



The Queer Foundation Scholar

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Bisexuality Exists

By **Brandon Lambert**
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I attend a very gay-friendly school, a conservatory of performing arts attached to a liberal arts university. Boys hold hands with boys. Girls hold hands with girls. These same-sex couples populate the campus lawns and quaint restaurants blending in seamlessly with the rest of the romantic world. The straight community and gay community co-exist peacefully and share a mutual respect for each others' romantic lifestyles.

Only one boy is condemned for his dating habits. This boy--a very close friend of mine--is bisexual. He goes on dates with boys; he goes on dates with girls. He has relationships with boys; he has relationships with girls. He has sex with men; he has sex with women (and claims rather vehemently that he enjoys both genders equally).

Because of his sexual orientation, he is the topic of many negative discussions. Nothing frustrates me more than hearing fellow homosexuals criticize my bisexual friend's lifestyle. They state, "bisexuals are just greedy," or, "bisexuals don't exist. They're just in the transition period from straight to gay." These statements both surprise and enrage me. These young homosexuals expect the world to accept their gay lifestyles, but are bashing a fellow member of the sexual-orientation minority. They are blind to the hypocritical nature of their statements. Don't they see the inherent irony in what they say? These homosexual youths (and believe me, there are quite a few who share this same view of bisexuality) need to open their eyes to the hidden danger of their statements. Rejection of bisexuality, especially by the Queer Community, is both ignorant and counter-productive to the advancement of LGBT equality.

Rejection of bisexuality in today's world is ignorant. This is especially true with the advent of studies confirming the existence of bisexuality. The beginning of serious, scholarly studies of bisexuality began in the 1940s with the publication of the Kinsey Reports by Doctor Alfred Kinsey. Kinsey rejected the notion that people were either homosexual or heterosexual. Kinsey purported that human sexuality was much more pliable and not as black and white as typically thought. He introduced the world to the now famous Kinsey Scale: a scale that quantifies a person's sexual orientation on a scale of 0-6, 0 being completely heterosexual to 6 being completely homosexual. Thus, a person scoring a 3 on the scale would be equally attracted to both genders, or completely bisexual. To put it simply, data was collected from thousands of males and females via a questionnaire. The answers were used to place participants on the Kinsey Scale. Most people scored between a 1-5 which means they were at least to a certain extent bisexual. Approximately 11% of the participants (men and women) scored a 3 on the scale. I was particularly surprised by this number. I have met very few self-proclaimed bisexuals in my life, but I guess what people claim they are in public and what they score on private studies are usually different. I shared this study with some students and was frustrated that they still claimed that bisexuals don't exist. They make it seem like a person's sexual orientation is a belief system that can never truly be proven. It's disheartening that we live in a world where people cast doubt on an individual's self-proclaimed sexual orientation, but this study should put to rest doubters of bisexuality. Thus, no person--gay or straight--should question a person who claims to be a bisexual. They do in fact exist. Yet, besides simply being ignorant, people (particularly homosexuals and transgenders) casting doubts on bisexuality is harmful to the entire LGBT community.

It may be hard to accept that a person is equally attracted to both genders, but a member of the Queer Community should view bisexuality with an open mind. If we as a community want acceptance we should be the first to accept everyone for who they are. If we cannot accept the behavior of bisexuals then why should we expect the rest of the world to accept the behavior of homosexuals and transgenders? Asserting that homosexual behavior is acceptable while claiming bisexual behavior as unacceptable makes it easier for the rest of the world to remain intolerant to all sexual-orientation minorities. When a homosexual makes negative statements about bisexuality they are in a way damaging their own cause. Enabling intolerance is unacceptable, and will, if left unchecked, threaten to derail the success our community has recently seen politically and socially.

It's understandable why it may seem difficult to reject bisexuality. I admit, it is hard for me to imagine being attracted to both men and women equally. In the same breath I am sure it is extremely difficult for my best friend- he's straight- to imagine being sexually attracted to other men. Yet, just because it's difficult to imagine being a bisexual does not mean they do not exist. I hope this article is preaching to the choir, I really do; however, too often do I hear inflammatory remarks against the bisexual fragment of the queer community by both heterosexuals and by other members of the queer community. Bisexuals exist, and the queer community should be the first to stand up and support this unique portion of the sexual-orientation minority. Only when completely united can we spread acceptance of LGBT's throughout the world.

About the author.

Brandon Lambert, past recipient of a QF scholarship, is a sophomore at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA, majoring in Theatre Arts and minoring in business. He continues composing and recording his own music, and has appeared in a theater production and a rock show. His two favorite courses this past year have been a Creative Non-Fiction Workshop and a Speech course in which he learned the International Phonetic Alphabet, a key to mastering dialects. As he says, Point Park University is proving to be a perfect transition between a small, rural Ohio town and NYC. He auditioned in NYC for a major part in "Jersey Boys." Offered a minor part instead, he turned it down in order to concentrate on his studies.

Reading the present issue, I wonder if you will experience, as I did, what I will call a Horatian synthesis: *prodesse et delectare*.

QF Writer Brandon Lambert's piece on queer unity reminds us of our part in the evolution of society's embracing diversity of all stripes. It sets the tone for the celebration that follows: Ray Verzasconi's delightful and challenging review of queer-themed videos. I hope you will take the time to follow the many links throughout his article to the pages and pages of fun and thought-provoking materials on the Web. Perhaps you will agree with me that learning and amusement are by no means opposites.

Perhaps also you will see in these pages the emergence of *The QF Scholar* as something more than a newsletter, as in fact a literary journal. Publication Scholarships provide an incentive for QF Writers, past participants in the Queer Foundation's English essay contest, to continue writing in college or graduate school and to submit their work for possible publication here. The results are evident in these pages.

The QF Scholar is a work of volunteers and is offered free to the public. There is no disbursement of funds other than the Publication Scholarships payable to the QF Writer's college or university to help defray the cost of the writer's studies.

Your donation, however, large or small, will help support this effort. You may earmark it for Publication Scholarships or for the general scholarship fund, in which case 100% of your donation will go into the endowment fund to secure the future of the annual English essay contest, now in its eighth year. The endowment has now reached \$14,000 and is growing.

You can help by forwarding the link for this issue to libraries and any other individuals who may be interested:

<http://queerfoundation.org/docs/theqfscholar.pdf>

To donate, either to the general QF Scholarship Endowment or to the special Publication Scholarship Fund, please go to www.GuideStar.org (search on "Queer Scholars"). Or write to the Queer Foundation, 3213 W. Wheeler St., #145, Seattle WA 98199.

Joe Dial, Ph.D.
Executive Director
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From the editor's desk . . .

I'm certain none of us really found any pleasure in the raucous Republican primaries. Primaries often do get spirited, but the Republican gang of seven tried to outdo each other, calling each other some rather nasty names—all of which suggests that the general election is going to be equally nasty, equally uncivil. Moralists have never been particularly concerned about their own morality.

I'm also certain that it was painful, especially to LGBTIQ youth, to find ourselves as the center of negative attention. At least until Santorum sallied forth on his anti-contraception crusade, we were portrayed as the barbarians at the gates of civilization protected only by Romney, Santorum, Gingrich, Bachmann, Cain, Perry or Paul. Shades of both Himmler and Stalin.

How do we fight back? Well, let me propose that sometimes tyrants and would-be tyrants can best be undermined by laughter. At the same time how can we take some of these people seriously? Of course we must remain vigilant, but God will destroy the U.S. with a monstrous tornado if marriage equality and civil union laws for homosexuals are not repealed? Contraceptives should be outlawed again? Oh, come on!

Except among recent Catholic immigrants, the birthrate among Catholics in the U.S. is below that of Protestants! Even in Mexico, in the past decade the birthrate has fallen from 5.5 to 2.3 in the past decade. Scattered all along the Pope's route in Mexico City were these giant billboards. "Celebrate the arrival of the Pope." I presume you know what Trojans are!



Oh, that the company had been as fearless in the U.S. Instead of expressing outrage at Santorum's comments, we could have laughed: "Celebrate the arrival of Santorum. Trojan." Cicero and Horace taught us that satire can indeed undermine tyrants. So join me in celebrating. With one

exception, the following videos should lift your spirits, make you want to sing, to dance, to celebrate the progress we've made in the past 65 years (it did not all start with Stonewall), to thumb our noses at the wing-nuts.

Actor, writer, director, and literary scholar (working on his Ph.D. in English at Yale University), bad boy James Franco has also used his writing, directing, and acting skills in queer cinema, including two feature-length films: *Sal* (2011), his biopic of Sal Mineo, and *The Broken Tower* (2011), his biopic of Hart Crane, and two short videos: *The Feast of Stephen* (2009) and *James Franco, Lucas, and Belinda: Love Walks In* (2011). In the latter,

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69d8yga4_Gw&feature=related, Franco integrates scenes from a video produced by high school students in Evry, France, with scenes of himself kissing and being affectionate with other men (and himself?), and with scenes of gay porn stars Lucas and Ryan. Belinda Carlyle, whose son is gay, provides the music. Later this year Franco's *My Own Private River* is scheduled to be shown at Lincoln Center. Re-editing Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho* and adding previously unseen out-takes from that film, with the approval of Van Sant and apparently also of Joaquin Phoenix and Keanu Reeves, Franco creates a paean to River Phoenix who fell in love with Reeves during the filming of *My Own Private Idaho*. There's an interesting story there, about River intentionally flubbing all his lines the last day of shooting that film because he couldn't imagine no longer working with Keanu.

While anti-gay organizations attempt to thwart efforts to stop bullying in schools, arguing both that bullying never hurt anyone ("it's just teasing") and that homosexual youth should be bullied to teach them of the error of their ways, students themselves are using the internet to fight back. Students at the Long Branch Middle School in New Jersey, for example, wrote, directed, produced, and acted in this video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-X3Pu20w24&feature=related>. They also re-wrote the lyrics to Enrique Iglesias' "I Like It" (with his permission). Read through the credits at the end to see that the entire community supported this project.

This one is from Cypress Ranch HS in Texas: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waAqJ6727Hk&feature=player_embedded.

Emily-Anne Rigal, 16, was recently recognized by *Newsweek* for being one of the nation's most influential women. Her WeStopBullying

organization, launched on YouTube, is apparently having a positive impact on teenagers who are learning if not how to stop being bullied, at least how not to let bullies destroy their self-esteem. Every teenager should be made aware of Ms. Rigal's website:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/WeStopHate/featured> .

This video is just one of several produced for the "It Gets Better" project by students at BYU; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ym0jXg-hKCI&feature=relmfu> . Several Mormon parents have also produced an "It Gets Better" video. Kudos to Dan Savage for conceiving of the "It Gets Better" project. We can only surmise that it is saving lives..

Released on March 30, 2012, Harry Weinstein's documentary, *Bully*, created a stir when the MPAA first gave it an "R" rating. This poster sums up an American irony, comparing *Hunger Games* and *Bully*.

Weinstein finally relented and removed the "f" words so the MPAA would give it a PG-13 rating.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5114WHxofzU&feature=player_embedded.

More irony: Josh Hutcherson, co-star of *Hunger Games*, has been a major supporter of the "Straight but Not Narrow" organization, and for his outspoken support of LGBTIQ people was awarded GLAAD's Vanguard Award this month. Young actors like Hutcherson and Daniel Radcliff (who has made an "It Gets Better" video that aired on "Glee") no

doubt change more young teenaged minds than "Glee's" Jane Lynch and Chris Colfer. How many teenaged girls swoon over Daniel Radcliff (Harry Potter) and Josh Hutcherson! And teenaged girls do indeed have the power to change the minds of their boyfriends. As the gay father of two daughters (now in their 40s), I remember certain homophobic young men rapidly changing their minds! And being sincere about it.

My advice to anyone who is depressed: "Sometimes you just have to kick up your heels and dance, dance, dance!" With the Pet Shop Boys singing "Pandemonium," JJ Productions gives us a cool mix of young men dancing, singing, and making love. Even I understand why this video has gone viral .

[Http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6PeJjcP-nQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6PeJjcP-nQ) .

To continue the dance, this performance by the D.C. Cowboys of their signature song, "Cowboy Up," performed at the 2010 D.C. Pride, should get your entire body a-moving:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_FEnbHqB1s&feature=related

Many short queer films can be found on both YouTube and Vimeo.—some good, many bad. I find the two cited below to be particularly poignant. Each involves two teenaged boys and a simple kiss. *Eu Não Quero Voltar Sozinho* [I don't want to go back (home) alone, 2011] is the story of a blind Brazilian teenager (Leo), his girl friend (Giovana) who wants to be his girlfriend, and the handsome new kid (Gabriel) in school. What a great little film, marvelously acted by all three actors, a great script, great direction and photography. It's still winning awards.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Wav5KjBHbI>

Sadly, violence against gay men has increased dramatically in Brazil in the past few months, even as the government invests more in promoting tolerance of sexual minorities— as in the production of this short film. Recent news reports suggest one gay man is being murdered in Brazil every day. Again, the more queers become accepted (not just tolerated) by the public, the more vicious the homophobes become.

Oranges (2004) is equally beautiful in its simplicity. Two adolescent Aussie boys meet by chance; one laments never having been kissed; the other boasts of having been kissed by dozens of girls. But has he? And how will their lives change that day? [Http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TLkZwI-y78&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TLkZwI-y78&feature=related) .

What would Barbie do without gay Ken, right? But what if Barbie is really transgender? Unlike the really raunchy gay versions of "It's a Barbie World" on YouTube, I find this spoof quite amusing:

<http://pinkyheat.tumblr.com/post/17519724522>

If you are a young gay man and you want to dream about the school jock falling in love with you,

you can dream while watching this version of *You Belong with Me*. Who knows! Maybe you do have a fairy godmother somewhere.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhHeGRFW9Oo&feature=related>.

A couple of videos with an historical perspective. The first was a school project using Lady Gaga's *Born This Way*. The second is a brief history of the gay liberation movement from 1969 to 2011.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFN9NhNKeAU&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MWqS8H684E&feature=related>

Legalize Gay (2011), another recent documentary, focuses on the efforts being made by a few in the sports world (coaches, managers, players) to promote equality for sexual minorities.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpFe1X2vyQ/>

Have we reached a tipping point, as someone in the latter documentary says? It would seem so in terms of marriage equality. In the past year marriage equality has become a reality in New York, Maryland, and Washington State, and efforts to repeal existing laws have so far failed. As for California, even if the U.S. Supreme Court eventually determines the constitutionality of Measure 8, voters may already be prepared to overturn it. A recent poll showed a huge turn-around in support for marriage equality. Voters in Washington State and Maryland will likely face a ballot measure this November asking them to repeal the marriage equality laws passed by the legislature and signed by the respective governor earlier this year. As of this writing, opponents in Washington State, at least, are not having much success in collecting the required number of signatures to get the issue on the November ballot. A Catholic priest in Seattle has earned the wrath of hate groups nationwide for refusing to let anti-marriage equality petitions be circulated at his church.

In terms of gay weddings, we find an increasing number preserved on video. Lady Gaga's "The Edge of Glory" provides the music for this one, which strikes me as being too much of the Hollywood fairy tale:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGq-p43ZzA&feature=fvsr> Still, I guess we can dream.

This video is a compilation of lesbian weddings. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jGTgKcC8tr0>

Quite unlike the U.S., in Europe conservatives have made no promises to overturn marriage equality laws where they exist. Indeed, even when conservatives have come to power since the economic downturn in 2008, they have promised not to touch marriage equality laws (in the U.K., the Netherlands, Spain). Although marriage equality is not yet a reality in Italy, this gay wedding took place in the city of

Brescia in northern Italy on Sunday, 12 February, and the video was posted on the 13th, in anticipation of Valentine's Day. You have to scroll down to 13 febbraio for *Ti sposerò*. *San Valentino 2012*.

<http://arcigay.it/c/video/>

2012 Publication Awards

If you participated in the QF's English Essay Writing Contest for High School Seniors prior to 2012, and you will still be enrolled in college at the undergraduate or graduate level this coming fall, remember you are eligible to compete for one of several publication awards (ranging in value from \$250.00 to \$500.00) and the opportunity to have your submission published in *The Queer Foundation Scholar*.

Submission deadline is **June 15, 2012**. If you have misplaced the instructions, you'll find them here:

<http://queerfoundation.org/docs/PublicationAwards2012.pdf>

Questions? Contact the editor at rverzasconi@msn.com

I imagine the above videos and hundreds of others like them give certain "religious" zealots fits. Try as they may, they can't control their flocks anymore. Their announced boycotts fizzle. Indeed, retailers are discovering that there is money to be made on being boycotted by the religious right. A&F benefitted greatly by the national boycott announced by the religious right in 2008 for its "homeroetic" catalogue. Sales soared! Penny's didn't bat an eye when certain "religious" homophobes announced a national boycott because the company featured Ellen in several of its ads. The Starbucks president and CEO laughed at right-wing threats of a boycott. This is not because so many of us are queer. It's because more and more of our families, friends, and neighbors support us and others just don't listen to the wing-nuts.

For those of you who are young, it will indeed get better, which doesn't mean the road won't be rocky. Equality won't be achieved in my lifetime; maybe not in yours either. But hopefully, no one will ever push you back into the closet. Don't ever become apolitical or apathetic. Register to vote and vote in every election. If I may quote one of my favorite proverbs, this one from Africa: *If you think you can't make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito.*

Freedom of religion and freedom of speech do not come packaged with "freedom from criticism" as a side benefit. Hate cloaked in religion and prayer is still hate.

Ray Verzasconi, Ph.D.
Editor