

SPECTRUM

Weird and Wonderful Leather!

Leather Dykes. List this under terms that scramble my brain. I have all kinds of questions that I would like to ask a woman who spends her leisure hours (at least) in a harness. I've never met one - that I know of - but my friend did on her trip to Vancouver. The stories she brought back were shocking in places, and downright crude in others.

Like leather Dykes. I can see the possibility of leather as politics: Mulroney has us all strapped for cash; dominant culture's been whipping us all our lives; cowhide is even recycling - or at least it's not wasting a by-product of the burger industry.

It must be very freeing to bare it all but the "hides" on a dancefloor - of course it would also hurt like hell for some of us. How much, or how little leather is worn seems to be up to the woman. I wonder if there are degrees of political leatherness. Are you a voting member with a bracelet, and part of the inner circle if the square inches of cowskin total more than your own?

I was in a store in New York last year that specialized in leather. (I was doing the tourist thing...you tour your way. I'll tour mine.) On the wall of this shop I saw a full harness of black leather. It was complete down to the hood, and this...well...seven-inch "protrusion" is the only word I'm going to be allowed to use here. For five hundred plus bucks (American) you could set yourself up as the reigning monarch of the leather set. I was dying to ask the

attendant if the -added member-could come off, unscrew or something, in case you found that your date for the night shopped at the same place. Instead I politely glanced through the collection of whips under the counter.

Before I left, a man came in and made a purchase. I don't even know what he bought, but I immediately thought of him pursuing some violent act with it. It took a moment of thought before I decided I had no way of knowing what he was going to do with whatever he bought. I assumed, as do many people, that someone who is into leather is into S&M (and also that S&M is always violent). Wrong.

Leather Dykes will tell you - when they feel like it - that wearing leather has very little to do with the power relations of their sexual activities. Non-leather wearers have no way of knowing, and no right to prejudge what type of sex they have. Others will tell you that S&M is certainly not always violent. If we want to educate ourselves in this matter we'll find that lots of our ideas are wrong.

Obviously you don't have to be into S&M to wear leather, but do you do far out things like hang from the ceiling while watching TV? Why not? I'm really curious as to what you do in leather. What kind of politics are you really into? Despite my flippant remarks above, I do believe there is a legitimate politic (or non-politic - the effort to remain outside of politics that some people adhere to with an almost political

dogmatism) for Leather Dykes. It would be great to sit down with a Fredericton Leather Dyke and discuss Leather culture.

A Fredericton leather bar might be a hoot, too. Pardon me if I can't see it actually happening. We can't even keep fluffy places like Trax open for long. There doesn't seem to be too much luck in the way of finding a new venue for a while. Although the renewed FLAG is working on dances and special events, and the lesbian dance committee is still hard at organizing women's dances. The next women's dance is Feb 15 - regular place regular price. (I wonder if anyone will surprise me by showing up in leather.)

The Black Triangle by Tristis Bhaird

Getting information about what events are going on has just gotten a little more difficult. The FLAGline has closed down, leaving Fredericton without a central information line, and new Lesbians and gays without an access point into the community. This should be of some concern to the politically minded out there.

Obviously we are going to have to replace it with something. At FLAG's next meeting (Feb 12, I believe) I suggest it be on the agenda.

The speakers bureau I talked

about earlier will be put together shortly. There has been a lot of interest in it, at least in the presenting side of things. I have yet to hear from a group that is looking for this kind of dialogue. Of course that may be because we haven't sent the posters out yet.

One more Fredericton event to note is the coffeehouse. The event I talked endlessly about on Dos Lesbos (CHSR FM 97.9 - Mondays at 7PM) for the past six weeks turned out to be a success. There will be more of them, hopefully regularly.

Legal Ease: Engagement and Marriage

Austin and Charlotte have been seeing each other for over two years. They have finally decided to tie the knot and get married. Marriage will involve many changes in their personal lives but there are also legal considerations that they must be aware of.

To be married Austin and Charlotte must be over the age of 18. If either were 16 or 17 years old, he or she would need the consent of their parent(s) or legal guardian. If one of them was under the age of 16, he or she would require a declaration by a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench permitting marriage in addition to parental consent.

In order to be married in New Brunswick they must first obtain a marriage license. A marriage license is a document that is presented to the person performing your marriage. A marriage license ensures that the couple is legally entitled to marry. To obtain a marriage license, Austin and Charlotte must appear before an issuer of marriage licenses and file an application. The fee for the license is \$100.00. Unless the circumstances of your marriage are urgent or exceptional, you must wait five days after making your application before the license will be issued. After they have received the license, Austin and Charlotte must have the marriage ceremony performed within three months.

There is no longer a requirement for a blood test in New Brunswick before obtaining a marriage license. There is also no requirement for the publication of banns. However the Marriage Act does not prevent the church from publishing banns according to its traditions.

If for some reason Austin and Charlotte break the engagement there are also legal consequences. An engagement is considered a legal contract. Under some circumstances, the person who breaks the engagement may be required to pay damages to the innocent part, his or her former fiancée. Another consideration is the problem of who is entitled to the engagement ring. The general rule is that whoever breaks the engagement is not entitled to the ring. For example, if Charlotte breaks the engagement, Austin is entitled to the ring. Wedding gifts are said to be conditional to the wedding taking place and should be returned if the wedding is called off.

The marriage can be solemnized by either a member of the clergy or by a Clerk of the court of Queen's Bench. There must be two or more credible witnesses present at the ceremony. They must be 19 years of age or older. If Austin and Charlotte are married by a clerk, they will have to pay a \$25.00 fee. After the ceremony, the person who solemnized your marriage will give you a marriage certificate.

The choice of a surname may also be a consideration. The Change of Name Act allows for several options. A person can retain their surname he or she had before the marriage or may choose to assume his or her spouse's name. It is also possible to use a combination of both your surname and your spouse's provided the name is hyphenated. For example, if Charlotte's surname was Smith and Austin's surname was Jones, either may use the surname Smith-Jones.

You can get a copy of your marriage license from Vital Statistics Office in Fredericton. To get a copy, you must have the following information: name of the bridegroom, name of the bride, surname prior to marriage, place of marriage and date of marriage. There will be a fee of \$20.00 for a wallet size copy and \$25.00 for a certified copy.

For additional information on marriage, contact: Vital Statistics Office, Department of Health and Community Services, P.O. Box 6000, Fredericton, NB, phone: 453-7411.

This column is intended to be used as a guide only. It is not meant to be a replacement for professional legal advice. If you require any additional legal advice or legal counselling, please contact a lawyer.

MISSING

FROM MARSHALL D'AVRAY HALL:

APPLE COMPUTER PACKAGE consisting of the following 5 components:

- Apple II GS Serial No.: E7280TNA2S6000C
- Apple Color 7GB Monitor - Serial No.: N7151991
 - Drive 5.25" - Serial No.: KBC2863
 - Drive 3.5" - Serial No.: Y7B1CMG
- Apple Image Writer - Serial No.: 0836637

Call Heather McDonald at 457-9870

Knowledge leading to the whereabouts or safe return of these items will be rewarded.

Unitarian

11 a.m., Sunday, January 19th
ROBBIE BURNS AND RELIGION.

John Ross

Children's Program: Environmental Concerns
THE UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF FREDERICTON
749 Charlotte Street

Join Us For Coffee After The Service.
This Fellowship exists as a Haven of Religious Freedom
For Further Information Call 451-0919

Rebels in North
America Run
Against the Walk
Light. But in a
Haegelian shadow,
even Zeus seems
mortal.