

Straight, but not narrow

October 11 is National Coming Out Day

BY J. A. DIKÉ

Humans against Homophobia is a working group of the Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group (NSPIRG).

It has recently started up again here at Dal and will launch its anti-homophobia campaign on October 11 — *National Coming Out Day*. Have you considered how you will celebrate this day? If you're queer, maybe you'll post a message on the internet, or come out to your dog. Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people know what they will do, but heterosexual people can celebrate this day too.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said that racism would continue not because of bad people, but because of the silence of good people. The same holds for gays who are detrimental to the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual people,

they merely have loud voices (and big mouths, eh Rosanne?). The time for mere tolerance has passed. Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual people are no longer interested in just acceptance, we want change! So all of you who are straight, don't just sit passively by, speak out against homophobia.

In honour of *National Coming Out Day* here are some advance tips on how to react if a Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual person comes out to you:

1. Do not run screaming from the room. This is rude.
2. If you must back away, do so slowly and with discretion.
3. Do not assume they are attracted to you.
4. Do not assume they are not attracted to you.
5. Do not expect them to be as excited about meeting a heterosexual as you may be about meeting a gay person.
6. Do not immediately start talking about your opposite sex partner in order to make it clear that you are straight.

7. Do not ask them how they got that way. Instead, ask yourself how you got to be the way you are.

8. Do not assume they are dying to talk about being Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual.

9. Do not expect them to refrain from talking about being Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual.

10. Do not trivialize their experience by assuming it is a bedroom issue only. They are Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual 24 hours a day.

This is just a short list; there is much more we can all do. If you're not sure how, but know you want to put a voice against homophobia, talk to us and find out. Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual people are usually up for discussing how we can become more visible. If you're a non-heterosexual and interested in fighting for your rights or a straight-but-not-narrow person who wants to end oppression for all people, then come out to a meeting of Humans against Homophobia and make a difference!

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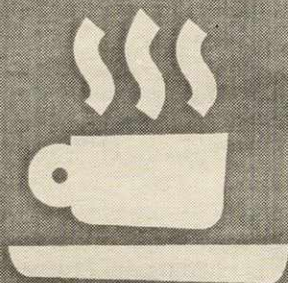
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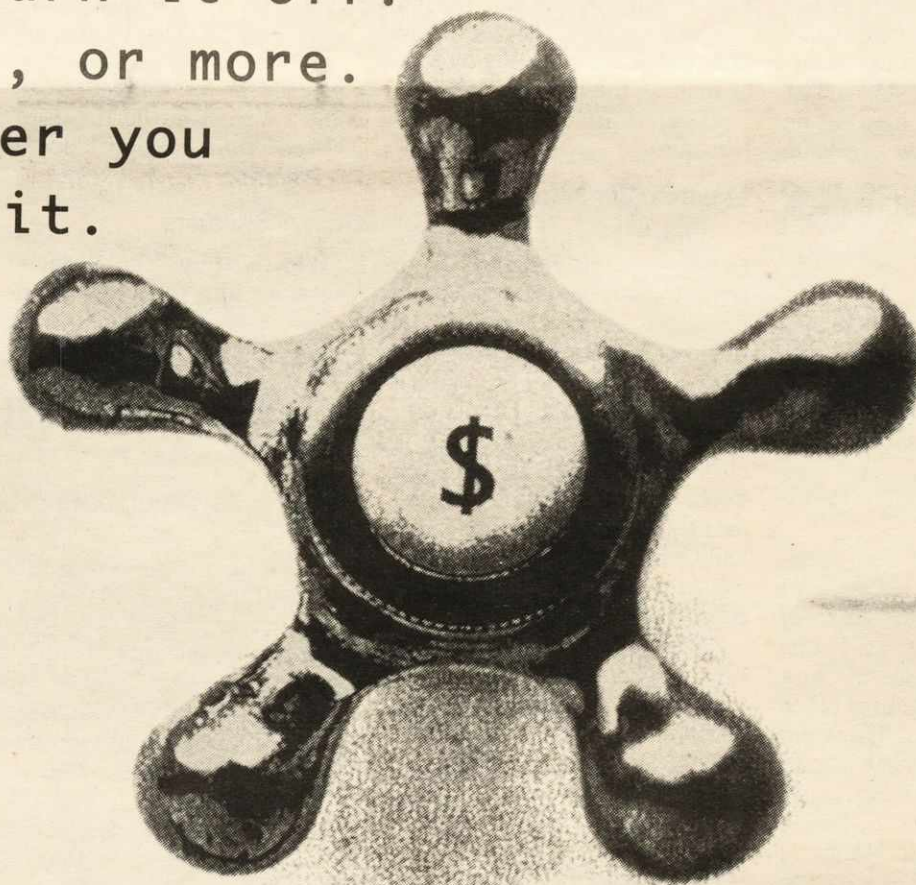
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