesbian at all from family and friends now.

As I turn a new page in my life with graduation and going into the workplace I will continue to be an advocate for the GLBT community and express myself. As for my extended family, they all know by word of mouth but again it is never talked about. However, I have made clear to my mom that if I have a serious girlfriend I am going to bring her to family events and parties or I will not go. I stand by my word that I will give up others if they cannot accept me for who I am. I know I may not see real marriage in my lifetime (only 4 states allow it legally) but I hope to have at least a civil union and hope that those who are close to me will attend and be supportive. All of my friends have been supportive of my sexuality, they see me for who I am and what I have accomplished as a person and for that I am grateful.

Anonymous

Coming Out

I was raised in a very Catholic family, so when I realized that I was bisexual; it was very difficult for me to accept. To be anything other than straight as an arrow in my family is practically blasphemy. In fact, if my family ever found out, it would be a miracle if I wasn't disowned. Coming to terms with my sexuality was made even more difficult by the fact that one of my best friends (who is also bisexual) was treated horribly in our high school. All through high school, I felt extremely two-faced. Hiding a whole side of my personality made me feel as though I was living a double life. I was one person when I was alone, but another person when I was around my family and friends. Realizing this fact made me completely rethink my belief system. Rather than blindly following what I have always been told to, I formed my own ideas about what I believe. This was a major step for me, as it was when I finally admitted to myself that I am bisexual. When I came to college, everything was completely different. Rather than being a social outcast, I found myself embraced by the LGBT community. I was also paired with a roommate who is going through the same thing I am. Realizing that I am not alone and that there will always be people there to support me made me much more comfortable with myself. I'm still struggling a little, but I find myself opening up to people. Even if it is just one person at a time, I see it as another step toward accepting who I really am.

Mike Cooper

My Life from Bad to Good

My story starts when I was molested at the age of four by another man. I was in foster care and this guy and his girlfriend was taking care of me at the time. Since I was afraid of sleeping in my bedroom, I would sleep down stairs on the couch. On some days, the guy that was taking care of me would see me laying down stairs and would sleep with me. Nothing happened when he would sleep with me, but one night he molested me and hurt me physically. I told my social worker and they took me away from there. I was then put into a group home, where I had stayed for many years.

At the age of ten, I was finally adopted. I was put into school and for once in my life, I felt like I belonged. Growing up, especially after I was molested, I never really thought about my sexuality. But during High School, I guess that's when you can say that I found out that I was gay. My last year of high school, I started going to Chesapeake College. When I got there, I started looking at other guys and felt strongly about them, compared to how I felt about girls. And even though I knew it would be considered wrong in other people eyes, I got into my first relationship with one of the guy students there. The guy that I met was very cool and we really hit it off. Since I really wasn't sure about how my parents would react, I would lie and say that I was spending that night at a friend's house when I was actually with my boyfriend.

When I turned eighteen, I decided to come out to my parents. Well I actually came out to my mom and she didn't take it too lightly. Well to put it in a nice way she told me to get out of her house. She kicked me out in the middle of winter and if it wasn't for my boyfriend, I would have been out on the streets. I was happy living with my boyfriend for a while, but then everything started going downhill between me and him. So I broke up with him. We were single for two years and then we got back together. Well this time, things were different because every time things started going downhill, he would beat me. He actually had me in the hospital ten different times. The tenth time, I finally broke up with him again because I just couldn't deal with it anymore.

Shortly after that, I was walking home from a friend's house and there were like five or six black guys standing on the other side of the street. They started calling me a faggot and other derogatory names. Before I knew it, they ran across the street and started beating me up. They beat me up so bad. Luckily, I had enough energy to get up and walk back to my friend's house in order to get some help. I was actually flown to shock trauma right here in Salisbury because my condition was so bad. I had a concussion and was out of work for a week. They had almost killed me.

Well I lived in that town for 9 more months before I moved here to Salisbury. I have joined this group called BT GLASS. I have a lot of fun at the meetings and I love it when I get to go to movie nights. I just love being in BT GLASS because I have met a lot of great people that I can't imagine being without. I also met this guy that I really like and I hope that he likes me too.

Come On, Come Out...

Rachell Shockley

Status: Freshman

Major: Superhero

When I was seven-years-old, my parents went through their divorce. They didn't love each other anymore, was the only explanation I got. I never realized I didn't know the full implications of this statement until almost ten years later. It was after my sixteenth birthday and my dad happened to be in town at that particular time, I think to celebrate my birthday late.

One afternoon while my sisters (they're twins and were only thirteen at the time) and I were just hanging around the house, my mom and dad came into the living room. I remember my mom calling upstairs and asking one of my sisters to come downstairs; there was something our dad had to tell us.

Immediately, I think for the worst. I'm a worrier, so I was sure someone had died or there was something wrong [terribly] wrong with him. His sexual orientation was the last thing on my mind. But that's what this little family meeting was really about. My dad finally came out to us (his daughters that is) about being gay.

When I think about it now, it was more of a 'light bulb' moment, rather than shock. Things that were happening and had happened made more sense. But in that moment I remember feeling, well I was okay with it. My mom hadn't raised me to hate gays or anything; I had a friend at school that was gay. Only, this was my dad not some friend I met and voluntarily got to know. My dad: a prominent aid in creating my life. And now, he was gay? How did that even work?

Later, it was explained to me that he was doing what was expected of him at that time in his life. Men were expected to marry women and have families. Just because he didn't want to be married to my mom anymore didn't mean that he didn't love her or my sisters and I any less. After that I was sad. Sad for my dad, that he didn't get a chance to be who he was for a majority of his life. Sad for all the other people who never got the chance to be who they really were because they were afraid of what other people would think/say/do.

After we were told, I was okay(ish) with the fact that my dad ~~was now~~ had been gay for my entire life and I was just now finding out about it. It was weird, I'll admit but I don't think it had really sunk in entirely yet.

That night I get a call from my best friend asking, 'Hey, what's up?' It took that much from me to breakdown.

"I found out the reason my parents got a divorce." I answered, sniffing a little bit. It was the first edge of the impact.

"I always thought you knew, but well, what was it?" She answered confused.

"Well I knew they 'no longer loved each other' but I didn't know it was because my dad likes boys!" I may have even partially wailed the end of my sentence because I just didn't know how to handle it.

My friend let me cry and talk without saying much. There wasn't much to be said. No one knows what to say. 'I'm sorry' isn't really appropriate. 'I know how you feel' hardly applies. "It doesn't change anything does it?" really made the most sense.

"You're right, it doesn't. He's still my same dad and he loves me. He just has boyfriends now, like I do. Eesh." And suddenly, everything about the situation seemed better.

I joke. A lot. About a great number of things. It helps me deal with things in a better way. I joke about my dad a lot, good naturedly of course with my sisters, my friends, even my mom sometimes. I love my dad, don't get me wrong, but who can pass up a good gay joke? (Only kidding.)

You see, my dad is not a stereotypical gay man. He does not have a great fashion sense, he doesn't speak with a (slight) lisp, and he doesn't even hold his partner's hand when we go out places. We never talk about the subject, it's just always *there*. It's never a bad thing though; I probably could talk to him about it if something came up. He's happier now more than ever and that is something I can be proud and happy about as well.

Rick Highers

Short Story

Life is known for throwing people all kinds of surprises. Some of them are seen as wonderful gifts and others as horrible burdens. They affect people in many different ways. Whatever the case, these surprises that life throws at us are catalysts, obstacles, unexpected forks in a road we never imagined for ourselves. They push, mold, and guide us on our way to self discovery.

This is the story of one such “surprise”... Well, maybe surprise isn’t exactly the right word since now when “Paul” (as we’ll call him for the purpose of anonymity) looks back at his life, it is obvious that he would turn out this way. However, at the time, surprising it was.

Paul Streeter was raised by his mother whom he shared a very close bond with. She was and still is his closest friend. He was a seemingly ordinary child in Middle School. Average and somewhat of a misfit, Paul didn’t seem to be well liked by other kids his age but this suited him. He liked avoiding the complicated social world. Always content to be off on his own, Paul was usually off picking flowers or catching bugs while the other boys his age were playing baseball and chasing girls around the playground.

It wasn’t until his sophomore year of High School, when asked out by Dani Dean, that Paul realized he hadn’t taken an interest in girls yet like most of his other friends. Dani was part of the Marching Band; a click in the social structure of High School that Paul was happy to find fit him well. She was pretty, intelligent, and had similar interests. So Paul, chalking his lack of interest in girls (so far) up to lack of experience, accepted Dani’s request. He and Dani hit it off from the get-go. Always in sync with each other’s thoughts and sense of humor, they grew to be best friends in no time. That is until something went wrong. Something Paul never expected nor was prepared for. A surprise life had maliciously thrown in his path.

Paul was fast asleep after having spent a beautiful day with Dani. He was dreaming about the day they had spent together and to his astonishment, he leaned over and kissed her. Even more astonishing, he had become aroused! Delighted by this sudden interest in her, he took the dream further. Kissing from her mouth to the edge of her jaw line, then down to her neck and..... Suddenly the atmosphere of the dream changed. Dani’s actions became aggressive, grabbing Paul’s shoulders firmly with uncharacteristically rough hands and forcing him down on the couch. All the while kissing him with such ferocity he hardly noticed

the shift in the texture of her skin or the unusually powerful persona she had adopted. He was in such ecstasy he hardly noticed as the soft round features of her face changed to hard squared rugged ones, under his touch. His head spinning with the unexpected euphoria of this dreams twist, he paused to look at her... His heart stopped!

Gasping in horror, Paul woke in hot sweats but his blood ran cold threw his pulsing veins. Where he had expected to see the face of his sweet Dani laying atop of him was a man! A hot, sweaty, muscular man! Shocked and disgusted with himself, he tried to reason with himself. Make himself forget... but he couldn't forget. All night the image of the man's lustful face haunted his thoughts. Worst of all, though he would not admit it, Paul knew he had liked it.

The next morning Paul drove away all thoughts of the previous nights... nightmare. But as the day went on, things began to get worse. He had awakened a monster living inside of him that he had never known existed. It was impossible for him to walk past a single member of the football, lacrosse, or "god forbid" the swim team without slipping into a train of thought that both discussed and embarrassed him! To top it off, he and Dani were unable to take their relationship any further than first base. She seemed to be just as uninterested in Paul as he was in her. These sinful, revolting thoughts continued to torture and destroy him from the inside, eating at his very existence.

Paul began to hate himself. He hated his weakness, hated his vial repulsing thoughts that he couldn't keep controlled. Time, cares, and interests, along with his grades and relationship with Dani, all slipped away as he fell further and further into depression. Paul had been raised a Roman Catholic and taught from a young age that homosexuality was unforgivable. How could such a thing happen to him? How could he ever tell his mother? She was the most important person in his life and the one person whose rejection would honestly crush his heart. What had he done to make God punish him like this? He resented, No he HATED God for making him like this!!!!!!

That was it! Threw all the fog of denial and depression, It had hit him! The answer he had needed. God HAD made him that way! Which meant, in Paul's mind, that he was as God had intended him to be. Baffled by how such an obvious explanation had eluded him for so long, Paul finally accepted that he was gay.

In the new acceptance of himself, Paul felt a great weight lifted off his heart. Like a part of him that had been torn away had finally been reunited with his other half. Paul felt compelled for the first time to tell everyone what he had kept hidden from them for so long, but he still wasn't sure he could handle it.

What if they rejected him? What if the people he had thought loved him unconditionally dropped him on a dime? Each disgusted face and harsh comment would be like shards of glass splintering away at his papery frail heart. However, fate it seemed was on his side. Every time Paul got the urge to confide in someone, the perfect opportunity came along. With each person he told there was a weight lifted as his papery heart grew stronger, and one by one he was able to tell his loved ones.

Finally the time came for Paul to tell the one person whose opinion mattered most. The one person he had let completely into his heart, and had no barriers to protect himself against. His mother! He had been building up for this and knew it was time. He had wanted to tell her all day and could feel butterflies in his stomach when he knowingly heard the phone ring. Who else could it be? The fate-like irony had become too predictable. Shakily he answered the phone, hardly able to control his voice as he greeted his mother. She heard the frightened tone in Paul's voice and grew quiet. Paul, finding enough nerve in his mother's terrified silence stammered

"Mu-om? J-just humor m-me ok?" he paused for her choked response and continued. "Th-th-theres s-something I n-ne-ed to tell y-you." Silence..... Still stammering, Paul went on.

"Ummm.... umm I-uh... um.. I'M GAY!"

Click! Paul screamed the last part into the phone and hung up, too horror struck to hear his mother's reaction. His phone rang instantly, but he needed time to compose before he could talk to her again. Shaking with disbelief, he hardly noticed the next three calls. Seconds rolled by in what seemed like hours and his phone rang again. Paul, now able to compose himself, took a deep breath and answered the phone. To his astonishment, she was laughing.

"The little shit won't answer the phone!" she chuckled to someone in the background sarcastically.

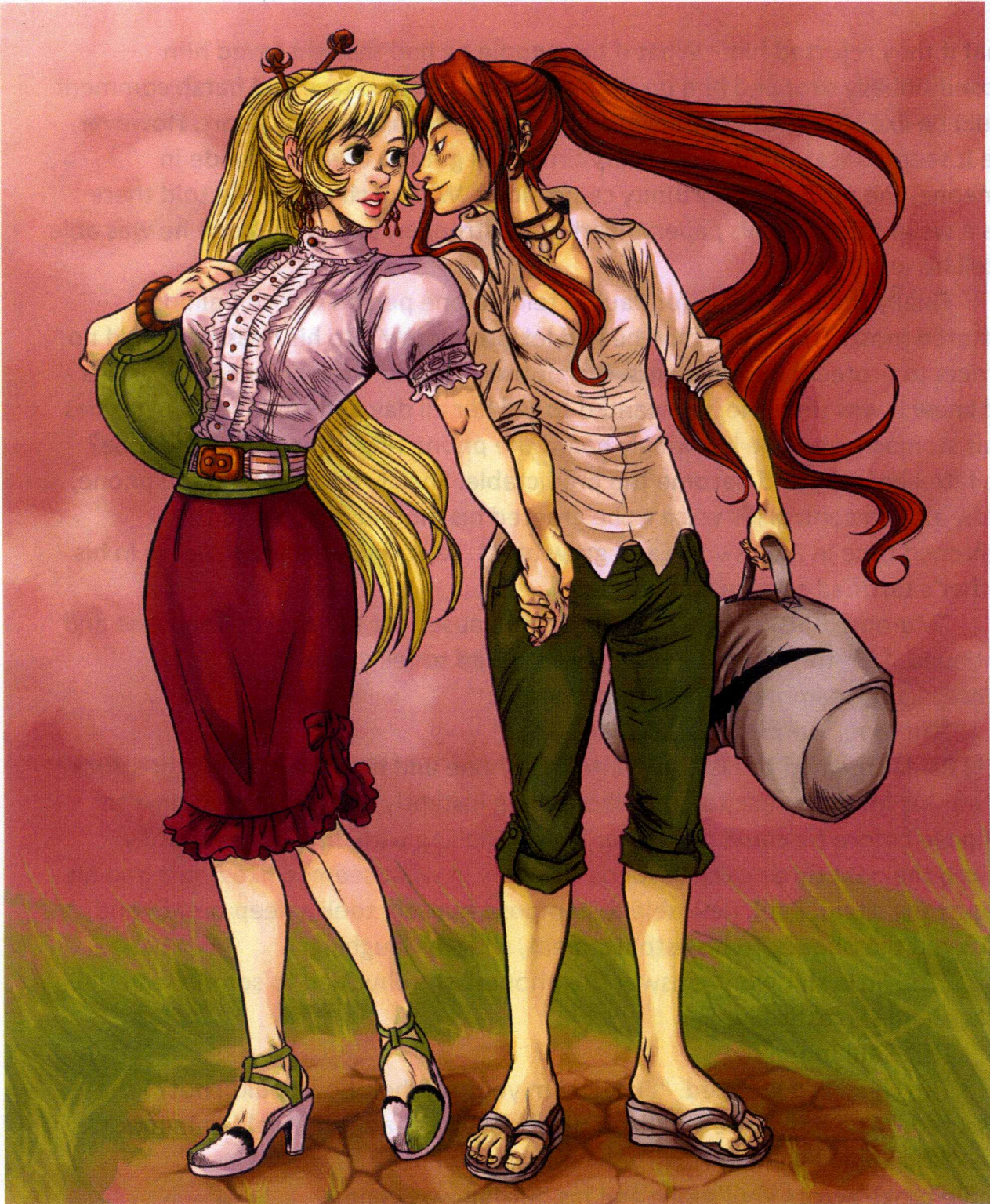
"Hi" Paul mumbled.

The chuckling stopped. "I knew. I'm your mother, how could I not?" she reassured. "And how Dare you hand up on me like that!" she scolded in mock tone. "You know I'll always love you no matter what."

A smile broke across Paul's face and his burden was gone.



P.H.J.



By: Deanna Echanique



Well is **He** or Isn't **She**?

By: Robert Cogdell III

Rick Highers

Inside
There is a darkness inside that terrifies me
It growls and claws at my soul to be free
My conscience and morals keep it at bay,
But it's raging grows stronger every day
Yet I can't help but wonder if one day let free
Would everyone see
That this monster inside is still me?

PHJ.

Inside was a piece I wrote in 2005 (prior to my coming out) during my junior year of high school. It deals with the internal struggles and fears I was faced with while coming out. I had already accepted myself that I was gay, but was terrified to tell my family and friends. Worried that they wouldn't except me or would disown me. As usual, writing was my way of coping.

Anonymous

Anonymous

Delaware

Once on the Delaware sands,
I strutted in a tight skirt
so timidly because I might get beaten.

The beach is a good place for these things
Hope is so bright it causes sun burns,
and the ocean sees every human detail.

Robert Cogdell III

Severed Tongues and Tales Never Taste So Painful...

Your tongue severed still spells deceit
 Truths never to prevail
 Sewed to your heart your slurs live on
 To tell another tale

Happy the blind will be to see
 This wall painted so gay
 A mastermind, So clever your
 Words lead the deaf astray

This masquerade it is your ball
 Many have known that bed
 No stranger to make love so brief
 True love is surely dead

You saw veils cry a sea of tears
 Arms covered in your 'love'
 So sad, it ended nowhere fast
 To suffocate in blood

Pied jester lay! Make shadows feel
 Like lusty lover's sin
 Cause every word bled from your lips
 Are lies cracked from your grin.

This poem was written shortly after I was kicked out for being gay in order to hide someone else's secret. It epitomizes my feeling at the time.

Rick Highers

Be

**I am what I am
and will always BE.**

**Prey Love, don't question
T'will only BE headache.**

**Stead let BE what is me
And expect it!**

**For true to myself
I will always BE.**

**And hope love BE enough
To except it!**

PHJ

I wrote Be after an argument with my mother about a year ago. She had been in the know about my sexuality for a while and had been very understanding. She was supposedly ok with it and never intentionally made me feel as though there was something wrong with me. However, she would often ask me questions in a roundabout way to persuade me into being straight. I often let these sly remarks and hinted persuasions go. Not letting them get to me, but one night I had had enough. I was what I was and it wouldn't change! She could either accept it and save us both the headache or shut up. Lol. This was the outcome of my frustrations.

Rick Highers

Sinful Love

*If such heavenly love will so bring me to hell
 then to hell I surely will go.
 For I swear when I'm near you the angels do sing
 And if God have it be, it be so.
 Yet would really he give us a love strong enough
 That I'd travel to hell to be with you?
 Unless by divine hand we met not by chance
 And thus heavenly love it is true?
 Oh, praise be to God whatever the case
 Cause without him this love could not be!
 For deep down in my heart I know without doubt
 That he purposefully sent you to me.*

RHJ.

Sinful Love is a piece I wrote last year in community college. My friends and I had been having a discussion about sexuality and religion. I have many friends with many religious backgrounds and beliefs. Some of which disagreed with my perception of religion. I myself have dappled in my share of various experimental practices or beliefs, always trying to keep an open mind, but for the most part I am Christian. While coming to the realization that I was gay, I had a lot of trouble understanding why God would do this to me and condemn me to hell. After a period of depression, I had an epiphany. If god made us, then he intended for me to be this way. I wrote this poem after the discussion with my friends to reiterate this point.

(These are simply my beliefs and opinions. Please don't be offended by them if they disagree with your personal beliefs, but please don't bash them either. We are all entitled to our own beliefs.)

Robert Cogdell III

A Toast to Loves Noose...

Is it too much to ask to be?

To ask so genuine?

Is it so much to be so drunk?

To live in this their sin?

To know the path of loneliness

To live life loving hell

To be so wrong and end up there

To envy it as well?

Never to kiss, only to cry

To live in shadow's doubt

To live to know what others felt

To live a life without

To create such a sacred thing

To souls that inked their pens

So evil they're to write such lies

To judge hearts of humans

To love not lust, not luck, nor pride

To heart's collide scope

To broken waves bled from their eyes

To life hung from this rope

I wrote this poem about gay suicide. This Poem in particular, was for those who have felt so pressed by their homosexuality that they have take their lives, and expresses my anger in that they would be made to feel this way.

Rick Highers

OUT!
It's Out!

They know!

Word is spreading fast!
And though I am not
ready, soon I will be
out in the open!

I won't be able to
hide any longer.....
This both excites
and terrifies me!

I took the first step!
My foots out the door!

And Soon!
All too Soon!

I'll be facing the world outside!

RHJ.

Out was a piece I had written in Jan of 2006, my senior year of high school. It was inspired by my being outed. I forget exactly how or why it happened, but basically one of the classmates at school that I had entrusted my secret to had told one of their friends. Of course they made the 3rd party swear to secrecy, but with no friendly ties to me that promise were rather empty. Anywho, as I'm sure all of you know, once the gossip wildfire had ignited it, was impossible to put out. Writing was my way of ... coping.

LGBT Definitions

Below is a partial list of LGBT terms and definitions

Ally - Quite often, a non- LGBT person that is for the rights of LGBT people. LGBT people can be allies as well, for example a gay male who is an ally to a transgender person.

Bisexual - A person who is attracted to both men and women.

Coming Out - The process of acknowledging one's gender identity and/or sexual orientation to other people. This is usually a life-long process.

Closeted/"In the Closet" - A person who hides and/or keeps their sexual orientation or gender identity a secret from others.

Gay - A person who is attracted towards the same sex- more commonly used for males.

Gender Expression - How a person outwardly expresses their gender.

Gender Identity - A person's inner sense of self as male, female or somewhere in between. Although most develop a gender identity corresponding to their biological sex, many do not.

Heterosexual - A person who is only attracted to the opposite sex.

Heterosexism - The approach that heterosexuality is the only legitimate or acceptable sexual orientation.

Homophobia - Fear of lesbians and gay men.

Homosexual - A clinical term for people who are attracted to members of the same sex. Some gay men and lesbians find this term offensive, gay, gay man, or lesbian is often preferred.

Lesbian - A female who is only attracted to other females.

LGBT - An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender.

Sexual Identity - How a person identifies and perceives their sexuality using such labels as "lesbian," "gay," "bisexual," "bi," "queer," "questioning," "heterosexual," "straight," and others. Sexual identity evolves depending on the person and although our sexual behavior and how we define ourselves (identity) can be chosen, some people claim their sexual orientation is a choice. For others though, this is not the case.

Sexual Orientation - A person's attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex. Includes gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual.

Transgender - A person whose gender identity does not correspond with their biological sex.

Transphobia - The fear or hatred of transgender people.

Transvestite - A person who obtains sexual gratification from dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex, independent of sexual orientation.

Transsexual - A person who will (pre-op transsexual) or has (post-op transsexual) undergone a sex change operation.

Outing - Revealing and LGBT person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity without their consent.

Queer - A historically negative term used against those thought LGBT. It has been reclaimed by some people as a positive term describing all those who do not conform to rigid notions of gender and sexuality. It is often used in a political context and in academic settings to challenge traditional ideas about identity ("queer theory").

Questioning/Curious - A person who is uncertain of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. They often seek information and support during this stage of their identity development.

For questions or further information on all things LGBT feel free to e-mail us at

Btglass@salisbury.edu

E-mails are kept confidential!