

womanifesto

Newsletter of the MSU-Bozeman Women's Center

October/November 2007

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH- COMING OUT AWARENESS MONTH: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

By Erin Diehl

Welcome to October, the month when we commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness, Domestic Violence Awareness, and National Coming Out Day through a variety of educational programs. Everyone clear your calendars-- there is a lot to get done this month!

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM)

NBCAM was created by several national public service organizations, professional medical associations, and government agencies all working together to raise awareness of the prevalence of breast cancer and detection and screening services available to women. However, NBCAM's main focus is to empower women to take control of their own health, through self exams and yearly mammograms, while making us aware of treatment options for breast cancer.

October is the designated month for breast cancer awareness. It was established in 1985 and is represented by the pink ribbon. Originally, a week long program focused on offering information to the public on the prevalence of breast cancer, and the two founding members of the Board of Sponsors were the Academy of Family Physicians and CancerCare Inc. They played a huge role in the start up of NBCAM by widely publicizing the program, handing out pamphlets and testifying before congress about the need for the national awareness about breast cancer and the crucial role of mammograms.

For local support here in Bozeman, the Wellness Community-Montana offers a variety of programs and free support and education for people affected by cancer and their families. They offer monthly support groups for cancer survivors and caregivers and hold two monthly sessions, in addition to a women's retreat each Fall and a men's retreat each summer. A resource library is available to the public, as well as a program called "Cancer Companions," which matches those who have survived cancer treatment with others who have recently been diagnosed. For more information, visit Community Wellness-Montana's website at www.thewellnesscommunity.org/montana. For more information on breast cancer, or supporting survivors, visit the National Breast Cancer Awareness website at nbcam.com.

To celebrate NBCAM, The Women's Center will be hosting a sack lunch seminar on October 24th entitled "Breast Cancer: Awareness, Resources and Hope," at noon in Sub room 276.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month was founded by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence after the first Day of Unity was observed in October of 1981. This day was created to bring all the advocates working to end violence against women and children together. This Day of Unity became a week long event, which lead to activities at the local, state, and national level. In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed, and more importantly, the first national toll free hotline was created. In 1989, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month Commemorative legislation was passed by Congress and has been recognized every year since. Domestic violence awareness month is symbolized with the purple ribbon.

For more information on the prevention of domestic violence or how you can get involved, visit the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence website at ncadv.org or contact the VOICE Center at 994- 7069.

To commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness month, the Women's Center and VOICE Center will be hosting several events. The first is a Sack Lunch Seminar on October 10th in SUB 276: "He seems like such a nice guy...", and the second is on October 17th: "What if? Ways to plan for Safety". On October 16th from 8:30-4:00 p.m., The VOICE Center and the Network present a Faith Summit: "Domestic Violence Training for Clergy" at Christ the King Church; and on October 29th, Jackson Katz, an international author, educator and filmmaker, will present "The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How all Men Can Help," at 7p.m. in Gaines Hall room 101. (See more about Jackson Katz in this newsletter)

National Coming Out Day

National Coming Out Day commemorates a protest in Washington D.C. held on October 11th, 1987, when half a million people participated in a march for gay and lesbian rights. The rally resulted in the creation of various organizations, including the National Latino/a Gay and Lesbian Organization, the AT&T GLBT employee group, PFLAG, and LEAGUE. A motivated group of more than 100 gay rights activists gathered in Manassas, Virginia where they continued the dialogue created by the rally and founded National Coming Out Day, marking the anniversary of the highly successful march. October 11th then became a national day of celebrating sexuality and coming out of the closet.

For more information concerning National Coming Out Day or gay/lesbian rights visit the human rights web page at www.hrc.org. Also, checkout the statewide newsletter at www.gaymontana.org. and MSU's student group, QSA (Queer Straight Alliance) at gsa-msu-owner@googlegroups.com.

To commemorate National Coming Out day, the Women's Center will sponsor a seminar on Thursday, October 11th at 7:00 p.m.: "Homosexuality and the Bible" by Joel Biggers.

Purple Haze: Breaking Down Stereotypes in the Case of Same Sex Abuse

By: Julia Zema

The color purple signifies both Domestic Violence Awareness Month and National Coming Out Day—the purple ribbons helping us remember those struggling behind closed doors and in personal closets. One goal during this year's National Domestic Violence Awareness Month is to break down stereotypes—especially those identifying domestic violence exclusively as a heterosexual issue. Lack of knowledge about violence within homosexual relationships further oppresses those victims. Few people realize the severity of abuse though it occurs with the same frequency as within heterosexual relationships. Gender is a significant component and the assertion of gender roles is often the root of domestic violence. Victims who experience abuse within GLBT relationships may face similar reactions and obstacles when seeking help, but their GLBT status often leads to many additional challenges when attempting to find support.

Our patriarchal and homophobic society defines and judges those who differ from the “norm.” Gay and lesbian couples are often defined by their sexuality and their “otherness” — a fact which often leads to a myriad of challenges that can work to make their lives much more difficult. Abuse within a GLBT relationship can present even more unique problems, as many laws used to protect victims are specific heterosexuals. An abuser in a GLBT relationship may have an added layer of coercion and power by threatening to “out” their partner to family, friends, or co-workers, and may be aware of the fact that the victim is less likely to look for support because of their closeted status. Assumptions about partners (i.e. that all intimate relationships are between men and women) in the law and justice system continue to make seeking out help and support more difficult by potentially alienating victims. The same prejudice against women that exists in a patriarchal culture works to alienate gays and lesbians in a homophobic culture. When lesbians suffer abuse in a domestic relationship, they struggle with both of these issues, making their situation more overwhelming.

In heterosexual relationships, where men are more often the abusers, violent acts are carried out in line with society's belief of male dominance. Abusers within GLBT relationships may assert a male-oriented gender role which can lead to violence. The isolation which is a result of living in a heterosexist and homophobic culture may influence partners within GLBT relationships to form a stronger sense of dependency towards one another. "This increased dependency and isolation may result in an increased need to control one's partner, especially in relationships where one lesbian passes as heterosexual while her partner does

not, or when one partner seeks more independence or separation." (Psychologist Lori Haskell)

Multiple myths regarding domestic violence in same sex relationships still exist, and it is important to understand and debunk these are myths in order to increase awareness. People may define abuse as fighting in GLBT relationships because the two partners are viewed as equals in society. Understanding that domestic violence or abuse is the use of control by one person over another, regardless of their perspective genders, is crucial in recognizing this dynamic as abuse. One existing stereotype is that women are not capable of physical violence, and therefore, domestic abuse cannot exist within lesbian relationships. Though these views are slowly changing and we are seeing progress within the judicial and law enforcement fields, traditionally, in situations where both the victim and batterer are women, police have a difficult time identifying their suspect and victim when called to a crime scene. Homophobic beliefs influence many law officials and juries to take domestic violence in lesbian relationships less seriously.

Lesbian and gay victims often have different experiences in coping with domestic violence and finding support systems and resources is often much more difficult than it may be for their heterosexual counterparts. When both the abuser and victim are women, each has access to resources including shelters, making this an unviable and unsafe option for the victim. Oppression of both women and GLBT populations can prove to be even more dangerous when applied to those in abusive relationships. We need to spend our energy debunking myths about gender roles and GLBT people and keep educating social workers, domestic violence shelter workers, police officers, and those in the judicial system about the unique challenges faced by gay and lesbian victims of abuse.

More resources are currently available to help gay and lesbian victims of domestic violence. Services have been established specifically for GLBT victims, and many advocates and shelter coordinators receive special training to raise their awareness of the unique nature of same sex domestic violence. The Northwest Network for GLBT Survivors of Domestic Violence (www.nwnetwork.org) specifically caters to non-heterosexual domestic violence. In addition, the VOICE Center (406-994-7069) or The Women's Center (406) 994-3836), both on Montana State University's campus can provide resources to help victims and survivors of domestic violence.

QSA (Queer Straight Alliance) Update

QSA is a campus based student organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, and transgender students, staff and community members, and allies in Bozeman. Weekly forum meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday evenings, and a variety of bi-weekly social programs are also held throughout the academic year. Forum meetings provide an opportunity to discuss topical issues pertaining to the perception of sexual identity in the Gallatin Valley, meet others, and become the catalyst for social change in Bozeman. Social programs like coffee and bowling nights offer those interested the opportunity to meet with others that are similarly minded, and help to form a strong LGBTQ-allied community in Bozeman.

The personal is often political, so stay apprised of the current political climate and events and the action alerts which can be sent to you from gsa-msu@googlegroups.com--just write and let them know you'd like to be included on their email list for updates. Make sure you stay politically active if these issues are important to you, your friends, family or other people you care about. Letters, calls and emails to your representatives DO make a difference!

All LGBTQ students and community members are welcome at our confidential meetings as well as parents, friends and allies. To find out where meetings are or to get more information about coffee nights, bowling events, and pizza nights, or about QSA in general, contact us at 994-4551, e-mail us at gsa-msu@googlegroups.com, or visit our website at www.qsamsu.com.

Check around for posters about upcoming events to celebrate National Coming Out day on October 11th, and be sure to check out the dance on October 13th!

Fall 2007 Sack Lunch Seminars!

October 17: What if? -- Ways to Plan for Safety SUB 276

Statistically, 1 in 4 women in the United States will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. Join Shannon Root, Community Education Advocate from the Network Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse, to explore the ways in which you or a friend can plan financially for safety.

October 24: Breast Cancer Awareness Month SUB 276

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Join us for this discussion of how two local groups, The Center for Cancer Support and Team LUNA Chix, are working together to raise awareness for the prevention and treatment of breast cancer, a disease that now affects one in eight women.

October 31: Witch's Brew: A Brief History of Plant Medicine SUB 276

Witchcraft medicine is one of the oldest healing arts on earth. This lecture, offered by Kris Hill, founder of Hill Botanical, will look at the myth of the scary mean old witch and the plants she liked to use. How did those brooms fly anyway?

November 7: Adoption Birthmothers: Who Are You? SUB 276

Join Alaina Lammer Knight, an adoption caseworker for the Lutheran Social Services of Montana, for this interesting and eye-opening discussion of who birth mothers really are. Alaina will take this opportunity to bust some of the myths surrounding birth mothers and to give us a clearer picture of the adoption process as a whole.

November 28th Gender Bias in Science SUB 275

Join Assistant Professor Kristen Intemann for this discussion of the different ways in which gender stereotypes and assumptions have influenced what scientists have studied and observed, how research questions are framed, and how data is interpreted.

The Women's Center is Open for You

The MSU Women's Center is celebrating its 24th year as an office on campus. This is your Women's Center. We are here to serve all students, faculty, staff and community members. In the Women's Center you will find a welcoming space with room to study and explore. We house a special treasure: the Geraldine Fenn Memorial Library. This cozy little lending library houses over 1900 books primarily by or about women and a wall of fantastic newsletters and magazines. Anyone can check out books for free. Donations of books and magazine subscriptions appropriate to our library are always welcomed. Come and check it out.

When you find our office at 15 Hamilton Hall, our staff will greet you and gladly help you find answers to your questions, tell you about our programs and services, steer you to groups or other organizations that may be helpful, show you a big book full of scholarships for women, invite you to volunteer, or try to meet any other need you might present.

But you don't have to wait that long to enjoy your Women's Center, we are open Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Local Women's Resources:

The Network Against Sexual and Domestic Abuse (24-hour Shelter & Crisis Line), 586-4111

Bridger Clinic, Inc. (Reproductive Health Care), 587-0681

Career Transitions, Inc. 388-6701, careertransitions.com

Child Care Connections, 587-7786

HELP Center (24-hour crisis line), 586-3333

MSU Police (24-hour emergency), 994-2121

MSU Counseling and Psychological Services, 994-4531

MSU Student Health Services, 994-2311

MSU VOICE Center (Victim Options In the Campus Environment), 994-7069
(24-hour crisis line)

MSU Women's Center, www.montana.edu/~wwwwomen, 994-3836

Montana Women Vote! Project, (406)543-3550 (Missoula),
montanawomenvote.org

Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG), 723-7251 (Butte),
252-5440 (Billings)

PRIDE, www.gaymontana.com/pride, 1-800-610-9322

QSA (Formerly Q-MSU): Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender,
Questioning, and Allies Student Organization, 994-4551, or [qsa-
msu@googlegroups.com](mailto:qsa-msu@googlegroups.com).

Women's Voices for the Earth, 585-5549

10 THINGS MEN CAN DO TO PREVENT GENDER VIOLENCE

- 1 Approach gender violence as a MEN'S issue involving men of all ages and socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds. View men not only as perpetrators or possible offenders, but as empowered bystanders who can confront abusive peers.
- 2 If a brother, friend, classmate, or teammate is abusing his female partner -- or is disrespectful or abusive to girls and women in general -- don't look the other way. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to him about it. Urge him to seek help. Or if you don't know what to do, consult a friend, a parent, a professor, or a counselor. **DON'T REMAIN SILENT.**
- 3 Have the courage to look inward. Question your own attitudes. Don't be defensive when something you do or say ends up hurting someone else. Try hard to understand how your own attitudes and actions might inadvertently perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.
- 4 If you suspect that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, gently ask if you can help.
- 5 If you are emotionally, psychologically, physically, or sexually abusive to women, or have been in the past, seek professional help NOW.
- 6 Be an ally to women who are working to end all forms of gender violence. Support the work of campus-based women's centers. Attend "Take Back the Night" rallies and other public events. Raise money for community-based rape crisis centers and battered women's shelters. If you belong to a team or fraternity, or another student group, organize a fundraiser.
- 7 Recognize and speak out against homophobia and gay-bashing. Discrimination and violence against lesbians and gays are wrong in and of themselves. This abuse also has direct links to sexism (e.g. the sexual orientation of men who speak out against sexism is often questioned, a conscious or unconscious strategy intended to silence them. This is a key reason few men do speak out).
- 8 Attend programs, take courses, watch films, and read articles and books about multicultural masculinities, gender inequality, and the root causes of gender violence. Educate yourself and others about how larger social forces affect the conflicts between individual men and women.
- 9 Don't fund sexism. Refuse to purchase any magazine, rent any video, subscribe to any Web site, or buy any music that portrays girls or women in a sexually degrading or abusive manner. Protest sexism in the media.
- 10 Mentor and teach young boys about how to be men in ways that don't involve degrading or abusing girls and women. Volunteer to work with gender violence prevention programs, including anti-sexist men's programs. Lead by example.

This poster was produced by MVP Strategies, a gender violence prevention, education and training organization.
Email: MVPStrategies@aol.com

DO NOT MISS THIS ONE!
JACKSON KATZ IS COMING TO BOZEMAN!

Jackson Katz, educator, author, and filmmaker, who has long been recognized as one of America's leading anti-sexist male activists, is coming to Bozeman at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 29th. Katz's groundbreaking new book, *The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help*, explores the ways in which male dominant culture contributes to sexual and domestic violence. Katz strongly believes and advocates for the idea that all men, even those who do not commit violent acts against women, can help stop this violence. He readily suggests strategies to enlist men in the fight against all forms of violence against women.

Katz is a former all-star football player who became the first man at the University of Massachusetts Amherst to earn a minor in Women's Studies. He holds a masters degree from the Harvard Graduate School of education and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in cultural studies. In 1988, Katz became

the chief organizer for Real Men, the Boston based anti-sexist men's organization. Believing that only men can effectively stop violence against women, Katz's work focuses on educating and motivating men by raising awareness, particularly in the sports culture and military.

Katz co-founded MVP, Mentors in Violence Prevention, a program at Northeastern University. MVP is currently the most widely utilized sexual and domestic violence prevention program in professional and college athletics. He was a member of the U.S. Secretary of Defense's Task Force on Domestic Violence in the military from 2000-2003, and since 1990, has lectured at more than 950 colleges, prep schools, high schools, professional conferences and military installations. For more information about this and other events for National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, call the VOICE Center @ 994-7069.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 29TH @ 7:00 IN GAINES HALL, ROOM 101



Women's Center
15 Hamilton Hall
MSU • Bozeman
Bozeman, MT 59717-0210

Return Service Requested