



# The Lavender

## Volume 1, Issue 2

LGBTQ Resource  
Center

The Lavender  
February/March 2009

### New Things Are Happening At The Center

By Dr. Liz Cannon, LGBTQ Resource Center, Director

As I sit here watching yet another snow fall out my living room window and wondering if spring will ever come to Wisconsin again, I remember that the excitement of new horizons offered by the LGBTQ Resource Center are enough to combat the winter blues. Entering our second semester of existence, we can say we have established a foothold on the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh campus. When I ask my classes if anyone has heard we have a Center, at least two in each raise their hands.

I'm a fan of brown bags because noon programs offer opportunities for education to staff who might not otherwise come back to campus in the evenings, so we are happily continuing with our Brown Bag Series. As I write my remarks to you, I see our first Brown Bag is next week. One of our students, Jack Scheerer, is speaking on *Invisible Queers*. It's one of my hopes that the Center will be a major way to bring faculty, staff, and students together, and I am heartened when students are willing to share their expertise as well as faculty and staff.

We are also expanding our programming this year: we have added both a Film Series and a Discussion Group Series. Later in this issue, I have expounded on my enthusiasm for our Discussion Groups, which are safe spaces where faculty, staff, and students can talk about major issues affecting our community. And I know it's popular to have Film Series as everyone is doing so. But there is a reason films are so popular: they are effective. Ok. They are also cheaper than bringing in speakers our budget can't sustain. But let me repeat: they are effective. Last week we showed the film "Brother to Brother" as part of

Black History month. A large crowd—for an LGBTQ event—gathered to learn about the intersection of race, sexuality, and gender; in this case, to learn about the particular experiences of black gay men both in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and during the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s. In orchestrating a meeting between Harlem Renaissance Writer Bruce Nugent, living in a homeless shelter in the 2000s, and a young black, gay artist, the film asks us to question what has changed and what has not as well as providing us a literary history for queer black studies.

The film also fit nicely with the Reading Seminar the Center is hosting this spring. Backed by a grant from the Institute on Race and Ethnicity, this seminar is reading *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology* edited by E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson. Our first discussions have proved intriguing, and we will be sharing with you what we learn in both a brown bag on May 6 and a future article in *The Lavender*.

Another exciting edition to the Center that will be happening this spring is the expansion of our technological capability. Thanks (a very big thanks) to Rainbow Alliance for HOPE's request for a one time Allocation, we will soon be mounting a flat screen TV with DVD player as well as getting our own equipment to use in the neighboring classroom to project films and PowerPoint presentations. When we get a couch, the Center will be available for educational film watching whenever we are open and not otherwise occupied.

I want to end by thanking again all who have donated to the Center. Our Rainbow Wall is being built brick by brick. Our

library is also growing—and I am hoping that this semester we will match last semester's donation of 129 books (don't forget that cash donations can be designated for expanding our library). I also want to thank those of you who are volunteering for us this spring, especially those leading talk-backs for films and the Group Discussions. We are also starting a program for volunteers to assist in the Center itself during hours of operation (a big thank you to Jesse Smet and Cindy Schultz who are volunteering on Monday evenings). I know many more want to volunteer but are only available evening hours. Our hope is to be open during the evenings M-Th. To that end, I have been working with Steve Arndt to create a Safety Plan for the Center that will allow us to remain open during evenings when I am not available. Given the energy that has already been created in this Center, I know that will happen soon—and give us another reason not to be bogged down by all this snow!

### The Queer Lexicon

**Lesbro:** a man who prefers the company of lesbians.

**Gayborhood:** Is a gay-friendly neighborhood or area of a town/city, where gays and lesbians are known to live.

**Futch (futch):** someone who is neither feminine nor butch but somewhere in between.

**Heteroflexible:** a person who is straight but has a queer sensibility. They have lots of LGBTQ friends, identify with the culture and often advocate for LGBTQ rights.

**Gaylese:** sometimes called gay-speak, is the vernacular of LGBTQ people.

\* definitions are reprinted from urbandictionary.com

### Calendar of Events March

Mar 9 ~ Mon 7:30—8:30pm  
Discussion Group: "Queer Images In Popular Culture" with John Palmer, in the Resource Center.

Mar 9 ~ HOPE Meeting.  
MBLGTACC presentation

Mar 16 ~ HOPE Meeting.  
Game Night.

Mar 18 ~ Wed 12pm.  
Brown Bag: "How Can We Support Curriculum Transformation to Include LGBTQ Studies?" with UWSA's Helen Klebesadel & Lisa Beckstrand..

Mar 30 ~ Mon 7:30-8:30pm. Discussion Group: "Bisexuality: Finding a Place in the Queer Community" with Liz Cannon and John Barthuly.

Mar 30 ~ HOPE Meeting.  
MBLGTACC presentation.

Mar 30—Apr 3 ~ Social  
Justice Week

April 1 ~ Wed. 12-1pm.  
Brown Bag: "finding A Place for Queers in Religion" with a panel of experts (in the Resource Center).

## Stop the Hate

By Shelly Rutz, Clinical Social Worker, SAMHSA Grant Project Director

In 2005, the UW Oshkosh Counseling Center received the Garrett Lee Smith grant from SAMHSA to develop a Comprehensive Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Program, which has fundamentally transformed the University's approach to students experiencing mental and behavioral health problems which lead to depression, substance abuse, suicide attempts and academic failure. This collaborative effort focused on better meeting the needs of at risk populations and for whom the nature of this campus creates barriers to accessing care.

Since receiving the grant, UW Oshkosh has participated in significant suicide assessment and multicultural competency trainings. The Counseling Center has made a commitment to ongoing multicultural competency training to meet the needs of our marginalized students. Recently, the Counseling Center received refunding for another 3 years to expand on the Comprehensive Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Program and to create a culture of an informed, caring and compassionate community. To accomplish this task, the grant initiatives focus our campus on the importance of education and safety concerning sui-

cide prevention, substance abuse, hate and bias incidents. A caring, informed and compassionate community seeks information, training, and consultation when engaged in the development and education of our students.

Therefore we need to continue increasing the campus' competency in working with distressed and marginalized students. One way of increasing the campus' competency is to implement the Stop the Hate training on campus. Students and Staff can not perform optimally when they are experiencing the chronic stress and trauma reactions related to hate crimes and bias motivated violence.

This Spring the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh will host a Stop the Hate Train the Trainers Program. UW Oshkosh staff and students have been identified to participate in this training. In addition, UW System is coordinating teams from other UW schools to attend this important training.

Stop the Hate Train the Trainers Program supports colleges and universities in preventing and combating bias incidents and hate crimes on campus as well as fostering the development of community. The Stop the Hate Program allows top administrators, student affairs professionals, faculty and students

to learn new innovative tools to take action on hate crimes and bias-motivated violence issues on his/her campus and region.

The only resource of it's kind specifically for college campuses, the Stop the Hate 200+ page premiere training manual and three day, 18-20 hour Train the Trainer program was developed by the Association of College Unions International in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League, Tolerance.Org and The Southern Poverty Law Center, the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence and the National Center for Hate Crime Prevention. Stop The Hate is owned and operated by Campus Pride (<http://www.campuspride.org>) the leading national nonprofit 501(c)3 for student leaders and campus groups working to create a safer college environment for LGBT students across the United States. The program was founded by Shane L. Windmeyer.

For more information on this program or other services offered, contact the University Counseling Center at 424-2061 or visit our webpage, [http://www.uwosh.edu/couns\\_center](http://www.uwosh.edu/couns_center). Our offices are located in Dempsey 201. We're Here for You!



*"Students and Staff can not perform optimally when they are experiencing the chronic stress and trauma related to hate crimes and bias motivated violence."*

### Students

The UW-Oshkosh Counseling Center is a Free & Confidential service offering:

[Personal Counseling](#)  
[Career Counseling](#)  
[Career Self Help](#)  
[Self Help](#)  
[Crisis/Suicide Prevention](#)  
[Resource Contact Information](#)

## Honored Ally

BY Thomas J Wolf

In the struggle for LGBTQ rights and inclusivity, we often forget to honor our allies for their support and passion for creating an inclusive world.

In this issue, we would like to honor our very own University Books and More as our Honored Ally. Director Joe Blohm and his amazing staff have shown tremendous support to our LGBTQ Community over the past couple of years.

Over two years ago, the bookstore expanded their bookshelves to include a section of LGBTQ resources from varying genres that represented our diverse community.

When the LGBTQ Resource Center opened, they began donating queer related books to help us build our library.

Around the same time, members of our LGBTQ Community asked if the store would consider selling apparel that would reflect our Queer Community on campus. They did not hesitate to say yes and even went beyond apparel. They began stocking up on Queer bumper stickers, pencils and magnets.

In mid-February, the first t-shirts arrived. The logo is simple and bold with the word PRIDE across

the chest and a rainbow bar underneath.

The bookstore hopes to add a couple more types of apparel in the near future.

Any way you look at it, the bookstore is a true ally to our community and should be commended on their efforts to improve our campus climate.

Our community has had some struggles and will certainly have a few more. But, with allies like the bookstore and so many more around this campus, we must remain hopeful that equality and acceptance will be the norm.



<http://bookstore.uwosh.edu/home.aspx>

*Thank you  
 University Books  
 and More for your  
 leadership in  
 diversity and  
 Inclusivity.*

## LGBTQ Resource Center Launches Discussion Groups

By Liz Cannon

As Thomas said just today, we really do need to come up with a better name for what we've provisionally called "Discussion Groups," especially since they have begun with a bang. Jordan Landry, Assistant Dean of COLS and co-chair of the LGBTQ Council, started our series with a debate over origins: is sexual orientation a choice, constructed behavior, a biological fact—or does it even matter? Next, Christie Launius, Director of Women's Studies, and Ciara Healy, librarian at Polk, continued the momentum by exploring the question of what same-sex marriage has to offer our community—if anything. I would like to invite you to join us on the following Mondays at 7:30 in the LGBTQ Resource Center to continue our talks.

On Monday, February 9, Jordan Landry, Assistant Dean of COLS and co-chair of the LGBTQ Education and Advocacy Council, led the first discussion, "Nature vs. Nurture: Where Do Queers Come From?" On Monday, February 23, Christie Launius, Director of Women's Studies, and Ciara Healy, librarian at Polk, will lead us in a discussion on "My California Wife, My Wisconsin Life: The Case for Same-Sex Marriage." While Wisconsin has officially taken a stance on this issue, many of us living in the state are still debating the implications of this amendment. On the one hand, amending the state constitution seems to be in clear violation of the civil rights of many of Wisconsin's citizens. On the other hand, the right to marry and the benefits that are supposedly connected to it are not guaranteed for all heterosexuals either—health benefits, for example, are tied one's economic standing in one's community. On the one hand, marrying one's same-sex partner is a public statement of resistance, one that some may term radical. On the other hand, marrying one's partner is a liberal step into the institutions that govern our country. Should marriage be defined as simply a religious rite? But the first gay marriages were performed in Christian churches, albeit they were not recognized by the state. And

many Wisconsin citizens who are "married" performed only a civil union without a religious ceremony. Finally, how does the question of marriage affect people who are transgender? How many people have heard of the court case in Texas where "the Texas Fourth Court of Appeals ruled that a post-operative transsexual woman, Christie Littleton, is legally male and therefore lacked standing to bring legal action as a widow. And since Texas law forbids marriage between two men, she could not have married Jonathan Littleton; hence, their 7-year marriage was retroactively nullified?" (<http://www.gpac.org/archive/news/?cmd=view&archive=news&msgnum=0212>). Many queer activists wonder why so much energy is spent on legalizing gay marriage. Many queer activists believe gaining this right is a crucial nail in the coffin of homophobia.

On Monday, March 9, John Palmer, Assistant Dean of Students, will lead us in a discussion on "Queer Images in Popular Culture." I am intrigued by how media representations of queers both shape popular response and regulate acceptable queer behavior. "Ellen" was groundbreaking. Or was it? Ellen's sitcom daily life differed little whether she was represented as straight or lesbian. That was the point. Is representing lesbians as the same as middle-class, white, monogamous, heterosexual women strategically savvy or does it make the black cross-dresser in *The Fifth Element* even "queerer" to straight eyes? I'm looking at a poster of the characters of *Queer as Folk*. Do these representations of white folk who show no "gay" markers help a white, middle-class, heteronormative audience understand "queer" as a positive umbrella term or does it, again, relegate other LGBT people not pictured on this poster to the old homo-, bi-, and trans-phobic definition of "queer"?

On Monday, March 30, I will join student leader John Barthuly in leading a discussion on "Bisexuality: Finding a Place in the Queer Community." Bisexual myself, I find this topic especially interesting. My own "coming out"

process from identifying as heterosexual, to identifying as lesbian, to identifying as bisexual shows that while lip service is played to bisexuality, our culture is still a binary one that is disturbed by third terms and shades of grey. Despite—or maybe because of—the Kinsey Report that identifies a continuum of sexuality indicating that 80% of humanity has bisexual tendencies, neither the straight community nor the queer community are comfortable with bisexuality. If you are bisexual, you are not truly one of us. And, of course, not all bisexuals are alike. Some are African American. Some are transgendered. Some are monogamous. Some have same-sex partners. Some are married. Robyn Ochs puts it well: "Loving both women and men can be a difficult path. The established signposts you encounter along the way—lesbian, gay, straight—never quite show you where you need to go. A popular bisexual button reads: Two paths diverged in a yellow wood, and I took both. Bisexual folks can spend a long time in the woods figuring out which trail allows them to 'take both.'" (<http://www.robynochs.com/writing/articles/Randen.html>)

On Monday, April 13, Cheryl Bates, Assistant Professor of Social Work, will lead us in a discussion of "What is Effective Activism?" In anticipation of National Day of Silence on April 17, I envisioned this discussion as hashing out what types of activism work and what types don't. Does being silent "bring attention to the name-calling, bullying and harassment—in effect, the silencing—experienced by LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) students and their allies?" (<http://www.dayofsilence.org/content/getinformation.html>). Are the confrontational actions of Queer Nation more effective? For example, on April 20, 1990, Queer Nation activists protested the tendency in advertising not to use gay spokespersons by showing up to an event at Macy's, where Greg Louganis was promoting a new swimsuit line, with his picture pasted to WHEATIES boxes.

Should we be organizing rallies and sit-ins or should we be writing letters to our representatives in congress?

On Monday, April 27, student leader Bailey Murph will be leading a discussion on the "Intersection of Race and Sexuality." While no discussion of an LGBTQ topic is complete without a discussion of race, this discussion will more explicitly focus on people's experiences of race and sexuality. The truth is that we hear from few LGBTQ people of color on our campus. There are many reasons for this silence, including the fact that we have few people of color on our campus period. On the one hand, in their introduction to *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology*, E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson remind us in how in many black communities "homosexuality was effectively 'theorized' as a 'white disease' that had 'infected' the black community" (4). On the other hand, in "Racing Homonormativity: Citizenship, Sociology, and Gay Identity," Roderick A. Ferguson points out that Conrad Bentsen's sociological study of homosexuality in Chicago in the 1939 concluded that "African American neighborhoods, in particular, were social spaces that could potentially throw gender and sexual stability into confusion" (57-58). Additionally, Cathy Cohen in "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens," convincingly argues that most queer activists see the world in terms of queer and straight where "queer" is equated with "white" and "straight" is equated with "power" despite many configurations of heterosexuality that intersect with positions that do not reflect power. Racism works together with homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia to silence gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people of color.

As you can tell, I am very excited about our Discussion Group Series this spring. And I want to thank all of the leaders who have volunteered to make them happen. I hope you can join us.



## Rainbow Alliance for HOPE

**By Shawn Patrick, President, Rainbow Alliance for HOPE**

Twenty UW Oshkosh students recently got back from the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC). This year the conference was held at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN and had just over 1,500 LGBTQA college students attend. The delegation from HOPE had the opportunity to partici-

pate in workshops, listen to keynote speakers, and network with other LGBTQA college students from all over the Midwest.

Keep a look out for a calendar of events and promotional materials for BGLAD (Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian Days) Month which is held in April. Robyn Ochs, a long-time bisexual activist, will be speaking at UW Oshkosh

on April 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in Reeve Union. Also, we will be hosting an amateur student drag show on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10pm in the Titan Underground during Titan Nights.

For more information about HOPE and other resources, check out our website:

<http://www.uwosh.edu/hope>



Rainbow Alliance for HOPE meetings are held on Mondays at 9pm in Reeve union.

## The Great American Hope

**By Thomas J Wolf**

Something happened this last election season that has not been felt in this nation since the days of John F Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. A resurgence of Hope from sea to shining sea came across us in waves as scores of Americans began to believe in a simple message, "Yes We Can". This adaptation of the 1972 United Farm Workers' slogan became the keystone to Senator Barack Obama's successful campaign that led to an historic day on November 4, 2008.

On January 20<sup>th</sup> of 2009, the prayers of millions were answered and the troubles of the World seemed lessened as Barack Obama became our 44<sup>th</sup> President of these United States and for the first time those reverent words "All [humans] are created equal..." seemed true.

Our first African-American President, Barack Obama. Uttering his name seems to emanate power and remind the self of the Hope that he has given America and the World. Day in and day out I find myself randomly muttering his name in my head and cannot help but feel reenergized and hopeful.

The way to freedom was not without resistance during the campaign season and many were unsure if Senator Barack Obama was the right person to lead us

out of the darkness. Early on he battled for primacy with Senator Hillary Clinton. Week after week the two senatorial heavy weights seemed to push and pull each other in a political tug-of-war trying to garner support from every side.

The LGBTQ Community seemed to overwhelmingly support Senator Clinton. Certainly she is a laudable public servant, but her stance on LGBTQ issues was as lackluster as the rest of the candidates. At least the Illinois Senator Barack Obama had a message of renewed Hope, reunification, and inclusivity, even if he did not seem to address queer rights issues to our satisfaction. Besides, did we not have enough of Dynasty (the Clintons) and Dallas (the Bushes) dictating our lives and running this country in to the dark?

Eventually, Senator Barack Obama emerged the victor and became that one clear and commanding voice that would lead the people into a new era. He hit the ground running after that November 4<sup>th</sup> election with his plans for change and within hours of taking the oath of office, the presidential webpage, outlining strategies, stances and initiatives was updated (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/>). Embedded in his agenda for Civil Rights are his plans and support

for the LGBTQ Community.

From expansion of hate crimes statutes to repealing "Don't Ask Don't Tell", opposing same-sex marriage bans to expansion of adoption rights, President Barack Obama is committed to "equality and justice for all" more than any other President in our history. He will not be able to do this alone, nor should he. As President John F. Kennedy once stated, "...ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country", we too must ask ourselves, "what can we do to educate our nation about the importance of diversity, the need for inclusivity, the fundamental right of equality for all, and the true meaning of One Nation Under God?"

The answers and the tasks before us may seem daunting, but they are not insurmountable. After all, Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream and we the people of these United States just elected our first African American President; a man whose message of change was the very vision of hope that we as Americans, as human beings have sought for over 2 centuries.



Our 44th President of the United States of America, Barack H. Obama.

*"While we have come a long way since the Stonewall riots in 1969, we still have a lot of work to do. Too often, the issue of LGBT rights is exploited by those seeking to divide us. But at its core, this issue is about who we are as Americans. It's about whether this nation is going to live up to its founding promise of equality by treating all its citizens with dignity and respect."*

*– Barack Obama, June 1, 2007*

## LGBTQ Resource Center

Campus Center for Equity & Diversity  
University Wisconsin Oshkosh  
800 Algoma Blvd  
Oshkosh, WI 54901

Phone: 920-424-3465  
E-mail: [lgbtqcenter@uwosh.edu](mailto:lgbtqcenter@uwosh.edu)  
Website: under construction  
Facebook: UW-Oshkosh LGBTQ Resource Center

**Together We Create Change!**



## Help Build the LGBTQ Resource Library



The Resource Center is trying to build a library of materials relating to the LGBTQ community to serve as a resource for students and staff and as a foundation for a future LGBTQ certificate program.

We are looking for materials such as books, movies, or other media related to the LGBTQ community. There are three ways you can help!

- If you have any materials you would be willing to donate, please drop them off at the LGBTQ Center or email the Director of the LGBTQ Center
- If you would like to purchase material to donate, the LGBTQ Resource Center has two wish lists: one for more academic resources and one for more popular resources. We will be happy to email these to you upon request
- We will also be glad to accept monetary donations from which we will purchase library materials. Checks can be made payable to UW Oshkosh



Contact Information:  
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# Rainbow Builders

Become a part of history and help us build your LGBTQ Resource Center "One Brick at Time". Donate to the Center and we will add your name to our wall of "Rainbow Builders".

You can help by donating queer related books, DVDs, artwork, office supplies, furniture, and of course money. You may also donate your time by offering to facilitate a brown bag on any queer related subject, or volunteering to help staff the center.

Our center can only exist

with your help! Please consider making a contribution today. Join these "Builders" and become a part of UW-Oshkosh history:

Dr Liz Cannon  
Dr Simon Sibleman  
University Books & More  
UW-Oshkosh Health Center  
Rainbow Alliance for HOPE  
Jack Scheerer  
Thomas J Wolf  
Miriam Schacht

Jesse Smet  
Kyle Thomas  
Dr. Daniel J Maloney  
Alaina Wypiszynski  
Jess Ness  
Serena Knowles  
John Palmer  
Jenn Kiss  
Stan Sweeney  
Jack Talbot  
Laura England  
Cassie Stadler

Christine Williams  
Robert  
Erik Forsgren  
Jordan Landry  
Kim Charniak  
Amney Harper  
Christie Launius  
Ciara Healy  
Your Name Here  
For more information or to make a donation, please email us at [lgbtqcenter@uwosh.edu](mailto:lgbtqcenter@uwosh.edu) or call