

These Are A Few Of My Favourite Things!

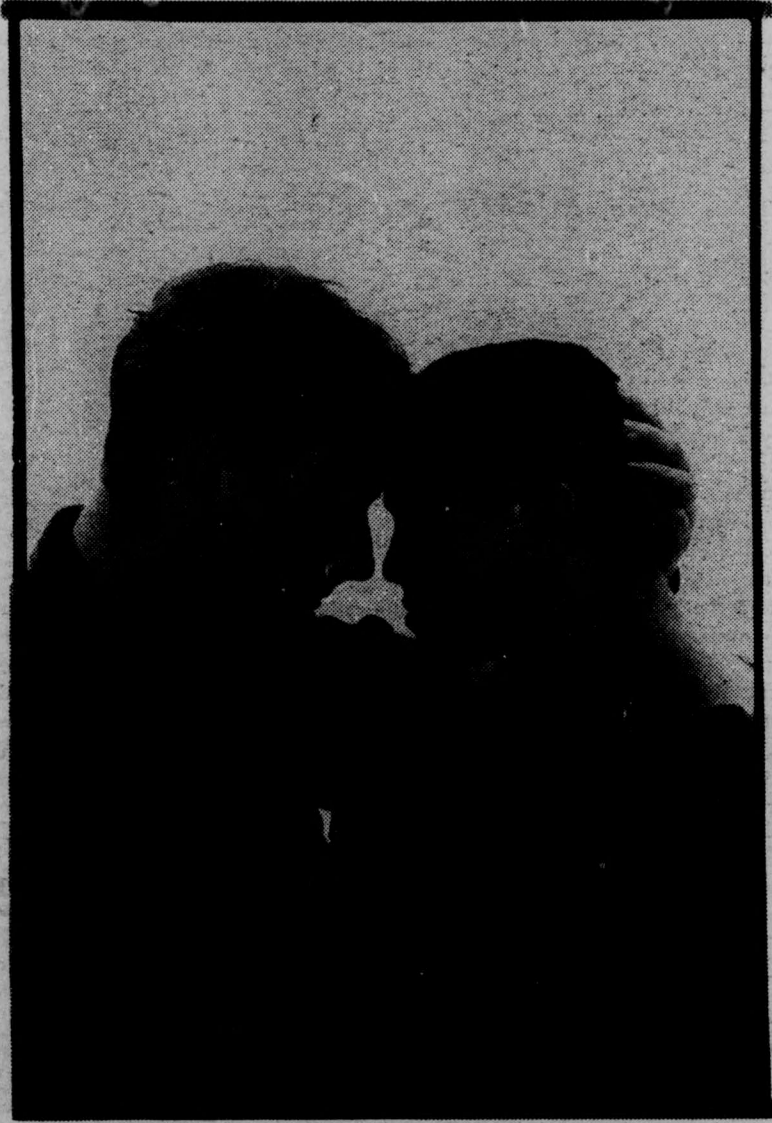
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Homosexuality has been defined as a sexual/romantic attraction towards persons of the same sex. In some cases, bisexuality has been lumped together by the heterosexual population into the same classification. Homosexuality itself can be subdivided into gay men and lesbians as a way to differentiate between the sexes. For a number of reasons, this division highlights certain similarities and differences between the experiences of gay men and lesbians. This article will focus on gay men, what exactly it means to be a gay man? Well, there are a fair number of lived-experiences, ideals, stereotypes, attitudes and roles that can exemplify gay men. They can be serious, witty, hilarious, saddening, subtle and direct. But above all things, they are reflections of what gay men have done and thought from the past to the present. It would take too much time and a too many pages to really express what it means to be a gay man, so here are a number of things that reflect the ideas of a gay man. Not all of them will necessarily indicate the proverbial epitome of gay maleness, but some may give an idea.

BEING A GAY MAN MEANS:

- Being proud of who you are, in spite of negative social pressures.
- Trying to look your best by working out at the gym, staying healthy and so on.
- Being comfortable with your body and not giving in to social pressures of body imagery.
- Cross-dressing and being able to put together a stunning outfit that makes you look better than some women.
- The agony/ecstasy of beard burn.
- Never being sorry for your sexual orientation.
- Being able to see and talk to women as human beings and not as mere sex objects.
- Being able to freely express yourself emotionally, spiritually, sexually and socially above the stereotypical social male image.
- Knowing some of the history and culture of the lesbian community.
- Not having to worry about certain issues such as marriage, having children, etc...
- Being asked by someone for decorating tips.
- Being a member of a community that transcends religion, ethnicity, culture, and some gender barriers.
- Not discriminating against heterosexuals.
- SHOPPING!!!
- Not confusing masculinity with machoisms
- Coming out to yourself first before coming out to others.
- Holding hands with the man you love.
- Being proud of the many lesbian role models who are blowing the closet door wide open.
- Actually having rhythm, style, pizzazz and form when you dance.
- Sensuality as well as sexuality. Remember, being homosexual doesn't just mean sex.
- Being called a "faggot," "fruit," "queer" and a host of other derogatory names by an intolerant and homophobic society.
- Being called a friend, son, nephew, uncle, brother and a host of supportive names by the positive elements of that same society.
- Knowing to some degree what another man likes to do, and have done to them, during sex.
- Bringing him home for the first time, seeing a movie together for the first time and spoiling him rotten...and watching his reaction to it.
- Standing up for your rights when it comes down to equality versus discrimination.
- Cultivating a broad range of friendships; male



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- and female, homosexual, bisexual and heterosexual.
- Never letting other people try to put you back in the closet.
- Receiving some interesting Valentines paraphernalia.
- Having a sense of humour about life, even though the rest of society seems to have a mad on for us.
- Trying different roles and images (e.g. Leather men, Drag Queens, Activists, etc.) to see which ones you prefer.
- Making sure you don't lose sight of who you are after trying on different roles and images.
- The teasing pleasure of S & M/Bondage transformed into pure ecstasy.
- The joy of being honest with yourself and admitting to your sexual orientation.
- The sadness associated with the losses to AIDS.
- Support lesbian politics, businesses, activities and events.
- Practicing wearing those heels before doing drag.
- SEX, SEX, SEX!
- Traveling to San Francisco, Provincetown, Amsterdam, Toronto and a host of other places that are lesbian havens.
- Being able to fix a car, build a fence, whip up a gourmet meal, put together a fashionable outfit and not bowing down to a specific gender role.
- Wondering what part of your body you want to shave.
- The joy of your first sexual encounter with another man.
- The fear of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Learning that being gay can also mean loving someone else, aside from the sex.
- Chanting "We're here. We're Queer. Let's give

- ourselves a cheer!" at Gay Pride Parades.
- Understanding all of his favourite past-times, hobbies, etc.
- Hairy chests, the smell of a man and that wonderful feeling of being held in a big guy's arms.
- Popular gay icons, such as Elizabeth Taylor, Madonna, James Dean and Oscar Wilde.
- Choosing from leather, lace, gymwear, uniforms, western, etc.
- Working as a doctor, engineer, lawyer, actor, beautician, surveyor, and a host of other professions and occupations.
- The balance between playing football, soccer, and rugby AND knowing how to create a bouquet, going to the opera, and painting.
- Being spiritual and religious without succumbing to the dogma of intolerant religions.
- The sheer blinding quality of bright, flamboyant clothing contrasted with the melancholic perversity of an all-black outfit.
- Knowing that some of what is currently cool in mainstream started with lesbian culture.
- Gaydar!
- Being just as loud and in your face as anti-gay people!
- Protesting anti-gay legislation and supporting pro-gay ones.
- Knowing what someone means when they mention Tom of Finland, being a "friend of Dorothy's," camping it up, Castro and the term "Mary".
- Having dreams/nightmares about ABBA reuniting

Bisexuality : Fence Sitting or Real Feelings ?

JENN BROWN

THE BRUNSWICKIAN

The topic of bisexuality has been studied and discussed for many years. For example, some of the gods worshipped by Ancient Greeks exhibited bisexual behaviour. Zeus and Apollo, principal gods noted for their numerous (female) mates, both loved male mortals (Ganymede and Hyacinthus respectively).

In recent times, the idea of bisexuality has been seen as more common. But to what degree is it accepted and is it more or less accepted than homosexuality? A major concern has been how to categorize people who are attracted to members of both their own sex and the other sex. Early thought on the topic stated that humans, in regards to sexuality, should not be put into categories.

"The world is not to be divided into sheep and goats. Not all things are black nor all things are white. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories. Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separated pigeon-holes. The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects. The sooner we learn this concerning human sexual behaviour the sooner we shall reach a sound understanding of the realities of Sex." (*Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948)

In spite of this opinion, brought forth by early Psychologists and Sociologists, the popular intent seems to involve a continuing attempt to categorize bisexuals into either the category of homosexual or heterosexual. However the unique thing about being bisexual is that the individual fits into neither or perhaps both categories. Because of the inability to categorize the "feelings" of the bisexual person they can often find themselves accepted by neither the gay nor the straight community. If a person is attracted to a member of the same sex one time, and a member of the opposite sex the next they can be accused of fence sitting. The simple fact is that people who are bisexual are simply attracted to who they are attracted to. The idea that we are all born bisexual but are socialized into sexuality according to our birth sex has long been discussed. This would be a very strong argument for the validity of the feelings that bisexuals have. In recent years there has been a gradual acceptance of bisexual people into gay support groups. Many of these groups are now titled Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual. Literature on the topic is still limited, but there is an increase in available information as more studies are done. On the topic of bisexuality and its "causes" because of incomplete of information a conclusion can not be drawn. Studies continue to be done to determine why certain people are born gay or bisexual and others are born straight.

With time sociologists, psychologists and society in general are realizing the validity of the experiences and feelings of the bisexual individual, realizing that it is no more a matter of choice than being heterosexual or homosexual.

