

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

# An Intern's International Perspective

The following is an edited summary of the final project of LGBT Center intern, Cheung Ting Chi. As a social sciences major and an international exchange student from Hong Kong during the fall of 2006, Ting Chi offered new perspectives and an exceptional desire to learn. At the conclusion of her internship, she called it "an unforgettable experience!"

One of the most unforgettable events for me is being an intern in the IC LGBT Center. I remember when my professor suggested an internship with the LGBT Center, I had a lot of questions. I had not heard the term "LGBT" before and I was curious about what it was. Because of my curiosity and interest in gender studies, I decided to start my internship with the LGBT Center. My expectations of this internship included finding out about the services provided by the Center, comparing the structure of different LGBT Centers in the US, and most importantly exploring sexual minority issues and comparing them with the situation in Hong Kong.

I find that the environment and the level of support (such as people's attitudes and institutional support) between Ithaca and Hong Kong are very different. In

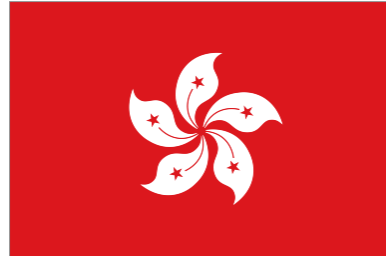
Hong Kong, we have a total of eight universities and none of them have an LGBT Center. At my home university students can study gender but there is no queer study at all. Students can take courses which are related to sexuality but the choices are quite limited.

There is one student organization called HK Queer Campus (which started in February of 2006) in my school, but it is not officially recognized. My school also has a non-discrimination policy. According to the Equal Opportunity Unit, a member, employee or student of the university

shall not discriminate against others based on one's sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or race. This policy protects the rights of both LGBT students and employees in my university.

There are also three online radio stations in Hong King which provide news and entertainment programs for homosexual people. However, there is no governmental law protecting homosexual people from discrimination in Hong Kong. Also, there are no television programs with LGBT characters or themes. In fact, if something slips

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LGBT Center Intern Ting Chi brought a unique perspective to the LGBT Center as an international student from Hong Kong. Above, the flag of Hong Kong.

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# Alumni Journal: Ryan Prosser '03

My four years at Ithaca College were the most transformative period in my life. I knew from the first time I visited the campus as a prospective student that it was a place that I would thrive. I did not know then how much the people that I met, and the opportunities that I was given would have such a long lasting impact on both my personal and professional lives.

Ithaca College is a place in which the students are given a voice to transform their own experiences as well as the college culture as a whole. This is vital in the creation of engaged citizens. This is why so many Ithaca College graduates are able to create change and impact their communities in a positive way once they have left the south hill.

An underlying theme of academics and student life at Ithaca College is the idea of taking what you have learned and experienced while at the institution with you to whichever community you inhabit once you leave. It seemed to me that the institution incorporates social justice into nearly all facets of its operation. This is an admirable and unique quality in Higher Education.

The most life-changing experience of my time at IC was being a part of the development, implementation and growth of the LGBT Center. It was a dream originally developed by a wonderful alumnus named Michael Mandel. His work created a springboard for other student leaders and committed staff and faculty to bring to fruition a dream of a student who saw the potential for a stronger community.

It was this change in action that has sparked my professional aspirations. I am now a Student Affairs professional working at the University of Illinois at Springfield. I see myself on a daily basis utilizing the education and social training that I received at Ithaca College. UIS is a growing campus, with unique

challenges and opportunities. LGBTQ issues are at the forefront of the student dialogue and are a daily part of the student affairs professional culture. The University of Illinois at Springfield has recently implemented a Safe Zone program to better train faculty/staff/resident assistants and other students in creating understanding, comfortable spaces for people to discuss issues of identity and sexuality. I am a part of the steering committee for this program. I am also a member of the Access and Diversity committee, and the Diversity Task Force. In all of these opportunities I find myself drawing from the experiences and challenges I faced at IC.

*It is the culture of Ithaca College that serves to challenge each and every student to carry with them, IC's legacy through their own life's journey.*

In higher education and particularly student affairs, the idea of "best practices" is used to develop programming and services. My experience at Ithaca College has been extremely valued by my colleagues here. The programs that IC has developed and the support mechanisms that are endorsed are being used by my new campus as well as campuses around the country. IC's inclusion in The Advocate's first ever guide for LGBT students is evidence that it is on the forefront of LGBT student services.

As students and employees, be proud of this, but do not stop fighting to provide the best services possible. Continue to beg the questions "What more can be done?" The nature of Ithaca College is to develop a life-long relationship with the people you meet and the professors that mentor you, certainly. Most importantly however, it is the culture of Ithaca College that serves to challenge each and every student to carry with them, IC's legacy through their own life's journey.

*Ryan M. Prosser  
Resident Director  
University of Illinois at Springfield*

## An intern's international perspective, continued

through (like the on-stage kiss of Madonna and Britney Spears at the MTV Video Music Awards in 2003) the director of programming in Hong Kong must cut this scene at once so it does not go on the air. However, I would not say that the situation is worse than the US since both places have different contexts, and since some Americans don't accept LGBT people or TV programs either.

There are some institutional supports for LGBT people in Hong Kong, but awareness of these issues is not very strong. But, people of my generation are more likely to talk about and be more accepting of LGBT issues. I have some friends who have come out to their friends or in school, but not to their families. Comparing with Hong Kong, I think students at IC are more willing to come out and talk about their sexual orientation.

When I first arrived at IC, a guy I had known for a short time told me he was bisexual. I was very surprised he was willing to share this, since we had only known each other for a little while; I was curious about how he could tell of his sexual orientation openly, and without being afraid that I might be a homophobic person. After I lived here for several months, I actually found out the answer to this—the atmosphere in Ithaca is very inclusive, and people feel safe to come out. Though not all students are interested in queer studies, their professors may invite the LGBT Center Coordinator, or prism students, to give presentations directly related to their lessons. For example, in my educational psychology class, my professor invited the LGBT Center Coordinator to discuss ways to create an inclusive classroom environment for LGBT students.

***“People of my generation are more likely to talk about and be more accepting of LGBT issues.”***



*Lis Maurer and LGBT Center intern Ting Chi*

I also found that although the public image of the US is very liberal and modern, not everyone is as open-minded as I imagined. There is no federal law about banning discrimination based on sexual orientation in the US. I also found that people in Hong Kong and the US are concerned with different issues—in the US the most controversial debate about homosexuality is same-sex marriage. In contrast, the most controversial topic about homosexuality in Hong Kong is the approval of the Sexual Orientation Discrimination Ordinance.

Homosexuality is not an old topic in Hong Kong. In fact, before 1995 people talked about homosexuality rarely. However, after proposing the Sexuality Orientation Discrimination Ordinance in 1995, Hong Kong people started being interested in the civil rights of homosexual people.

I think the situations of Hong Kong and the US reflect different cultural values. The values of Hong Kong are constituted by both Western and Eastern values. As Hong Kong is part of China, it is affected by Confucianism. The society of China is very traditional and homosexuality is a taboo. The Chinese government also forbids any information about homosexuality to enter the country. For example, the film *Brokeback Mountain* was banned by the Chinese government even though the director is a Chinese person. In addition, the society of Hong Kong is not as traditional as in China, because Hong Kong was a British colony for about 100 years, and sovereignty was returned to China in 1997. For this reason, values in Hong Kong are influenced by both Britain and China. From my point of view, the level of openness about LGBT issues is somewhere between China and Western countries. People in Hong Kong know that homosexuality exists, but they are not willing to talk about it. I think the stage that Hong Kong is undergoing may be similar to the stage the US was in ten years ago. I think there is room for improvement for both the US and in Hong Kong.

In conclusion, I think the environment of Ithaca is much more inclusive than Hong Kong. However, I believe the environment of Hong Kong may be friendlier for LGBT people than some places in the US. I think the situation in Hong Kong is improving. I think time is needed for improvement, and I am confident that the situation will be better in the future. Maybe 10 years from now, my home university will have a LGBT Center and students can major in queer studies, and people will be willing to come out not only to their friends but also to their families.

*The Center extends a big thank you to Ting Chi for her willingness to learn and share her unique perspectives with students and staff. We wish her the best of luck back at her home university!*

## LGBT News to know...internationally



### It's official: Gay Marriage in South Africa

South Africa became the first nation in Africa, and the fifth in the world, to legalize marriage for same-sex couples.

The Civil Union Act was signed into law by the country's deputy prime minister, one day before a December 1, 2006 court mandate to guarantee marriage equality for gay and lesbian couples.



### Marriage Rights in Israel

In November, the Israeli High Court ruled that gay and lesbian couples married abroad (in countries in which same-sex marriage is recognized as valid) will be registered as married couples in the population registry.

Six of the seven judges voted in favor of the decision, with one opposing.

## LGBT News to know...nationally

### From New Jersey...

In December, the New Jersey Legislature passed a bill establishing civil unions in New Jersey, which was signed into law by the governor. However, as with all same-sex civil unions and marriages performed in jurisdictions where they are considered legally valid, the federal government does not recognize them.



For more information about what's going on in New Jersey, check out: [www.gardenstateequality.org](http://www.gardenstateequality.org)

## Spring Events: more than movies!

*These events are collaborative projects between the LGBT Center and other Ithaca College departments:*

### Thursday, February 15th

Klingenstein Lounge, time TBA

Allison Redick speaks on

"Intersex Studies: Life Beyond the Case Study"

Contact: Rebecca Plante, Sociology

### Thursday, March 29th

Park Auditorium, 4pm

Lecture and film screening with filmmaker and writer Richard Fung

Contact: Tom Shevory and Patty Zimmerman,  
Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival  
[www.ithaca.edu/fleff/](http://www.ithaca.edu/fleff/)

### Monday, April 9th, Clark Lounge, time tba

Speaker on Health and LGBT people

Contact: Priscilla Quirk, Coordinator of Health Promotion & Substance Abuse Prevention



Want to  
Volunteer in  
the Center?

Stop by 150 Hammond Center (the lower level, just past the Counseling Center and the Office of Health Promotion) to pick up your application!

We're looking for currently enrolled students who can offer at least 2 hours a week throughout the semester as a Resource Room volunteer.

Volunteer slots fill up quickly, stop by soon!

# LGBT Center Film Series Schedule

The film series continues...

Out of the Past:

Heroes & History of the LGBT Movement



**Wednesday, January 31st,  
Textor 103, 7pm**

*Changing Our Minds: The  
Story of Dr. Evelyn Hooker*

The story of Dr. Evelyn  
Hooker, who undertook  
groundbreaking research

during the 1950's that led to a radical discovery:  
gay people were not, by definition, "sick."

**Two films in observance  
of Black History Month**

**Thursday, February 1st,  
Textor 101**

*I Shall Not Be Removed: The  
Life of Marlon Riggs, 7pm*  
Touching memorial to Marlon  
Riggs, a gifted gay filmmaker  
and courageous advocate for  
stigmatized people everywhere.



*Brother Outsider: The Life of  
Bayard Rustin, 8pm*

The story of Bayard Rustin,  
organizer of the 1963 March  
on Washington who helped  
mold Martin Luther King, Jr.  
into an international symbol of  
peace and nonviolence.

**Thursday, March 1st,  
Textor 103, 7pm**

*A Litany for Survival: The  
Life & Work of Audre Lorde*

A mentor and inspirational force for  
many, Lorde embraced life and  
focused her energies to fight for civil  
justice, women's equality and lesbian  
and gay rights.



**Thursday, March 29th,  
Textor 103, 7pm**

*Hand on the Pulse*

Interviews, photos and archi-  
val footage tell the story of  
Joan Nestle, outspoken activ-  
ist and co-founder of the  
Lesbian Herstory Archives in  
New York City.

**Three films in observance  
of LGBT Awareness Month**

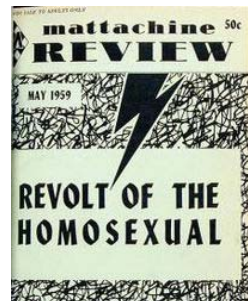
**Wednesday, April 4th, Textor 102**

*No Secret Anymore: The Times of  
Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon, 7pm*

and

*Hope Along the Wind:  
The Life of Harry Hay, 8pm*

Each film profiles the  
visionary work and lives of  
individuals who founded the  
first organizations in the US  
For gay men and lesbian  
women.



**Thursday, April 5th,  
Textor 103, 7pm**

*The Times of Harvey Milk*

In 1978 Harvey Milk became  
the first openly gay person to  
be elected to public office in  
California. This film tells the  
story of Milk's election and  
shocking murder.

**Please join us for a film!**

*The untold stories of the heroes and history of the  
LGBT movement are just one documentary film away!*

C E N T E R F O R

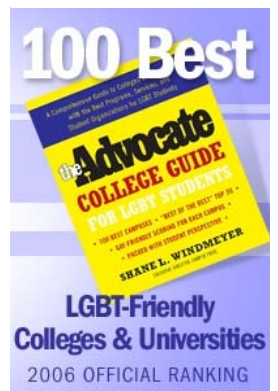
Lesbian  
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E D U C A T I O N  
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We're one of the...



## Dates to know



**Holocaust Remembrance Day**  
April 15th  
[www.ushmm.org/remembrance](http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance)



**National Condom Week**  
February 7-14

**Freedom to Marry Week**  
February 11-17  
[www.freedomtomarry.org](http://www.freedomtomarry.org)



**No Name Calling Week**  
January 22-26, 2007  
[www.nonamecallingweek.org](http://www.nonamecallingweek.org)

**5th Annual LGBT Health Awareness Week**  
March 11-17  
[www.lgbthealth.net](http://www.lgbthealth.net)



**National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**  
February 7  
[www.blackaidsday.org](http://www.blackaidsday.org)



**Day of Silence**  
April 18  
[www.dayofsilence.org](http://www.dayofsilence.org)

**DAY of SILENCE**

