

Multiplicity

A bi-annual newsletter from the Adviser
to the Provost on Equity and Diversity

Fall 2011



University
of Victoria

welcome!

The University of Victoria is committed to providing environments for work and study that are safe, supportive, inclusive and healthy, and that foster mutual respect and civility. A fundamental value that informs all of our actions is the equal rights and dignity of all persons.

People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, intersex, asexual,

queer, questioning—LGBTQIA+—are members of every community. They are diverse, come from all walks of life, and include people from all over the world, of all races and ethnicities, ages and socio-economic statuses.

This issue of *Multiplicity* contains information about some of the LGBTQIA+ resources, services and programs available both on campus and in our broader community.

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue.

If you have questions, concerns, comments or would like more information please email multi@uvic.ca.

Grace Wong Sneddon
Adviser to the Provost on Equity and Diversity

EXPLORING SAFETY AND INCLUSION ON CAMPUS

By Andrew Shopland | fourth-year student

Where do you feel safe on campus? This was one of the questions we asked participants in a focus group during the 2010-2011 sessions of Women's Studies 335: Applied Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR). In this hands-on course, we got to delve into both the theoretical and practical aspects of FPAR methodologies as we developed and carried out a research project in partnership with the Positive Space Network focused around issues of safety and inclusion for people of non-dominant genders and sexualities.



Our key finding was that safety is the result of who is or is not present in a space. "For me it's not the place, but rather the people," said one participant. We called this concept Relational Safety because the overall safety of any particular space can be understood based on the relationships of the people in it and what they are doing there. This concept formed the basis for our other findings.

The discomfort of participants in specific sites was due to the people they may have found there, past experiences of encountering unsafe people in the space, or specific social interactions required of the space such as a certain gender presentation in a gender-segregated washroom. Our research also explored inclusion and exclusion, which we found to be strategies by which Relational Safety was created for those who had the power to dictate who was welcome in the space.

Our policies and practices must engage with the complex interactions of people with intersectional identities. Only then can we have truly safer spaces.

How to support LGBTTTIAQQ* students within the classroom

By James Cairns and Jin-Sun Yoon | School of Child and Youth Care

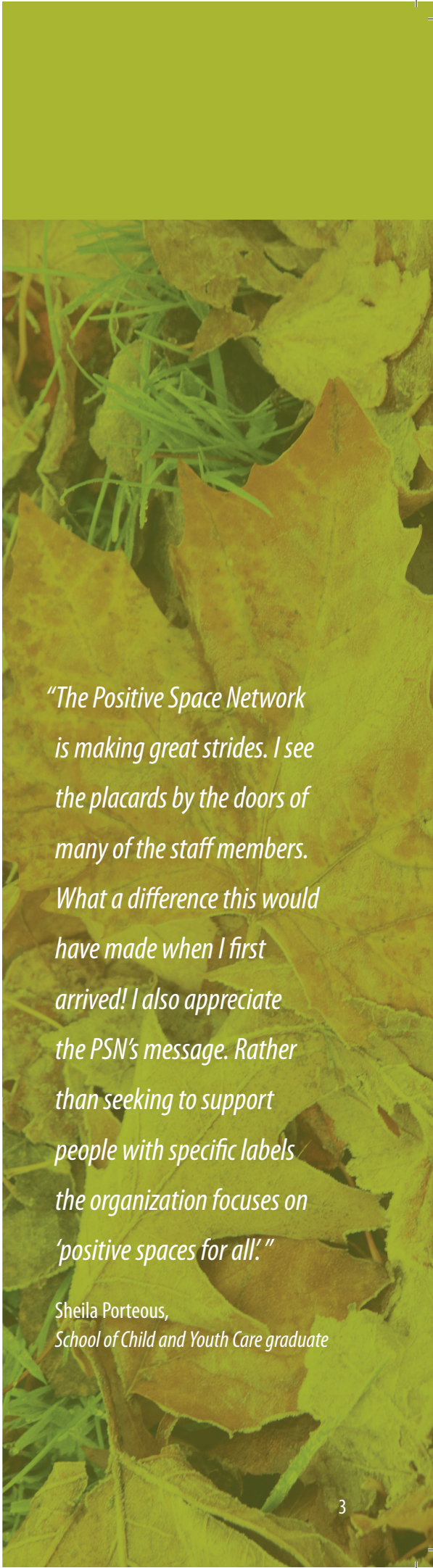
The responsibility falls on both instructors and teaching assistants to create a classroom climate that is inclusive and supportive of the diverse members of a class (online or face to face). Not all diversities are visible and often it is left to the queer student to either address divisive issues or deliberately ignore them. We encourage all students, staff and faculty to take advantage of the Positive Space Network's (PSN) workshops that focus on creating positive and safe spaces for all genders and sexualities. The experiential and educational workshops introduce a range of terminology (e.g. transgender, asexual, heteronormativity) and explore real-life scenarios that allow participants to gain more insight and sensitivity.

To genuinely offer support, all teaching staff need to make an ongoing commitment to pay attention to this often "invisible" group of students. This includes addressing all forms of discrimination, challenging and critiquing societal norms and heteronormative biases in the curriculum, and encouraging respectful discussion amongst students.

The School of Child and Youth Care hosted five PSN workshops this past school year for over 120 participants (students, staff and faculty). According to instructor JN Little, "Queer students felt more validated and recognized by the school after it hosted the workshops." The workshops begin to address and break down gender and sexuality norms that can lead to more discussion in classrooms.

Queer youth are at higher risk not because they have problems with their sexuality or gender, but as a result of institutionalized homophobia and transphobia. Departments can support these initiatives that can stimulate a cultural climate change, fostering a safer place for queer students and ultimately for everyone.

*LGBTTTIAQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirited, transgender, intersex, asexual, queer, questioning) has been replaced with "queer" as an overarching term in this article.



"The Positive Space Network is making great strides. I see the placards by the doors of many of the staff members. What a difference this would have made when I first arrived! I also appreciate the PSN's message. Rather than seeking to support people with specific labels the organization focuses on 'positive spaces for all.'"

Sheila Porteous,
School of Child and Youth Care graduate

Gender-neutral washrooms

| Building | Room # |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Cadboro Commons | 229 |
| Clearihue | D119 |
| Continuing Studies | 207D |
| Cornett | A150 |
| Cunningham | 047 |
| Engineering/Computer Science .. | 170 |
| Engineering Lab Wing | B112 |
| Finnerty Express Café | |
| Fraser | 136, A254 |
| Harry Lou Poy Complex | A111, B196 |
| Hickman | 122 |
| Human and Social Development | B329 |
| MacKinnon | 168 |
| Mearns Centre (BiblioCafé) | 110D, 110E |
| Phoenix | 150 |
| Sedgewick | C124 |
| Ian Stewart Complex | 265 |
| Social Sciences and Mathematics | A220, A322, A422, A522 |
| Strong | C129 |
| Student Union Building | A114 |
| University Centre | B227 |
| Visual Arts | A125 |
| Bob Wright Centre | A121 |

UVic Pride Collective offers advocacy, support, events

Submitted by UVic Pride

The Pride Collective is a constituency group of the University of Victoria Students' Society mandated to represent, advocate for and provide services for queer students on campus. We are a volunteer-run collective that provides social and political events for our constituency.

UVic Pride promotes and provides an atmosphere that celebrates sexual, gender and sex diversity; builds community; and is fully inclusive and supportive of all members, including people of any race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sex, colour, age, ability, class, sexuality, nationality, appearance, and religious or political affiliation. We seek to fight oppression of queer and trans* folks, as well as promote justice, dignity, equity and human rights for all people.

We have weekly collective meetings where we decide on the direction for the collective, coffee house events downtown, projects, social events, and training and workshops for volunteers. We also offer peer support and referral services.

This will be an exciting year for UVic Pride. We recently received more funding so we are able to do more advocacy work and social events. We are also moving to a much larger space in the basement of the SUB with a small kitchen and a gender-inclusive bathroom. If you want to become involved with UVic Pride, just come to one of our meetings or events, sign up on our mailing list via our website (www.uvicpride.ca) or stop by the office and say hi!



COUNSELLING SERVICES' DOOR IS OPEN

By Susan Dempsey | Counselling Services

The mission statement of UVic Counselling Services states, "We respect the dignity and worth of all individuals and embrace human diversity within a warm, accepting and confidential environment."

The members of Counselling Services endeavour at all times to engage with the student community in a manner that honours these values. We have been active in creating and expanding our capacity to offer relevant services to students of all sexualities and genders, through ongoing training in issues of sexuality, gender identity and awareness, and connection with groups and organizations across campus.

Aware that the needs of the LGBTTIAQQ community vary and intersect on many levels,

we strive to provide services that reflect these varied and unique needs. We work to meet students where they are, whether that is a place of excitement, pride, fear or confusion. Whether students are looking for compassion and understanding, for space to explore the impact of identity and sexuality on their lives, whether they are making difficult decisions about their own futures, or are challenged around fitting in, staying true to self or being part of community, we do our best to recognize and respond to those needs.

The university community is rich in resources and support for students, and Counselling Services has been involved with many of these resources, including UVic Pride, Safer Spaces and the Positive Space Network. Our office is a place of openness, engagement, support

and exploration in a manner that honours the complexity of the experience of LGBTTIAQQ students, wherever they find themselves.

You can find us on our website at www.coun.uvic.ca or in the University Centre second floor, room B270. Check out our website for our group offerings, learning skills courses, career exploration workshops and the bios of our counsellors. While we work diligently to make our individual and group counselling inclusive, we are also very open to suggestions and feedback. If you have ideas for support groups for more specific members of the student community, we would like to hear about it. Please contact Counselling Services Director Rita Knodel at rknodel@uvic.ca.

You can find us on our website at www.coun.uvic.ca or in the University Centre second floor, room B270.



NEW! TRANSGENDER COLLECTIONS AT UVIC LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

By Lara Wilson | University Archivist

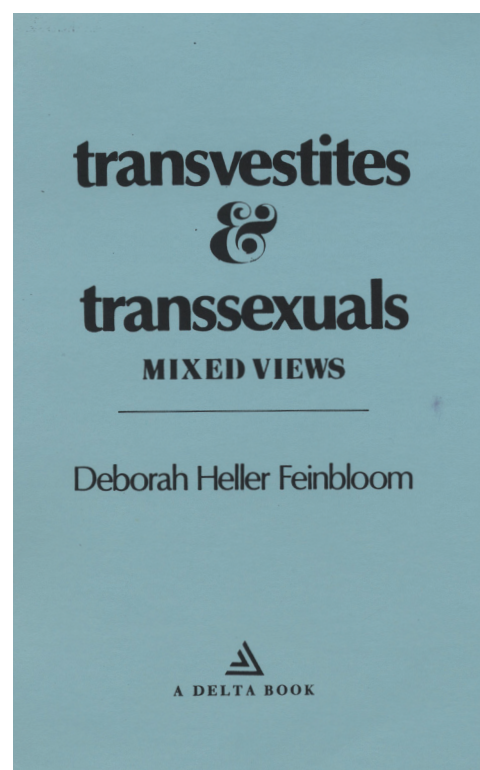
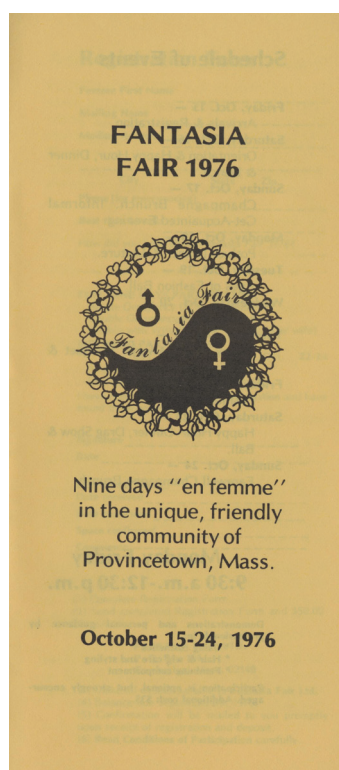
The University of Victoria Archives and University Libraries are pleased to announce new collections and acquisitions in the area of transgender studies. The Archives has begun to acquire archival and published material of individuals and organizations who have worked for the betterment of transgendered people in the twentieth century.

In the past several years the Archives, Special Collections and Main Collections of the Mearns Centre for Learning/McPherson Library have received significant and valuable donations of archives, monographs, periodicals and newsletters. An important component is the Rikki Swinn Institute (RSI) archival collection, which is now available to researchers online at MemoryBC.ca. RSI was established in Chicago and was the world's first institute dedicated to transgender research and education. The 2007 donation from

RSI includes hundreds of books and periodicals, and seven metres of archival materials, including the papers of transgender pioneer Virginia Prince, as well as Ari Kane, the Founder of Fantasia Fair (an annual gathering of crossdressing men), their partners, and medical and other professionals working with the community.

Monographs and periodicals related to transgenderism, transsexualism, cross dressing, transvestism, gender identity and related subjects are available from Special Collections (non-circulating) and the Main Library, and include the major gift of published materials from Rikki Swinn. Search via Summon at <http://library.uvic.ca/>.

Other private donations of transgender archives are currently in process and descriptions will be updated on MemoryBC.ca when available.



WORKSHOPS HELP CREATE SAFER SPACES AT UVIC

By Jes Scott | UVic Communications

Small groups of students, staff and faculty gather together around piles of laminated words. Sexual orientation. Gender identity. Gay. Two-spirit. Ally. People discuss what these words mean to them before returning to the larger group to share their ideas.

This is how all Positive Space Network workshops begin. Over the three-hour session, facilitators lead the group through conversations that will help them create safer and more inclusive spaces for people of all genders and sexualities.

"One thing that really stood out to me during the PSN workshop was that I felt very

comfortable," said Sarah Bonsor Kurki, a PhD student in education. "The workshop leaders created a respectful and safe space where participants could learn."

Participants also say that they enjoy networking with people across campus. "It was really great to see just how many other people care about these issues," said Stefan Bourrier, a psychology honours student.

All facilitators are volunteers and often speak of the emotional rewards of their work. "It was exciting to lead a group of future middle school teachers through the workshop," said Mary Stocks, an MA student in social work. "Middle



school was basically the worst stretch of my life and I could see that these three hours with these curious and engaged participants would help years of queer middle school students."

Over 200 people have attended PSN workshops since they were first offered in April 2009.

For more information about volunteering with the PSN, please email psn@uvic.ca or visit <http://web.uvic.ca/~psn>.

SAVE THE DATE!

CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS: LIVING SOCIAL JUSTICE PROVOST'S DIVERSITY RESEARCH FORUM

JAN. 23-24, 2012

Learn about innovative research from UVic faculty, staff and students. Engage in critical conversations on gender, race, identity, ability, Indigenous ways of knowing, mental health, sexuality, international topics and more...

Registration is free and includes deliciously diverse meals. Everyone is welcome – faculty, staff, students and community members. For more details, visit the website at www.uvic.ca/diversity2012 or contact diverse@uvic.ca.





RESOURCES

Gay, lesbian and bisexual

Victoria Pride Society

www.victoriapridesociety.org

GayVictoria.ca

A website offering live chat, an ad service and, in time, a number of other resources to the local GLBT community

www.gayvictoria.ca

Pink Pages

A directory of local LGBT-owned and friendly businesses

www.gayvictoria.ca/pinkpages

BiVictoria

A peer-run support and social group for all orientations

www.angelfire.com/bc3/bivictoria

UVic Pride

<http://uvicpride.ca/>

Camosun College Pride

www.camosunstudent.org/pride.shtml

Victoria Lesbian Seniors Care Society

Community support for senior lesbians

<http://vlscs.ca/index.php>

BC Vital Statistics Agency

For information on getting married in British Columbia

www.vs.gov.bc.ca/marriage/howto.html

Transgendered, transsexual and crossdressing

Transcend

A transgender support and educational society

www.transgender.org/transcend/index.html

Trans-Alliance Society

Vancouver-based organization offering forums for the transgendered community as well as materials to promote understanding and knowledge of trans culture

www.transalliancesociety.org/

Spotlight on diversity

Do you think we have enough gender-neutral washrooms on campus? If not, where are they still needed? We are also interested in hearing your perspectives on gender-neutral showers. Please send your feedback to multi@uvic.ca.

Please send your comments and feedback to multi@uvic.ca.

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