

Lesbian  
Gay  
Bisexual  
Transgender

E D U C A T I O N  
O U T R E A C H  
S E R V I C E S

# Out Words

## The Importance of Ally Work

Successful social change movements have many ingredients and allies are a vital part of the mix.

An ally is a member of a dominant group who rejects the dominant ideology and takes action against oppression out of a belief that eliminating oppression benefits everyone.

But that is only a small part of the rich and diverse contribution that allies offer. An ally is a person who takes a stand against social injustice directed at target groups.

Ally work can include: men who speak out against sexism; white people who speak out against racism; and heterosexual people who speak out against heterosexism and homophobia.

An ally works to be an agent of social change rather than an agent of oppression. They are confident in their own social group membership, and comfortable and proud of their own identity. They take responsibility for learning how oppression works in everyday life, and listen to and respect the perspectives of those who are oppressed.

Allies acknowledge unearned privilege and status, and work to eliminate or change privileges into rights that all people enjoy. Allies recognize that unlearning oppressive beliefs and actions is a lifelong

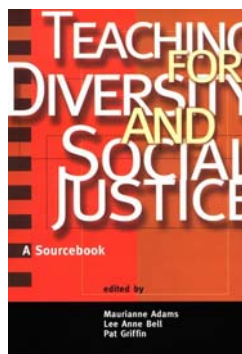
process, not a single event, and they welcome opportunities to learn.

Allies are willing to take risks and try new behaviors. Some allies may experience fears of their own as well as resistance from other people, but they are willing to take risks despite these obstacles. Allies act against social

injustice because they believe in righting wrongs and in making the world a better place for all. They are comfortable making a connection between themselves and every other person, and they know that in other circumstances or spheres they might be (and perhaps are) among the oppressed themselves. They are willing to make mistakes and learn from them; when they are unsure of something, they are willing to ask

questions. They are willing to be challenged about their own behavior and attitudes, and they are wholly committed to taking action against social injustice in their own personal spheres of influence, as well as in broader spheres -- social, political, or professional -- whenever the opportunity arrives.

Allies understand the connections among all forms of social injustice, and believe they can make a difference by acting and speaking out against them in their daily lives. Allies also work to cultivate support from other potential allies, and take care of themselves to avoid burnout.



*This book is a must read for allies and activists. This article is adapted from the information and expertise the book provides.*

Learn more about ally work at [www.ithaca.edu/lgbt](http://www.ithaca.edu/lgbt)

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# SONDA: *The Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act*

Thirty-one years after it was first introduced in the New York State legislature, the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA) became law this winter.

New York is the 13th state - the second largest after California - to enact anti-discrimination protections for gay men and lesbians. SONDA adds the words "sexual orientation" to the state's existing human rights and education law— outlawing anti-gay discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodation, education and credit throughout New York State

To celebrate the victory, rainbow pride flags were flown from city halls across the state, including those of Albany, Brighton, Brooklyn, Buffalo, and Rochester.

The LGBT Center sponsored an information and cake table to inform the campus community about this new legislation.

"It shall be unlawful to discriminate against any individual because of sexual orientation."

THE LAW OF NEW YORK STATE  
AS OF JANUARY 16, 2003.

EMPIRE STATE  PRIDE AGENDA



Center Coordinator Lisa Maurer, English Professor Greg Tomso and senior Danny Baker serve cake to passer-bys in Campus Center to celebrate the SONDA vote.



## *Gaypril 2003 In Review*

Gaypril was a great success! The month-long calendar of LGBT-themed events was jam packed with speakers, performances, movies, presentations, lectures and awareness building. In collaboration with the student groups BiGayLa and Created Equal and with the support and commitment of numerous departments and groups, more than 27 LGBT-themed events were held during the month of April.

The LGBT Center's spring speakers included Leslea Newman whose work focuses on intersections of Jewish identity and sexual identity, and Dr. Pat Griffin, whose talk drew about 150 people to consider issues of homophobia and sports (see photos, at right).

Other Gaypril events included a gay comedian, a lecture on intersex issues by an intersex alum of Ithaca College, an LGBT Career Issues workshop in collaboration with Career Services, films in the Cinema on the Edge series, the ever-popular Faculty/Staff Zap panel, and the annual observance of the Day of Silence.



Leslea Newman (top) and Pat Griffin (left) were among the very well attended Center sponsored Gaypril events.

Photos by Josh Redman

## *Congratulations!*

Annual awards given by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (of which the Center for LGBT Education, Outreach and Services is a part) include honors for raising LGBT consciousness on campus, service to LGBT community on campus and ally work.

Please join us in congratulating this year's recipients of these LGBT-themed awards: Daniel Baker '03, Jarred Eddy '04, and Dr. Bill Pelto.

Thank you all for your tireless efforts and commitment!

## Where's the "T" in SONDA?

On the day of the historic SONDA vote there were rallies in support of as well as protesting the non-discrimination legislation.

However, the protestors on this day were certainly diverse—some came to register their displeasure that LGB New Yorkers would finally have equal rights in some spheres. Others, however, publicized the fact that this legislation (unlike that of Minnesota, Rhode Island, and New Mexico) does not extend the same rights to transgender New Yorkers.

Discussions continue at the local and state levels as to how this additional goal can be achieved, including several meetings in the Ithaca community sponsored by the county Human Rights Commission and the

statewide advocacy organization the Empire State Pride Agenda. Senator Thomas Duane and Assemblyman Richard Gottfried unveiled a bill which would do just that, the "Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act" (GENDA) at an Albany press conference in April 2003.

For more information on this issue and the ongoing work to include gender expression in statewide legislation, please visit the Transgender Law & Policy Institute and refer to "Talking Points on Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act" at:

<http://www.transgenderlaw.org/resources/genda.pdf>



## Pride Flag Flies Over Campus... Briefly

Yogi Berra's words come in handy with regards to the pride flag on campus. *It's déjà vu all over again.* The pride flag was raised over campus on the new flagpole near Free Speech Rock. Less than two weeks later, it was reported missing by an observant student.

This marks the second time in three years that the pride flag has been stolen while flying on the campus. As one student aptly observed, "Basically two-thirds of the time that the flag has been flown over Ithaca College, it has been stolen."

Several staff, faculty members, and alumni immediately volunteered their own pride flags as a replacement, and a new flag will be raised as soon as modifications are made to the flagpole to make it more tamper-proof.



## Rainbow Reception for Graduates

This year will mark the first annual celebration to honor the lives and achievements of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, (LGBT) and allied graduating seniors. Ithaca College's Rainbow Reception for Graduates will take place in late April.

This unique and important event is modeled on a celebration first observed in 1995 at the University of Michigan, called Lavender Graduation. Since that time, a number of institutions have developed their own similar ceremonies—Ithaca College proudly joins in this tradition.

Because it can be challenging to be an out LGBT or allied student, only those LGBT and allied students who choose to participate will be honored. However, the

ceremony will take a moment to acknowledge those LGBT and allied students who are graduating this year that feel they cannot participate due to issues of safety and confidentiality.

For many students of diverse backgrounds, returning home to family and friends who share common cultural bonds is a warm and welcoming experience. Most LGBT students, however, come from families that do not necessarily share a common sexual identity and therefore, for some, this experience may create feelings of unease rather than comfort.

The Rainbow Reception for graduates will provide an opportunity to celebrate the lives and accomplishments of our sexual minority students as scholars and as individuals of pride, integrity, and honor.

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Check out the full-color version of this  
newsletter on our

**AWARD WINNING**  
website!

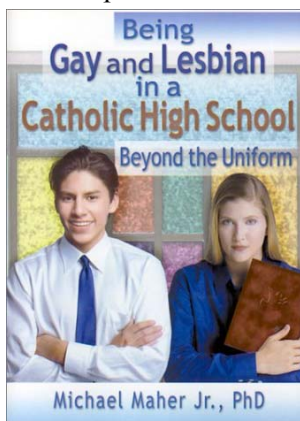
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## Book Notes

Whether you're looking for information for a research paper, something to read over the weekend, or some inspirational words about being an LGBT person, the LGBT Resource Room is the place to go!

Books can be checked out by members of the campus community - ask a friendly Student Volunteer for assistance!

A couple new additions to the Resource Room include:



***Being Gay and Lesbian in a Catholic High School: Beyond the Uniform***

by Michael Maher, Jr., PhD.  
Haworth Gay and Lesbian Studies, Harrington Park Press, June 2001.

***Restricted Access: Lesbians on Disability***

Victoria A. Brownworth and Susan Raffo, editors. Seal Press Feminist Publisher, October 1999.

*Reviewed by Jillian Jacobs '04  
Guest Book Reviewer*

Restricted Access is a compilation of stories bridging the gap between disabilities and sexuality. A myriad of disabilities and viewpoints are included, ranging from hearing impairment to caring for a disabled partner. Told from first person perspectives, the stories allow the reader to gain access into the lives of some incredibly strong and courageous women. Brownworth and Raffo have done an excellent job in Restricted Access of providing the reader with both a well-rounded collection of stories and an experience with a topic that does not receive much publicity.

