

# RESOURCES

# dykes

with baggage



the lighter side of lesbians in therapy

edited by riggin waugh

## BOOKS

### DYKES WITH BAGGAGE

edited by *Riggin Waugh*. Alysson Publications, 2000; \$12.95 softcover. An anthology of essays on every aspect of lesbians in therapy imaginable; both amusing and instructive, especially for anyone contemplating seeking counseling.

### BEYOND ACCEPTANCE: PARENTS OF LESBIANS & GAYS TALK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES

by *Griffin and Wirth*. St. Martin's Press, 1997; \$12.95 softcover. When a parent or friend hears for the first time that someone they love is gay, the feelings can range from bewilderment and confusion to fear and anger. Based on discussions and interviews with parents of gays and lesbians, *Beyond Acceptance* provides knowledge and information that will help parents come to understand their children and build stronger relationships with them.

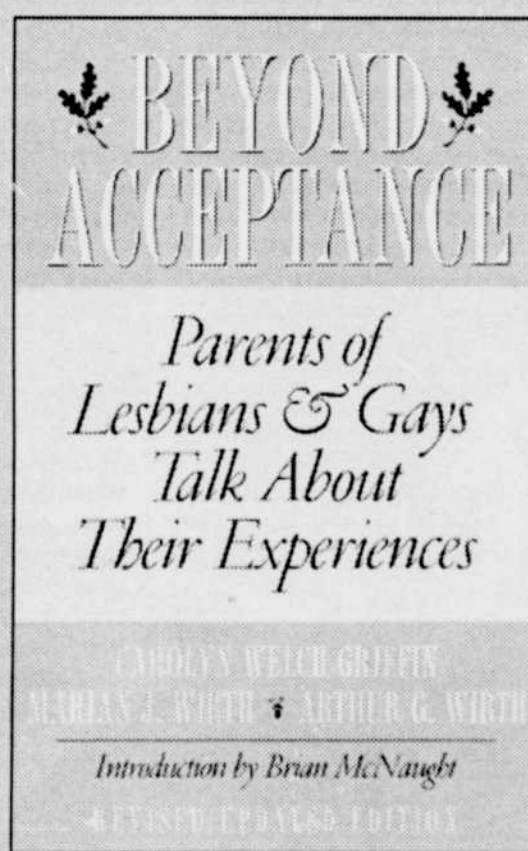
### STRAIGHT PARENTS, GAY CHILDREN: INSPIRING FAMILIES TO LIVE HONESTLY AND WITH GREATER UNDERSTANDING

by *Robert A. Bernstein*. Thunder's Mouth Press, 1999; \$13.95 softcover. The author is the former national vice president of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, and this is his personal account of coming to terms with his daughter's homosexuality and how coming out not only liberated her but enriched his own life.

## INTERNET SITES

[www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/links1.htm](http://www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/links1.htm)

Despite the limiting words in the URL, this is a giant, comprehensive site for all manner of articles and links on every topic imaginable having to do with counseling and therapy in the gay and lesbian community. Some of the section headings are: Identity Formation and Coming Out; Homo-Negativity/Phobia; Transgender/Transvestite/Transsexual; Religion and Spirituality; Gay and Bisexual Male Suicide Problems; Couples/Families/Children/Adoption/Spousal Violence; and



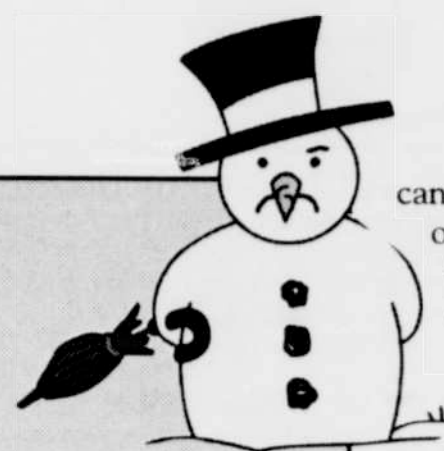
Counseling and Therapy Facts About Homosexuality and Mental Health: A History. Plus information on pro-gay counseling programs in public high schools and the opposition of them by right-wing political and conservative religious groups and much more.

[www.ksu.edu/ucs/gay.html](http://www.ksu.edu/ucs/gay.html)

This is the full text of a comprehensive brochure for college students, "Valuing a Gay or Lesbian Self-Identity," full of advice on considering counseling and an interesting list of gay myths exploded, which could be useful when confronting homophobic relatives.

[www.healthyplace.com/Communities/Gender/Site/comm\\_calender.htm](http://www.healthyplace.com/Communities/Gender/Site/comm_calender.htm)

Can't afford therapy? Investigate free online support and 24/7 chat groups at this site for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people.



can get e-counseling. Here2Listen.com is an online counseling service offering "therapy from your couch." Services include a gay and lesbian room and message boards.

Any prospective counselor should be able to offer you an overview of what to expect from seeing them. Here are some important considerations:

- What training does the therapist have?
- What is the therapist's philosophy?
- What are your goals for therapy?
- What will therapy cost?
- What will therapy involve?
- Is it possible to find a group around your issue?

- Does the therapist offer a free initial session?
- How much experience does the therapist have?
- Has the therapist worked with your issue before?

It is startling and important to note that Oregon law does not require licensing for people offering counseling services, although many colleges statewide offer degrees in counseling. You have to be careful, though, as M.A. might mean the person has a master's degree in education or any unrelated field.

In fact, most people would not recognize the qualifications held by people calling themselves counselors. The only way you are going to know is to ask questions—and consult our sidebar on credentials.

The price for counseling is hefty, and you owe it to yourself to know what you are paying for. The hourly cost to see a master's-prepared person runs about \$80. You can expect to pay \$100 to \$110 to see a doctorate-prepared therapist. Most will treat couples at the same price as an individual, but you'll pay roughly half as much if you meet with a group.

Group therapy often centers around issues such as violence, coming out or gender identity. Some insurance will help cover the cost, but you still can expect a significant co-pay. If you have to pay for it out of your pocket, ask about sliding-scale fees.

So, instead of suffering through the same old dysfunctional family gatherings and guilt trips in the same old way as last year, why not consider giving yourself the gift of better mental health this holiday season? **JN**

HERON, R.N., M.S., is a Portland free-lance writer and artist as well as a psychiatric nurse in practice for 11 years.

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