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GAY ATHLETES

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

If you were to browse the magazine racks at any convenience store, it is difficult to find a general interest magazine targeted toward teenage boys.

greater or

Magazine publishers know that most thirteen to nineteen year old boys will either read special interest magazines, those marketed toward adult men, or online publications.

Teen magazine are not geared toward boys because publishers they supposedly will not read them! However, *Macho* is meant to fill that void. It is a magazine meant to allow guys a space to follow their interest while redefining traditional ideas about masculinity. Macho seeks to challenge our readers to think more critically about how society constructs manhood. We recognize the value placed on boys engaged in sports, video games, and media but also want to intersect those spaces with open dialogues about sexuality, emotional and mental health, in our special "Tech Issue".

Margaret Mead argues in her article "Sex and Temperament" that society's focus on the essential nature of women and men is severely misplaced, and it is not only women who suffer from this strict expectation of gender performativity. Mead states that the "regimentation of one sex carries with it, to a less degree, the regimentation of the other also" (159). Boys are expected to be brave, strong, smart, and confident; they are supposed to play sports, be aggressive, not cry, and explore their heterosexuality in

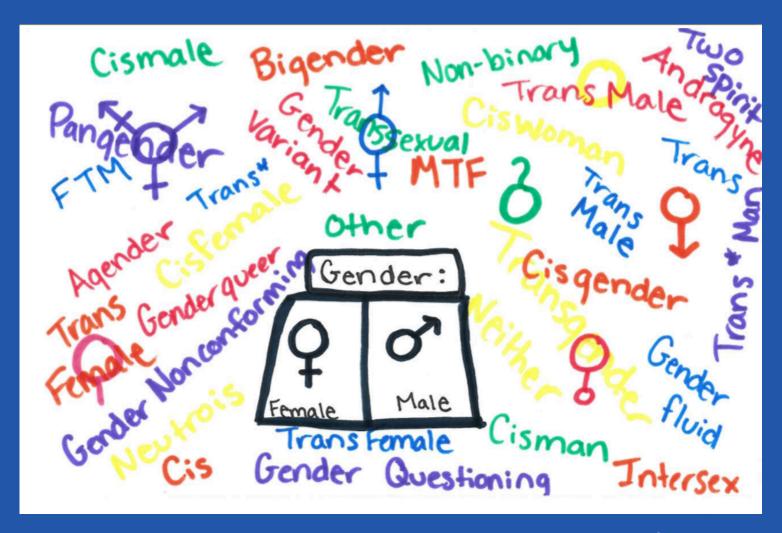
order to become men. Eric Anderson quotes sociologist Michael Messner but suggesting that men "... avoid compassion, weakness, fear, or the appearance of vulnerability because these are traits also associated with women" (34). The worst thing a boy can be called is a girl. However, Feminist scholars and activists have worked diligently to delegitimize gender stereotypes and *Macho* is simply a different forum with the sole purpose of achieving this goal.

It is obvious that society has a definite concept of "woman" and judges her based on her adherence to that concept. How many times have you said or heard the following: "she dresses like a boy", "she's not ladylike", or most damning "she acts like a man"? These phrases are used to demean women who engage in traditionally masculine behavior, they communicate to women that they are acting outside of their allowed gender boundary. Men are judged to insinuate that they are not masculine enough and are therefore of no better worth than women. R.W. Connell and James Messerschmidt's article "Hegemonic Masculinity" summarize this point, "To sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women" (844).

Macho does not want to maintain the status quo. It does not reaffirm common notions of masculine. It does not claim to speak for those who already have their voices validated. It is for the people on the fringes of masculinity. It speaks to boys who do not fit into the traditional model. And it asks those who do fit that model, to read through the pages and reflect on the ways in which they simultaneously benefit from and are restricted by definitions of masculinity.

facebook

Adds Gender Options



Facebook's expansion of gender options opposes the concept of a gender binary. A shift away from a gender binary allows for definitions of gender to be created which are not dependent on the dominant male gender norms. Simone de Beauvoir, in "The Second Sex", states that a consequence of the patriarchy is that "humanity is male and man defines women not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being" (163). It can be drawn from this argument that men would also define those not wishing to be defined as either gender as they relate to the norms of masculinity rather than by a definition that relates to intersex. Beauvoir argues that this dependence of gender definitions on the masculine creates an ideal; "He is the Subject, he is the absolute—she is the other" (164). Any non-male, including intersexuals, struggles to create their own independent definition of self, due to being labelled 'the other'. As reported by the Associated Press, "The Human Rights Campaign last year found that 10 percent of the 10,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender youths it surveyed used "other" or wrote in their own gender terms" Facebook's variety of gender options challenge the patriarchal concep("Male,

Female, or 'Other'?"). tion of the existence of solely man and not man, through providing such a large variety of options. Tracy Garza, Racial Justice Intern at Transgender Law Center and Co-Chair of San Francisco **Trans March** supports this claim, saying "These changes will allow many more Facebook

users to be our authentic selves online". An authentic self must not be anchored in definitions which depend on separating

become weakened.

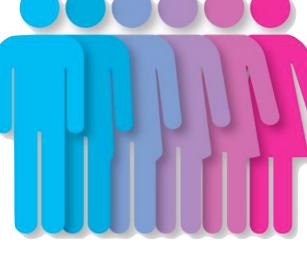


facebook.com

the self from the norm. An understanding of gender as spectral allows for the disintegration of gender roles. Students are bullied not necessarily due to sexuality, according to Ian Rivers and Neil Duncan in "Bullying", but because of their perceived differences and departure from traditional masculine/ feminine gender role expectations (32). The greater the availability to identify with contemporary conceptions of gender, the less traditional gender roles will be present and the stigmatization accompanying not conforming to traditional gender roles will

Homophobic language often reflects the content expressed during many aggressive episodes regardless of the actual or perceived sexual orientation of the victim (Rivers and Duncan 35). Through making more than 50

gender choices available, Facebook gives the opportunity to help adolescents, with who the site is popular, better understand intended uses of intersex terminology. Terms such as transsexual are given credence and may give way to the replacement of terms more likely to be used hatefully, such as tranny. Teens may understand that people support and identify with the terms that they understood only as use as hate speech, and come to the realization



https://libcom.org/library/communization-abolition-gender

of the actual definitions. Being more aquatinted with the actual uses of such terms may lead to teens' lesser use of terms like 'tranny' out of anger, and more use of terms such as transsexual for accurate and respectful description.

Another success of the Facebook gender update stems from gender privacy. The Associated Press reports that "Unlike getting engaged or married, "Your changing gender is not registered as a "life event" on the site and gender does won't post on timelines" ("Male, Female, or not become 'Other'?"). This has two important implications. First, your gender does not become your your definition. Gender does not invade definition" other's timelines as if it was their concern, those who wish to understand your gender can inquire within your profile. Even so, options such as 'neither' and 'other' are available, as are a spectrum of privacy options. Gender, sometimes a personal issue, is not a focus of ones online personality. The issue with publicizing ones gender is brought to attention by Judith Halberstam in "An Introduction to Female Masculinity", through the discussion of gendered bathrooms. Customs which force one to publicly identify their gender, Halberstarm argues, creates a conception that "this person is gender deviant" (494). The multitude of options offered by Facebook work to disintegrate gender binaries, allows the display of ambiguous gender, which Halberstam argues is "inevitably transformed into deviance, thirdness, of a blurred vision of either female or male" (493). However unfortunate, "gender's very flexibility and seeming fluidity is precisely what allows dimorphic gender to hold sway" (Halberstam 493). Through not displaying gender changes as a status update, the likelihood of being evaluated as such by

third parties is decreased. Indeed, Brie Harrison, a contributing engineer to the project, added, "I joined this company because of... control over who sees that identity", reports the Transgender Law Center.

The second success of not registering

gender change as a life event lies within the fact that the focus is not on a gender update. The implication of not publicly displaying ones gender update is that the focus is not that you were born different than how you currently identify. Through not announcing a change in gender, the focus remains solely on current identification. Consequently, sex is recognized as having a socially constructed element rather than being exclusively biological. Facebook recognizes that one may not be born with their preferred gender through permitting change, but does not focus on this. This idea is harmonious with the writings of Rubin in "The traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political 77 Economy' of Sex". Rubin states that "psychoanalysis describes the transformation of the biological sexuality of individuals as they are enculturated" (248). Opponents of the new Facebook policy, such as Jeff Johnston, an issues analyst for Focus on the Family, believe "It's impossible to deny the biological reality that humanity is divided into two halves - male and female" ("Male, Female, or 'Other'?"). This viewpoint neglects the role which society plays in shaping gender. Facebook's new policy, like the beliefs of psychoanalysis, recognizes biological sexuality, but understands that sexuality can be transformed through society by making a variety of options available. Through emphasizing current rather than former identities, Facebook, like psychoanalysis, recognizes that biological sex is simply a starting point and not the main focus of gender identity.

by: Julian McGinn

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying has become a hot topic in the US today. Cyberbullying is a relatively new development, resulting from increasing advances in technology. It is very prevalent, with a recent survey finding 16% of high school students were cyberbullied in the past year (stopbullying.gov). So what does cyberbullying have to do with feminism? According to research, boys are most often the perpetrators. Recent research found that boys are most often bullied by other boys, while girls are bullied by both genders. Boys bully others more than girls, and the rate of their bullying goes up with age (Sachs, 2013). Additionally, almost 60% of cyberbullying victims are female (Li, Q, 2007). This inequity in bullying is unsettling. The question is, why is this the case? This article will address the causes and types of bullying employed by boys, and the feminist interpretations of these tendencies. Cyberbullying, like any other bullying, shows the tendencies of boys to use sexualized and gendered insults to prove their own masculinity, and therefore superiority.

Bullying is defined as "unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance" (stopbullying.gov). Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through "electronic technology." This means the bullying is done using a phone, computer, tablet, or other device, through a social media site, text message, chat, or website (stopbullying.gov). Some common examples of cyberbullying are "mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by

email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, o r fake profiles" (stopbullying.gov). While kids who are cyberbullied are likely to be bullied in person also, there are a number of problems that are unique to cyberbullying which are extremely concerning. Messages can come from an anonymous or untraceable source, and can be sent out instantly to large numbers of people. Once the offending material is posted online, it can also be extremely hard or impossible to delete. Unlike with in person bullying, kids



Nichelle Giraldes

cannot easily hide from cyberbullying. It can happen when the victim is alone or with others, and can occur anytime (stopbullying.gov).

The origins and causes of bullying among boys are somewhat complex. In its basic sense, bullying is an attempt to gain power and superiority socially by putting others down. The study "'Dude, You're a Fag': Adolescent Masculinity

and the Fag Discourse" focuses on the "centrality of homophobic insults to masculinity especially in s c h o o l s e tti n g s" e specially through the use of the 'fag



thinkdigit.com

discourse' (Pascoe, 2005). The research shows that "American adolescent boys become masculine through the continual repudiation of a 'fag' identity" (Pascoe, 2005). Basically, boys gain their social power by attacking the heterosexuality and masculinity of others, therefore boosting their own masculinity. The research shows that the word 'fag' in particular is used as a "weapon with which to temporarily assert one's masculinity by denying it to others" (Pascoe, 2005). The word 'fag' in this sense does not just mean that one is homosexual. While it "may or may not have explicit sexual meanings," it "alwavs has gendered meanings" (Pascoe, 2005). When a boy gets called a fag, "it means he is not a man, not necessarily that he is a homosexual" (Pascoe, 2005). Boys are more concerned with showing their manliness than their straightness. This

shows a very important aspect of bullying: it is not all about sexuality, but more so about adherence to gender roles and establishing stereotypical masculinity. This is why the "fag discourse" is not just about oppressing homosexual teens, but it affects all boys regardless of their sexuality (Pascoe, 2005).

In "The Straight Mind" Monique

Wittig identifies that "straight society is based on the necessity of the different/other at every level" (Wittig, 1978). People tend to see any one different from the norm as

inferior, and this is at the core of the way we interact with each other. Wittig equates the different/other with the dominated, saying that our society "not only oppresses lesbians and gay men, it oppresses many different/others, it oppresses all women and many categories of men, all those who are in the position of the dominated" (Wittig, 1978). Straight white boys have social superiority over girls, LGBTIQ kids, minority kids, and other peers seen as "different" from this standard. Wittig writes that it is an "act of power" to find differences and control them, to set a standard that not everyone can reach, and then call it "normal" (Wittig, 1978). In "A Room of Ones Own" Virginia Woolf furthers this argument, writing that when people put other people down, it is all a power play. When a professor wrote about the inferiority of women, he was "concerned not with their inferiority, but with his own superiority" according to Woolf (Woolf, 1929). She states that "without self-confidence we are as babes in the cradle. And how can we generate this imponderable quality, which is yet so invaluable, most quickly? By thinking that other people are inferior to oneself" (Woolf, 1929). According to Wittig, "everybody tries to show the other as different," but not everyone is successful at doing this; "one has to be socially dominant to succeed in it" (Wittig, 1978). So, the seemingly "normal" kid preys on the "different" kid as a way of reinforcing his social dominance.

Whatever the cause, bullying is seen as more acceptable coming from boys, because aggressiveness and fighting is seen as a part of their nature. In our culture that is based off of traditional gender roles, "the belief in a 'boys-willbe-boys' mentality still persists, whether it's on a playground or in a college fraternity" (Sachs, 2013). This is one reason why more boys bully than girls. Additionally, female victims are more likely than male victims to tell an adult about being cyberbullied (Li, Q, 2006). Possibly this is because boys are taught from a young age that they are not allowed to feel vulnerable or weak, or show emotion. They are then too proud

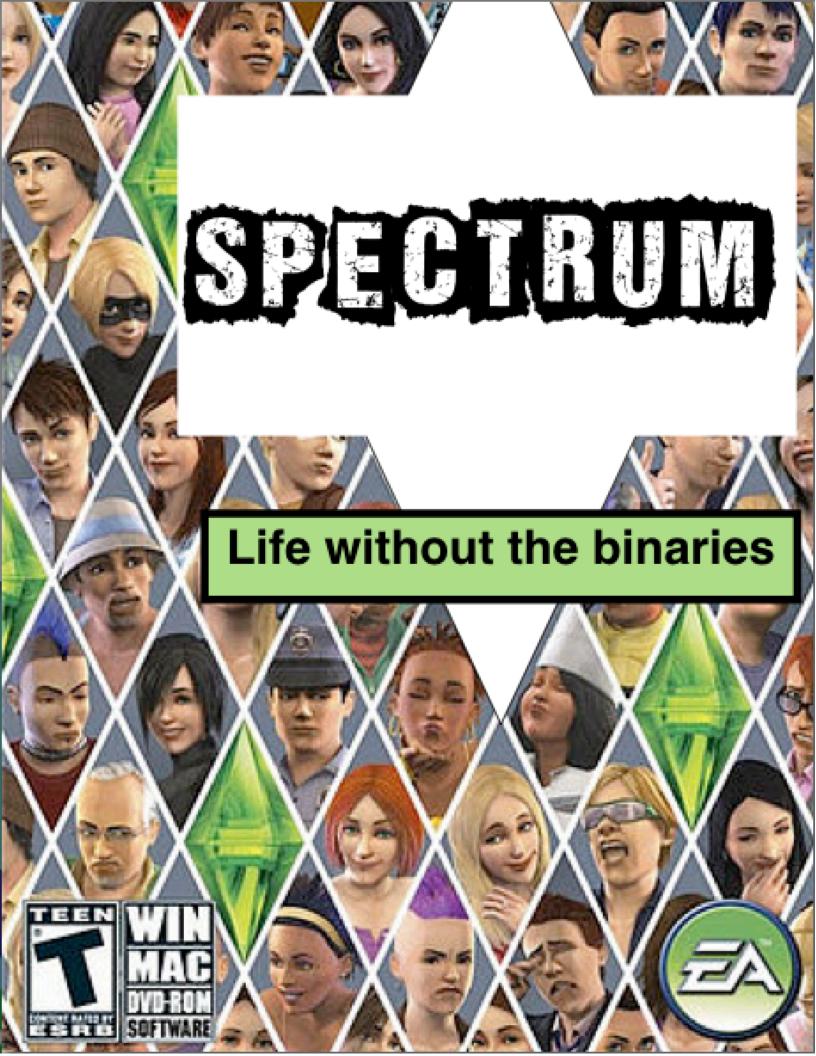
to admit they are being bullied, because this vulnerability threatens their outward masculinity and conformity to traditionally accepted gender roles.

While technology can be a helpful resource, means of communication, and source of entertainment, it can also cause people a lot of harm (stopbullying.gov). "Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems" (stopbullying.gov). Like with in-person bullying, kids who are cyberbullied are more likely to skip or refuse to attend school, be bullied in person, receive poor grades, have lower self-esteem, have more health problems, and use drugs and alcohol. (stopbullying.gov) To help prevent cyberbullying, you should be aware of how you act online, and do not put information about yourself on the internet. If you are being cyberbullied, you should tell an adult. If someone you know is being cyberbullied, don't be a bystander. You should comfort and help them, tell a trusted adult, and set a good example by not participating in or encouraging bullying (stopbullying.gov).

By Ingrid Sundstrom



stopcyberbullying.org



Interview with Eric Pizana

Eric Pizana is the Executive Director at Inside/Out Youth Services. He has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. He joined the Inside/Out Youth Services team in April 2011. According to the Inside/Out website, his job's focus is making sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning or queer youth are "finding what they need in the services provided "inside" at Inside/Out" (Dinofrio, 2013). Additionally, he trains



insideoutys.org

organizations, including schools and foster care agencies, "to gain an understanding of LGBTIQ issues and how to make their world a safer place" (Dinofrio, 2013). Previously, he worked for Urban Peak Colorado Springs, helping homeless youth in Colorado Springs. This helped give him a "direct understanding of LGBTIQ issues and homelessness" (Dinofrio, 2013). Eric struggled with his own sexuality growing up, and attended Inside/Out as a young man. "I don't just say Inside/Out Youth Services is a great organization because I work there, but because I used to attend myself," Eric says; "Coming to Inside/Out, I learned I was not alone" (Dinofrio, 2013).

Feminists have fought for years for the rights of LGBTIQ individuals. Eric continues this legacy of work by helping young men and women come to terms with their genders and sexualities, and by teaching them and providing them with services they need. Eric believes everyone should have equal opportunities, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. Although he does not know whether or not he can label himself a feminist, he agrees with feminist sentiments. Coming from a family who told him that his sexuality was unacceptable, he felt the need to fight for the rights and equal treatment of other oppressed people. "Finding Inside/Out empowered me," he said, "it is my pleasure to say this vital mission succeeds today for the next generation of youth" (Dinofrio, 2013).

Would you consider yourself a feminist? Why or why not?

Honestly, this is the first I have been asked this question which leads to have to think about it. Personally I have never labeled myself a feminist, however, I believe every person should be treated equality and have the same opportunities regardless of gender.

What caused you to get involved with helping LGBTIQ kids?

Growing up in a Hispanic and military home, I had a horrible coming out experience. My parents told me I was a disgrace to the family, would die of AIDS and that I should just kill myself. I ran

away often and did not have any form of support. The only thing that kept me going was the belief that someday someone would love me for who I was.

I found Inside/Out Youth Services in my youth and it was a blessing. It was there I found friends who were going through similar issues I was, and we became the best of friends and found support in one another. I found adults, the facilitators, who were proud of me way before I was proud of myself. I was able to talk about issues I can never bring up at home, I learned being gay was just a piece of whom I was and that it was okay, and Inside/Out saved me from a world full of rejection.

How did you get involved with Inside/Out?

Inside/Out shaped the person I wanted to become. I knew someday I wanted to become a supportive adult for youth. I furthered my education and immediately started to work in non-profits. I began working at Urban Peak Colorado Springs, a local homeless shelter that works with youth between ages 13-21. I eventually found my way back to Inside/Out Youth Services and started out as the Admin. Assistant and worked my way up to become the Executive Director. The experience feels like a complete full circle.

Would you consider Inside/Out to be in part a feminist organization?

I do. In our history the organization has been led by respectable and powerful women. They have set the tone and we ensure all of our youth have the same opportunities through our events and programs regardless of gender. We celebrate core values such as acceptance, equality, respect, safety, and understanding.

What is Inside/Out, and what services does it provide to LGBTIQ youth?

Our mission is to educate, empower and advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning youth. Inside, we provide safety and acceptance for youth. Out in the community, we promote equality, respect and understanding.

You can find information on our programs and trainings we offer through our website insideoutys.org.



insideoutys.org

How does Inside/Out help to empower kids?

We empower our youth through knowledge and giving them a voice. Our programs expand their knowledge by touching on topics such as safe sex and healthy relationships, suicide prevention, how to apply for college, financial aid and more. We also provide scholarship opportunities for youth to continue their education.

Our youth leadership program Proud Empowered Advocates for Queers (PEAQ) is especially phenomenal. They are a group of young people who go out in our community and educate on LGBTIQ terminology, share their personal testimonials, and host Q and A sessions. Through our PEAQ program youth gain skills for public speaking and how to facilitate group discussion.

What should teens do if they encounter heterosexism or bullying directed at LGBTIQ teens, or other oppressed groups?

When you see someone being bullied, don't be a bystander. When you look at bullying statistics about 7% of the students are targets and 9% are the bullies; 84% are standing watching this happen. Even if you are too afraid of doing something in that moment go up to the bullied student afterward and be their ally.

What can young men today do to help promote equality?

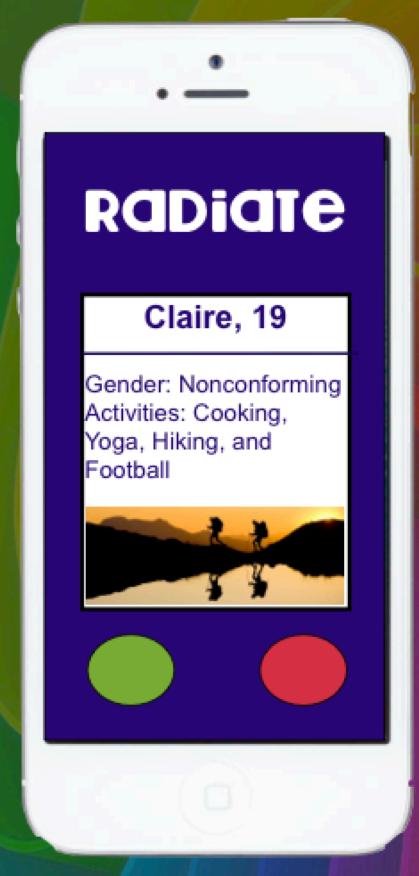
When I think about the LGBTIQ community and our allies, our allies have great power in their voice. Their voice appeals to a wider audience. Without their support the LGBTIQ movement would not be where it is today. Young men can help promote equality, or any issue they are passionate about, by using their voice on behalf of those who are oppressed.

Any last advice for the teens out there?

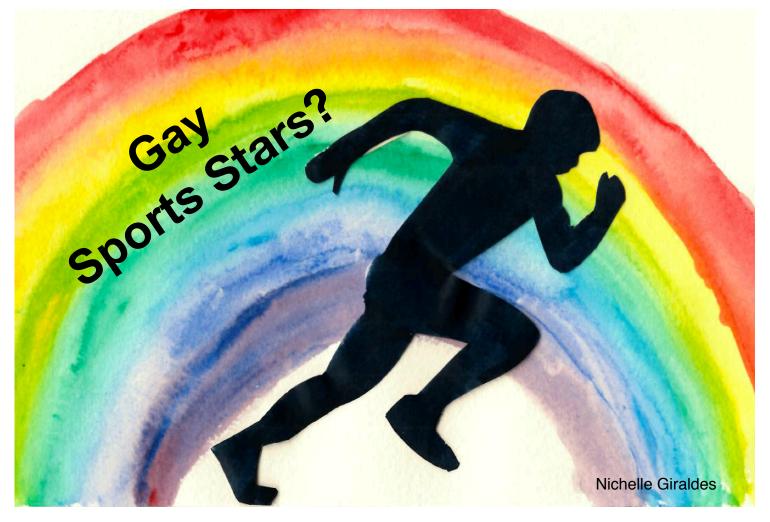
Don't wait for things to get better, or expect others to make the change you want to see. Be that person to make things better right now by getting involved. Start with the community you live in.

Eric Pizana has hopes to make life better for those who are oppressed. As a gay man, Eric identifies with and feels a need to help with other LGBTIQ individuals who are facing discrimination. As a member of a marginalized group, he can see that women deserve the same equality that he fights to obtain for LGBTIQ people. In "Not for Lesbians Only" Charlotte Bunch stresses the need for the straight to identify with and help with the causes of the homosexual community (Bunch, 1975). She identifies that "the heart of lesbian feminist politics... is a recognition that heterosexuality as an institution and an ideology is a cornerstone of male supremacy" (Bunch, 1975). She points out the connection between the oppression of women and the oppression of homosexuals. Bunch expresses the idea that "heterosexual privilege is the method by which women are given a stake in male supremacy—and that it is therefore the method by which women are given a stake in their own oppression" (Bunch, 1975). The quote that rings the most true women who want to demolish the patriarchy, and get rid of male supremacy, "must, equally with lesbians, fight heterosexual domination—or we will never end female oppression" (Bunch, 1975). I feel that this statement can be reversed to say that we will never end heterosexual oppression without fighting against male supremacy and the patriarchy. All oppression is interconnected, and all based on the same ideas of hierarchies and power imbalances. Eric sees the interconnectedness of discrimination and oppression. He sees that we need to get rid of all types of discrimination, so that all people can be equal.

By Ingrid Sundstrom



THE DOTTING APP FOR THE WHOLE PERSON



The perception of sports a maledominated ream comes in part from "the interplay of sports and war imagery especially in body contact confrontational sports" (Cornell and Messerschmidt 833). This could explain why there is currently no professional women's hockey league, one of the more physical popular American sports. In "Trans Woman Manifesto", Serano argues "...most sensible people would agree with the statement that "men are women's equals", we lament the fact that we are light-years away from being able to say that most people believe that femininity is masculinity's equal" (550). Women's professional leagues exist for nearly every popular American sport, except for football. The existence of professional womens' sports exemplifies division rather than equality; it enforces that women need a separate realm in order to perform successfully. Women are

permitted to participate in a traditionally male dominated activity, but as a marginalized side act. Through understanding the relationship between femininity and sports, we can understand how sexuality may interfere with one's position as a professional athlete.

Indeed, The New York Times recognizes the interference between sexuality and the National Football League, commenting that Micheal Sam, a promising NFL prospect "is making his public declaration before he is drafted, to the potential detriment to his professional career" (Branch). A common stigma associated with gay men is effeminacy. The issue with effeminacy in the NFL can be explained by Radicalesbians, who write "The grudging admiration felt for the tomboy and the queasiness felt around a sissy boy point to the same thing: the contempt in which women -- or those who play a female role —are held" (208). This perception of homosexuals as womanly can create discomfort among other athletes. Connell and Messerschmidt's findings on "gay men's ambivalent relationships to patriarchy and conventional masculinity" suggest that professional athletes are concerned that their masculine realm, which they have defended through separation from female participation, has been invaded by homosexuals (832). This threat could be actualized by means of the subtle homoeroticism of sports; Anderson suggests that "Men's sporting teams beam with young, toned, sexualized, and highly masculine bodies... bring out latent homoerotic desires from heterosexual men" (14). The threat is not only that homosexual presence will feminize the masculine realm through their mere presence, but that they will influence the team as a whole, making the once subtle homoerotism more forthright.

The presence of homophobia in the NFL goes to show the severity of the threat that homosexuality holds on their realm. "Homophobia may appear to be a way to nullify the homoeroticism of the sporting arena", continues Anderson (14). Athletes may use homophobic slurs in an attempt to keep other athletes latent homophobic desires at bay, but also their own. Locker rooms, where teams shower together, and overnight trips, where hotel rooms may be shared, are areas popular for homophobic language (Anderson 28). The presumption is made by those policing that the gay, or perceived to be gay, athletes are attracted to a fellow teammate. The assumption that all gay men are attracted to all men is fueled by the myth that gay men are hypersexual.

The media plays a heavy role in the "the production of exemplars of



Micheal Sam in sportsillustrated.cnn.com

masculinity (e.g., professional sports stars), symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them" (Cornell and Messerschmidt 846). The media perpetrates an ideal male sports star which is unrealistic, perhaps even for the athletes themselves. The New York Times recognizes this, calling the NFL "a league with overtly macho culture" (Branch). Athletes may feel as if they are under pressure to live up to such high standards of masculinity. The media spotlight may be a factor in homophobic policing; athletes may feel the need to ensure the masculinity of their teammates, knowing that their actions are under constant scrutiny by the media.

The coming-out of athletes has been divided, between active athletes and retired ones. "A few players have come out upon retirement, like the N.F.L. player Dave Kopay in the 1970s and the N.B.A. player John Amaechi in 2007" (Branch). However, coming out during retirement carries the implication of the separation between homosexuality and professional sports; these athletes

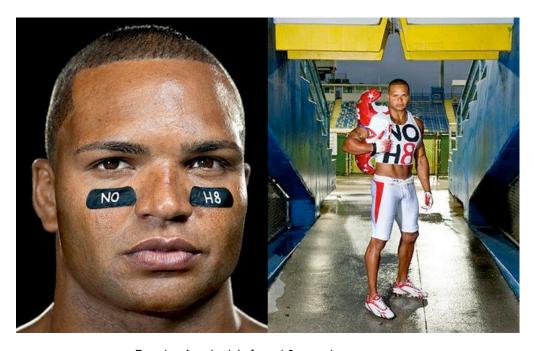
felt they could only be out when they were no longer involved. Anderson reports that the presence of muscles, a highly masculine image, "may also repel closeted gay men less concerned with being thought heterosexual or masculine" (55). Potentially, in the case of these retired athletes, coming out post involvement represents an internal divide between their athleticism and a more effeminate homosexuality. As required by their profession, they were muscular and masculine, but as a sexual being, disinterested in this self-image. For this reason, they could have found it difficult to be both at the same time.

Anderson theorizes that some gay men can be inclined to participate in sports in order to "rectify the feeling of femininity that comes with the stigma of homosexuality" (14). In accordance with this, the New York Times closes its article with a quote by Michael Sam; "I guess they don't want to ask a 6-3, 260-pound defensive lineman if he was gay or not." Here, Sam draws attention to his masculinity through referencing his height and weight. He

additionally implies masculinity through stating his position on the field, one involving significant physical force. It appears to be important to Sam to establish himself as machismo. Anderson's findings suggest that this machismo attitude is particularly important to some gay athletes' definitions of self.

The masculinity of muscle is seen as being incompatible with homosexuality, and yet it serves to dichotomize homosexual involvement in the sports arena. Those interested in compensating for the effeminate stigma of their sexuality, perhaps such as Michael Sam, are drawn to this image of the hyper-masculine, and others, perhaps such as the professionals Dave Kopay and John Amaechi who only came out post retirement, are deterred to come out as a more effeminate being while involved with such a masculine enterprise.

By Julian McGinn



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