Quote of the Week: "We dance around the ring and suppose, But the secret sits in the middle and knows."

Fredericton author tells story of "masks"

A Marriage of Masks M.T.Dohaney (Ragweed Press) 176 pages

ELISE CRAFT

Set in Fredericton, A Marriage of Masks tells the story of Laura Stevenson, a woman who learns that her marriage of twenty years has been based on false affection and misplaced priority. Told through a series of flashbacks, this novel unmasks the difficult and often painful realities of a marriage of convenience set against the backdrop of social acceptability and compulsory

After twenty years of marriage and the birth of a child, Laura learns that her husband Kevin has been having an affair with a male lover throughout their relationship. His infidelity serves as the looks back at the alienation she felt not loved, now she sees that she was caught in a marriage that was necessarily without passion and the love she wanted. Her husband had denied his identity to create a "family" for himself and their daughter in the eyes

Although angry and betrayed, Laura finds strength in Kevin's admission of his homosexuality. In it she finds

confidence in herself. She learns that both were victims of appearances and circumstance. She learns that she was

Simply written and full of local impetus for her to reassess her life; she references, A Marriage of Masks is a snapshot of human relations in a world within her family and her marriage. that values how things look over how Where she once believed that she was they are. It is a wonderfully straightforward and penetrating look into the repercussions of both sacrificing ones' personal identity to satisfy social pressure, and of the human need to love

Watch for more info. on M.T.Dohaney in an upcomming author profile.

Any questions or comments on the
Books Section are welcome and book reviewers always welcome.

New book offers informed argument about homosexuality

Virtually Normal. An Argument about Homosexuality Andrew Sullivan (Random House) 223 pages

THE BRUNSWICKAN One of the current debates within our society stems from beliefs concerning homosexuality and bisexuality. These debates have given rise to massive

homophobia to homophilia, tolerance and understanding to hatred and discrimination; these are the results of the ongoing struggle by lesbigay individuals for equality and recognition.

The many arguments for and against this would seem to overwhelm the right of lesbigays to live our lives as we are. However, the case as it currently stands appears to favour those whose positions appeal to a unequal status for lesbigays in society. The arguments for equal treatment are few and far between.

Andrew Sullivan, a scholar of modern history/political science and former editor of The New Republic, presents among the population. From an interesting argument about

NOREW SULLIVAN

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Normal. An Argument About Homosexuality.
The thesis of this book is simple; dissect the arguments, dogma, rhetoric and statements that argue against explorations into how our society deals with lesbigays. This work is somewhat autobiographical for Sullivan. His own experiences as a gay man growing up in these turbulent times provides a perspective that many in the lesbigay

Virtually Normal is an exan the various sociopolitical positions that exist in society with respect to homosexuality. Sullivan has taken certain particular beliefs and arguments in society and placed them into specific catagories which reflect choices people make. As he states in the book, "...these terms are not mutually exclusive...they are ideal types." However they do create a sense of where people stand in either one or more of his classifications.

There are four classifications which illivan speaks of that hold some belief homosexuality. The classifications of and liberals do not correspond political ideologies of the same name, but reflect a complex system of values, attitudes and views that govern a illness/sin perspective. Liberationists view homosexuality as a social construct that restricts and confines individual freedom to be who they are in society. The conservatives tolerate and are not tolerated and in fact are treated as shameful. In contrast, liberals view homosexuality as part and parcel of who a person is and it is the social treatment osexual persons that should be explored as infringing on lesbigay

Within each classification, Sullivan explores the relevant values and supporting evidence that are used as the basis for each ideology. Whether the value system is based on religion, culture, ethnography, social pressures, history or geography, each section is revealed as simply a part of a more complex system. For example, the prohibitionist stance is based on a number of religious perspectives is not as clear cut as many prohibitionists believe it to be. Instead, what appears to be taking place is careful and selective omission of religious statements and emphasis on specific sections of religious doctrine that pertain homosexuality.

The purpose of Virtually Normal is not to devalue each classification's system, but rather to carefully consider why society views homosexuality as it does. Once the reader has been presented with the information, Andrew Sullivan then presents a politics of homosexuality which call for the recognition of lesbigay rights without having to impose a system of tolerance or understanding upon society. In effect, this would provide lesbigays with the ability to live their lives as equals with heterosexuals without compelling society to tolerate homosexuality if individuals do not wish

This is not a hypocritical system, but instead recognizes the realities of our society. Just as certain heterosexuals should not force their homophobic views on people who do not want to change their opinions and attitudes, so too should lesbigays not impose their views on those who do not wish to accept homosexuality and bisexuality. Nevertheless, Sullivan's proposal does provide the lesbigay community with the support and recognition of their lives as equal citizens in society. In the end, perhaps this is what we as a group should be striving for in the social scheme of things.