

# GAYLAXY

Empowering eXpressions



PRIDE: PAST & PRESENT

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## Editor's Note

It's been a while since the last issue was released and my sincerest apologies for having missed out on the May-Jun issue. The emails you sent inquiring about the issue spoke for itself how much you have been waiting for the next issue, and I hope that with this issue, we can compensate a little for the inadvertent delay.

Last two months have seen pride marches being held in various Indian cities, including many new ones like Patna and Madurai. Kolkata, where the first pride march of India was held, had a record participation of 1500 marchers! Kolkata (and India) has surely come a long way since 1999, when only 15 people had walked down the streets of the city. Inside this issue, you will get to see pictures from the Friendship Walk held in 1999. This pride special edition of Gaylaxy not only appraises you of the present pride marches, but also reproduces various pages from the history of the gay rights movement in India.

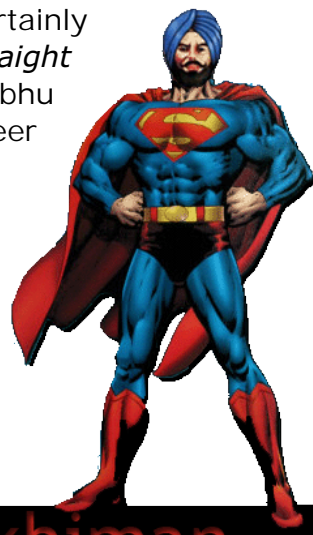
The month of May has now become synonymous with Kashish, the International Queer Film Festival of India held in Mumbai. Over the last 3 years, Kashish has grown by leaps and bounds and this year's Kashish has set a new benchmark. Sridhar Rangayan, festival director of Kashish, talks about the journey that Kashish has covered in these 3 years.

The fictional story **Forbidden Love in a Coal Mine** comes to an end with this issue. The story was carried in parts in various issues for more than a year. At Gaylaxy, we endeavor to give a platform for writers of queer fiction as well, and **Forbidden Love in a Coal Mine** is certainly one of the gems that we discovered. **Straight Talk** returns in this issue and Abhijeet Prabhu shares his experience of attending a queer event.

That is all from my side. Keep writing to us, and keep sending us your love and suggestions.

Love

Sukhi



Sukhiman

## COVER STORY

Friendship Walk 1999



Pg 4

Friendship Walk : In Pics

Pg 12

## G-NEWS

G-News



Pg 12

## SCIENCE & HEALTH

Alternate Sexuality : Why Does It Exist?

Pg 16

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

'The Shape Kashish Took Was Beyond Our Own Expectations'

Pg 18

Kashish 2012 : In Pics

Pg 20

Still Logged In

Pg 23

Gender & Sexuality Discussion in Punjab

Pg 25

Chennai Pride 2012

Pg 26

11th Kolkata Rainbow Pride Walk

Pg 31

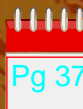
Gender Queer Pride Parade, Madurai

Pg 35



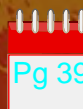
## RELATIONSHIP

Dusk to Dawn



## LIFESTYLE

Safe and Secure

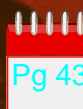


Vanilla Sex Makes Him Hot



## PERSONALS

My Cup of Tea



In Queer Shoes



Why LGBT Sikhs Shouldn't Fear  
Coming Out

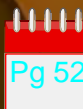


A Slut is Born Today



## LITERATURE

Forbidden Love in a  
Coal Mine



## NGO

NGO List



# FRIENDSHIP WALK '99



## CALCUTTA, JULY 2, 1999

The 11<sup>th</sup> Gay Pride Parade in Kolkata this year saw over 1500 participants. **Owais Khan**, one of the participants of the first pride march of India, had penned down his feelings, thoughts and experience of being part of history. We reproduce below that piece by Owais Khan and turn the pages of history

I have often wondered about life. Mine in particular. And never have I reached a final, decisive, complete conclusion. Every conclusion has been, if I use a charitable term, ambivalence itself. Right from the day I entered college, with a clear

mandate to 'slog my balls off' in order to get a branch change to Electronics from Civil Engineering; to this day when I sit wondering whether pushing for the first LGBT Walk in India was the right thing to do.

It is almost of an

academic interest that both the things did happen. On the day the branch change list was announced, my name was there, right at the top of the list of successful hopefuls. My friends were ecstatic, they will now get a meatier treat: two guys from the gang had

managed the seeming impossibility. I agreed grudgingly to the fifty percent funding that I had to do. And they all wondered, some aloud, whether I cared more about the branch change, or about the money that I was spending on the treat.

I have grown since. In terms of masking my fears and uncertainties, that is. Perhaps, years of corporate lifestyle have taken their toll, and I am wrapped in more layers of presentability than I truly care to be. But at the end of the day of The Walk some still penetrated those layers. Ashok (of the Row Kavi fame) observed that I was lying in a corner and making faces while he was busy expounding upon some of the important Swadeshi dynamics of the gay / LGBT movement. He struck back by *maroing line* on the same young man that I was trying to *patao*. It is upto Pintu, some day, to tell the world which one of us succeeded.

Well, coming back to the issue at hand, The Walk. I have often thought about whether it is better to be out in

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**I have found that being open about my sexuality has had a liberating effect on me. I am able to give more than what I earlier could**

the open, and be suspected about noblest of your intentions; face difficulties with families and extended families and jobs and housing and what not. Or simply gel with the existing realities of the world, and get your 'fill' surreptitiously. A dear friend, Scott, an American by physical birth, an Indian by his psychological rebirth as a gay man (his words, almost) wrote to me several days back. He pointed out what's not quite so hot on the other side of the fence. And how one, if he so wishes, can be secretly and gaily gay, without being openly, and thereby sometimes sadly gay, in India.

But like more than one

ex-boss of mine said, I absolutely do not know what not to talk to whom. But what can I do? AITS is not a curable disease. AITS, incidentally stands for, actually just started standing for, 'Acquired Illusions (of) Transparency Syndrome'. I simply find it impossible not to express what I really feel, especially, if it has something to do with love, or its fraternal twin, lust.

On a slightly more serious note, ever since I have been open about my sexuality, I have found that my performance has gradually improved. I have become more productive for this World. And as a business associate of mine pointed out a few days back- it is one's duty to produce Wealth. 'Wealth', with a capital 'W': not just dollars and cents and rupees, or that much worth of material production. But Wealth as in anything of value. Times have changed, my friends. Plato called the same thing, 'Good'. Post Keynes and post Gates, we find 'Good' and 'Wealth' synonymous.

But yes, I have found that being open about my sexuality has had a liberating effect on me. I am able to give more than what I earlier could: to my family, to my job, to my friends, to the movement, to the World at large. Perhaps, only because I have to spend less time inventing a fake life behind which I could convincingly hide my sexuality. Perhaps, also because I am much happier with myself and I can now look at battles further afield. Perhaps, I can now play more, and, yes, lose more, but on the whole, win more.

But the ambivalence once more. My life is not





everyone's life. And everyone need not find results the same. And therefore I can not recommend everyone to come with her or his sexuality, or anything else, out in the open. So should I be taking a political stand on my sexuality, homo, or otherwise? But take a stand, one must. And push for what one considers 'Good' and 'Right', one must. For if one does not do that, why does one live a life at all? For me everything must lead to something else. Life must lead to more life; happiness in life must lead to more happiness in more lives.

Hence, the need to look for greater happiness, first closer home, then further afield. So what's my home? What's my family? My only dog has just died. And my mom has just colluded with a religious cousin of mine to get me more religious. Poor things. None of the three ever realized, nor are ever going to realize that my religion is not one with a name, one or several prophets or gods or God or sons of the Same; but simply a series of phrases sounding like philosophic bumper stickers. One of them being, 'More happiness and more love for more people'.

And that is where my quest for more happiness for my family starts. I guess I am getting senile like Ashamma...I have also started seeing the variegated world of queers as my family. And none, I see are happier than those who are out, in varying degrees. Well, at least those are the ones who are using condoms!

So what could I do to make these members of my family happier?



**Life must lead to more life; happiness in life must lead to more happiness in more lives**

Make them more out? That seemed to be the logical answer. Several flaws to that answer, I am sure. But being comfortable enough to get a potential partner home openly is much better than furtive sex in the loos, and the *jhaadaaN pahaadaaN*. You could possibly also set up home with one or more of those you can comfortably get home.

So from first principles then, it makes sense to be out. With informed consent, of course. Further on, it is the job of every worker to make himself irrelevant. Every manager must ensure that his department functions so well that they do not need him anymore. Every teacher must make sure that all his pupils eventually know more than he does. Of course, yes. How else will we regularly produce a Newton, who claims to be so tall, only because he stands on the shoulders of giants? So we also must endeavour everyone who is a full-time or part-time civil rights or social or whatever activist. Being a lesbian or gay or whatever should be as simply commonplace and irrelevant as being x-handed: Not worth a second thought. That is, and if it is not should be, the credo for us all.

How do we get around to doing it? I am sure there are

several ways. Judicial action as has been initiated by ABVA in India. Repeal of Section 377 will go a long way in legitimizing our existence. Legislative action that ensures equal rights for people of alternate sexuality could also work wonders. So the need of petitioning the Parliament. We are a long way from winning that, for the Nation's reps and elders are both equally innocent of our concern. But Indian society and polity, as inward looking as it is, will find it necessary to see daughters and sons and close relatives and friends and esteemed colleagues come out as lesbians and gays before it accords them a right to their own lives.

Which to my mind leaves us only one course of solid action. Visibility for as many of us as are willing to be seen in a paradigm of ordinary, successful and happy women and men who are clear and open about their sexuality. *Homosexuality* to be precise. And that started my personal crusade of being visible as a gay person in any forum where it was warranted.

When I was visiting Arvind and Ashok (of the Jethanandani fame), late last year, Arvind, who incidentally was also my first Indian gay contact, asked me over for the pride parade in the Bay area when I said that I was likely to visit the US again soon. I was all set to do that, as I was expected to attend a symposium in the US at approximately the same time in connection with my day job.

However, very soon, I found that I was asked to shoulder a different set of responsibilities at the office.

And that meant the symposium, and thereby the US trip was off. Simple decision from then on. If I could not go to the parade, the parade must come to me!

This was the second great favour that Arvind had done for me. The first one was when he helped me come out, through the pages of *Trikone*; way back in 1988/89. Thanks a ton, again, Arvind.

I started the crusade by testing waters. Having recently been asked to take up the responsibilities of the new baby, LGBT India, came in handy. For those who do not know about LGBT India, this is a communication collective formulated during the 1999 conference at Hyderabad, YaariaN '99. It was the mandate of LGBT India to ensure that all LGBT groups and individuals within India

start talking the same language, if not the same dialect.

I saw as a major activity, an annual conference of all LGBT groups and individuals once a year. Humsafar Trust, Mumbai, had already volunteered to do that for LGBT India in the year 2000. But the next year was much too far away. We needed some more activities in the interregnum. A parade or a march seemed a very good activity to ensure visibility.

My touring as well as transferable job proved to be a major boon here. I sounded out several groups while jetting around for my company. From cautious optimism to enthusiasm I encountered the complete range of reactions. Calcutta, Bangalore and Mumbai showed interest in hosting the

event. However, in the end, Ranjan's belief in the concept won out, for he and Pawan were the only team who came up with a proper action plan.

Once the date was decided, a contact and follow up plan was put in action. I called as many people, as many times as I could on the telephone, without getting it disconnected for overuse! Several people did not like the concept. Others disagreed with the venue. Some opposed the dates. A lot of others said it is fine, but they would rather that someone else walked for them. Some could not get the tickets. Some, of course, were very willing to be a part of it, and made their arrangements in the face of all kinds of odds. A few did not have the money. I decided to sponsor those from my own funds. However,







towards the end, Lesbian and Gay Solidarity and India Fund came forward to reimburse me.

The long and short of it was that we went into it, some with enthusiasm, others with trepidation and doubt. The Walk was executed as per the plan rolled out by Counsel Club and Integration. A total of fifteen persons turned up at the venue on the day of The Walk: seven from Calcutta, eight from other cities, including New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Darjeeling and Kurseong. Hats off to these people. Of these, ten were okay with being seen in the media. For the benefit of posterity, I must record their names: Ranjan, Pawan, Niloy, Aditya, Navarun, Ashok, Jasmir, Nitin, Satish, and yours truly.

A major effort was made personally by me to get some lesbians and parents of an LGBT person in. However, for a variety of reasons this did not happen. Several calls were made to contact lesbians as also gays from smaller cities. We now await that constituency's appearance in

the next year's Walk.

One of the friends offered his unoccupied house for housing the out-station folks. That however, did not work out and five of us had to move to a hotel at the last minute. Hollywood Hotel was a dirty and unkempt hotel on the third floor of a very 'Calcutta' run down building. The room rent was too high. The bath was dingy and smelly. The bed-sheets had not been changed for the last fifteen occupants, and one could easily spy some telltale stains. We did not even have running water for the first two days! The reason we chose it is still a mystery to me. But there are some pointers, though. It was very close to the venue of The Walk. It had Western commodes: some of us queens did not want stretch marks in the wrong places.

And of course, the house keeping cum room service was absolutely wonderful. Nineteen years old, friendly, slim, with an infectious smile; he had all the ingredients to bowl a queen over. Pintu was wonderfully helpful too. He got two bucketful of water every

day for us. And he even changed the sheets for us. Pity he could speak only Bangla. More about him in some other forum.

The appointed day, Friday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1999, dawned to find my stomach full of fluttering butterflies. How many walkers will turn up? Will *any* walkers turn up? Will the T-shirts be ready in time? Will we have a hassle with the police? Will we get arrested? What will the media's reaction be? I was to deliver a presentation on the following Monday to some key business associates. Will they see the reports and refuse to take me seriously? Will I still keep the job on Monday to even get to the stage of addressing them?

One scared fairy I was, that morning. We were to have assembled at the venue at 8:30 am. It was 8:30 am and we were still at the hotel. Neither Pawan nor Ranjan had landed up to escort us there. I called Pawan's place. He said *he* was not supposed to pick us up anyway. So what do we do? How do we reach the place? Some meticulous directions and a few minutes later, we managed to reach the venue.

Nobody. Nobody turned up till about 8:55 AM. And then one after another walkers started trickling in. Even Ranjan arrived with the T-shirts. Then came the Times of India photographer. The journalist was still awaited. She had promised that she would also walk a short distance with us. Whether in the line of duty, or out of solidarity I know not, but she did come, she did allow me to persuade her into wearing the identifying T-shirt and she did walk with us for the first lap. Kudos to her spirit.

Irrespective of the reason she walked with us, she did the right thing. She got my name wrong in her report, but that's okay, most people anyway do.

We walked the first lap on the perimeter of the Park Circus maidan. We took a short cut somewhere along the road, but that was okay, it was the spirit and the symbolism that mattered. We finished that part in about half an hour and got together under the same pavilion where we had first met that morning. From there we split up in two groups. One went to North Calcutta, the other to South Cal. We were to meet back under the same pavilion between 2 and 2:30 PM.

The group to which I was assigned walked down to a lady's apartment that runs a feminist organization, and contrary to several other feminist activists is an empathizer of lesbian and gay causes. Since there were eight of us, we thought it right to distribute the visits amongst us, and at no one place should we all crowd in at the same time. So while some waited in the parking lot below, three of us went up. The lady was quite upset that we came in late. She had some other appointment in a short while. And then she proceeded to tell us things we knew and did not know for most part of an hour. With a very keen perception, she never noticed that we were getting increasingly ill at ease, wanting to get back to our work- walking.

Mercifully, the person at the next stop was not at home and we left our leaflets and decided to go to the next stop. That one was pretty far, so we took a couple of taxis. On the

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**The heavens  
decided to give our  
Walk a last  
dramatic flourish, it  
started pouring**

way, enjoying the spectacle of young men bathing in frilly loincloths and frillier towels, we reached our destination. From then on, my memory is rather hazy. My walking shoes, which I bought from Redmond, Washington, were proving what they were- *sasta maal*, and I could barely walk. What with the extra 30 kgs that I had packed in and around my midriff, during the last several months.

It was sultry as only Cal can be, and not until 1:30 did it occur to us that we could stop somewhere and buy a few bottles of water. Many of us had our kerchiefs so overloaded with sweat, that *unko nichodna pad raha tha!* Finally, somewhere along the line, we stopped, grabbed a quick bite and a lot of water, and kept going.

We were to have visited some thirteen places. We decided to drop two. But not before we had managed to visit the West Bengal Human Rights Commission office. That was a learning in itself. It was just like any other Indian Government office, only cleaner. Keep in mind though, that almost as a rule, the more an Indian Government office is used, the dirtier it is.

We wanted to meet the Commissioner, and when he was not available, we tried the Deputy Commissioner, who



Owai Khan and friend walking in rain

was also not available. We then gunned for the Commissioner's personal assistant, who was also not available. Ultimately, we were asked to meet the PRO, Public Relations Officer, who, surprise surprise, *was* available. Though, of course, he was also in a meeting, and we had to wait for almost half an hour till we could meet him.

The meeting was interesting. If he caught on who we were, and what we represented, he did not let us in on that secret. But the moment we mentioned that we were doing a press conference that evening at 4:30 PM, he caught hold of the thread he understood well. He said, "Oh we are also doing a press conference at the same time today. What a pity." What exactly he meant, probably only a person with IQ and EQ much higher than that of mine can fathom. Perhaps, he meant that they wanted to come and join us in addressing the press, and were interested in supporting our cause while sharing the podium with us. Perhaps... Perhaps, that is only my dream. Perhaps, that is only *our* dream. Perhaps, that is our *only* dream.

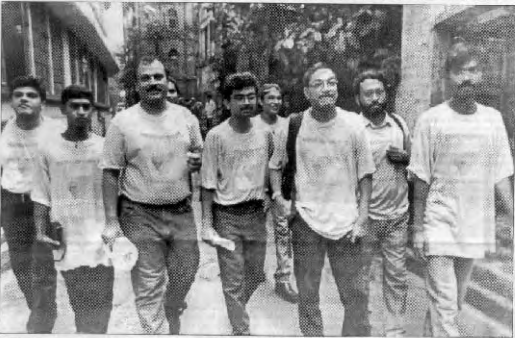
We visited the office of Prajaak, an NGO, which does some work in LGBT area also. We visited other NGOs and CBOs such as CINI ASHA and Thoughtshop Foundation. On



# THE EASTERN

CALCUTTA SATURDAY 3 JULY 1999

## WE ARE HERE, YOU CANNOT WISH US AWAY



RIGHT TO RUSSA A group of gay movement activists go on a friendship walk in Calcutta on Friday. The walk was aimed at spreading awareness of the movement. An Asian Age photograph.

### 15 friends walk with gay abandon

**By Our Correspondent**  
Calcutta, July 2: A group of 15 men, some in white t-shirts and others in casual wear, walked together in a procession on Friday. The walk was aimed at spreading awareness of the movement. The group, known as the 'Right to RuSSA' group, was led by Ashok Row Kavi, a prominent figure in the gay community. They walked through the streets of Calcutta, holding flags and banners. The walk was a peaceful demonstration of their rights and identity.

## GENE

### Col

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THE TIMES OF INDIA, CALCUTTA

July 3rd, 1999

## Gays stage friendship march

**By Chitra Siddhartha**  
The Times of India News Service

CALCUTTA: "Don't think straight, think people" was the message a motley group of information technology professionals working with multinationals, journalists, art students, interior designers and writers wanted to send across as they walked the streets of Calcutta.

Dressed in bright yellow T-shirts, 15 men from different parts of the country, walked together to help the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community emerge from the closet and be accepted.

"We are a small group out in the open but there are millions with us. They just need to know they are not alone," said Humsafar Trust chief Ashok Row Kavi.

On Friday, LGBT-India, a 'communication centre' for gay groups in the country, joined the international community, for the first time, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Stonewall riots which broke out in June 1969 in Manhattan, United States as an expression of gay rights.

"We believe in non-violence. So we are walking for friendship," Mr Kavi explained.

LGBT-India in association with two city-based alternative sexuality groups — Counsel Club and Integration — organised the walk to generate understanding about homosexuality and related issues. "Homosexuality is just not about orientations. There are larger issues



LGBT-India members marching through Calcutta on Friday.

of health, STD and AIDS associated with it. We need to be better educated," continued the Humsafar chief.

LGBT members visited various NGOs working with street children, the Human Rights Commission and the Durbar Mahila Samanvaya Committee, a forum for sex workers.

"Everywhere we went, we tried to make people realise how closely related health issues and homosexuality are," said LGBT-India convener Owasi Khan from Bangalore.

"We are willing to walk but are not too comfortable about our names being printed because our

families are not aware of our orientations," said two men from Darjeeling. For Aditya Mohnot, Calcutta, the walk was a novel way to let his family know of his orientation. "Though I have been very open, my parents have never asked me. Maybe, now they will and I can finally tell them," he smiled and said.

For Ranjan and Pawan of the Counsel Club, "the most vibrant and mainstream Indian LGBT group," the walk was years of hard work paying off.

"It is great that such a movement began here. We are planning to make this an annual event, to be commemorated countrywide," they said.

## Media coverage of the walk

the way, we got separated and subsequently, re-united. Finally, the heavens decided to give our Walk a last dramatic flourish, it started pouring. We managed to devise a strategy by which we could visit the remaining places and yet reach back to the pavilion in the Park Circus maidan in time.

The other group managed to visit the Family Welfare and Health department and other distinguished supporters before they too came back in the pouring rain. We decided to regroup at Hotel Hollywood instead of the pavilion. I stayed back at the pavilion to inform the remaining guys and had a fun time with them, during the wade back to the hotel, all through the knee-deep filth of river Calcutta.

Soon after lunch, Ashok and I worked on the press release, which through my shortsightedness was not done earlier. Pawan rushed with it to the printers and got copies

done on the way to the press conference venue. The rains had thrown everything out of gear and Ashok and I reached the venue late. The reporters were already restless. They requested for a fake walk just outside the venue for the photo-op. We decided to oblige.

The actual press conference did not go quite as per script, but in the end quite a few of us faced the cameras, the reporters and answered their questions. Most of the reporters also did one-on-one sessions with us. We ended up finishing with the last reporter by about 8 PM or so. After a small chat session we returned back to the hotel for a little bit of celebration.

Unfortunately, that part of the day did not go well at all. We could not find a booze shop open by the time we reached the hotel. Personally, I was much too drained to worry about that, and amidst

nightmares of pink-slips woke up the next day to find some good coverage in the Times of India and the Asian Age.

We did manage to do what looked impossible just a week earlier. In the final analysis though, whether The Walk will matter or not, one can never say. But again, in the final analysis, will *anything* at all matter? Life goes on without individuals, without whole classes of people, without even species. And in fact, the World and Universe at large will go on without life itself. But if one were to look at the World from the standpoint of the lookers, the human beings, specifically our types from this part of the World, then yes, I guess, history *was* made in the muddy environs of the Park Circus maidan.

Things will not change overnight. But little by little, we can keep chipping away at the huge mountain that is our



society, and at some point in time, we *will* find that we have shaped our niche exactly the way we wanted it. Some said fifteen is too little a number to begin with. But consider this: before The Walk, the gay people who were publicly open about their (homo)sexuality within India were countable on the fingers of one hand. Now at least one needs two hands to count them.

The next year, I am aiming for a three-figure presence during the Walk. And then, I am sure, we will have lesbians and transgender folks and parents of LGBT people and friends and small towners and empathizers who are themselves neither L nor G nor B nor T. The key here is consistency. In this world, only that individual or community succeeds, which

can keep playing, despite failures. Consider these 'successful' people:

- 👁 **Albert Einstein:** Flunked Maths.
- 👁 **Thomas Edison:** Teacher called him a dunce. Failed over 10,000 times in trying to invent the light bulb.
- 👁 **Henry Ford:** Bankrupt at age 40.
- 👁 **R N Macy:** Failed seven times before his store succeeded.
- 👁 **Bill Gates:** His college adviser told him that if he drops out he would never get a job.

Well, in that last case, the adviser was factually correct! Be that as it may, success comes only to that person and only that

community, which is consistent, which is a *Lambi Daud Ka Ghoda...*

So folks, start planning, the next Walk will have at least a hundred people. If you missed the first chance to be a part of history in the making, do not lose the next. The second Walk is the last Walk I shall be calling people to. I am sure I will not need to call people to the third Walk. It will happen on its own. Consider this-

***Main akela hi chala  
tha jaanibe manzil magar  
Log saath aate gaye  
aur karvaan banta gaya***

(I embarked alone my journey,

People kept coming and joining until we became a caravan).



# FRIENDSHIP WALK '99

## THE DAY HISTORY WAS MADE IN CALCUTTA

Pictures from India's first Gay Pride Walk











**Gaylaxy** is grateful to Owais Khan for sharing these priceless pictures with our readers and salutes the 15 bravehearts who pioneered the movement in India



## India

★ Kashish 2012- the International Queer Film Festival of India- was held between May 23<sup>rd</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup> and screened 120 films from 30 countries. The festival was also graced by many celebrities of national and international fame.



★ Pride Marches were held in various Indian cities during the month of June and July. While Chennai had a pride march on 24<sup>th</sup> June, Kolkata's pride walk was on 15<sup>th</sup> July. Patna and Madurai are the latest entrant to the list of cities holding a pride walk.

★ Hyderabad will be organizing a pride walk later this year. The city also hosted a Rainbow Film Festival in the month of June.

## G-NEWS: World

★ President Barack Obama has pledged his support for same-sex marriage, "I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married," he said.

★ Google has announced a global campaign in support of equal marriage rights for gay and lesbian couples. *Legalize Love* campaign was launched in Poland and Singapore and will be expanded to every country where Google has an office, focusing on countries where anti-gay sentiment runs high.



★ Danish Parliament voted 85-24 to legalize same-sex marriage. Couples in civil partnerships will automatically be granted the status of married.



★ More than one thousand LGBTs participated in the pride Gay pride festival 2012 on the occasion of Gaijatra festival on 3<sup>rd</sup> August in Pokhara, Nepal

★ Despite opposition and police arrests, Uganda held its first pride festival in August and concluded it with a pride walk.



# ALTERNATE SEXUALITY: Why Does It Exist?

It is humans who are trying to play the intelligent designer and question the existence of alternate sexuality, writes **Gaurav Deka**

Many great men have questioned the concept of "intelligent design" N number of times. Do we have a maker? Or are we products of self origination? This takes me back to the concept of Oroboros, which is a mythical creature created by Plato. The creature looks like a snake or a dragon eating its own tail. In many Greek, Egyptian and Indian philosophies this has been a symbolic representation of the cycle of life and death and immortality. But why a being who eats his own tail? It wouldn't need food to be searched, like our animal and human race does in this age, nor would it need to defecate. It doesn't need anyone from the outer world to communicate or limbs to move from one place to the other. Neither there is any beginning nor does it represent any end. Least of all it doesn't even procreate, because the purpose of its existence is served in its very making.

Speaking specifically of humans, when we look back at the age old concept of the Oroboros which is again a myth, but powerful enough to instigate questions of existence, why do we exist?

To eat, to defecate, to go

around the cycle of life and death till we reach eternity and the most important of all- to procreate. Procreation has been gifted to all of us including animals as the tool to carry our legacy or produce generations so that we leave parts of ourselves on this earth



and in a way not die—an excuse for immortality. Along with this we are also gifted with the mind, that among its countless dimensions follows love as one of the primary goals. Love's creation or rather metamorphosis has extrapolated its primary goal of procreation long back. Love stories true and false, have not ended up with procreation always, subjectively speaking,

most of the times.

Even to love we evolved organs that could be the media to transfer love from one individual to the other. Eyes, faces, physicality, genitals are a few examples. But who specifies love's norms? Are there ways to love or are there hard bound rules to make love to a person?

If we do not consider us as products of creation but self realization then there has to be a purpose behind this love that doesn't lead to procreation.

There comes Alternate Sexuality!

According to Darwin's Law of Natural selection, only the best of the lot are selected. If procreation was the only goal of Nature then nature certainly wouldn't have created Gays, Lesbians or Transgender who cannot procreate, but fascinatingly can fall in Love.

There are numerous catastrophes that keep on occurring one after the other in today's world, be it the natural Tsunami or the man-made World Trade Centre massacre. Lives are lost like falling meteors—thousands and thousands of them. Yet when we look at the demographic graph of the world, it gives us a logarithmic



exponential graph. Why so? People die and are born like the phoenix bursting out its ashes, and we find that slowly and gradually the population is still growing more and more.

Nature's plan is too intrinsic and mystical to understand in its entirety. When we use the word "abnormal" for people belonging to alternate sexuality, don't we actually question Nature, the purpose of their evolution or rather selection?

Whatever exists or can be perceived and is a product of nature cannot be classified into abnormal or normal. It just exists because nature has selected them.

Going back to the existence of these so called other kind of beings, who choose to love but are unable to reproduce, we can come to a subtle conclusion that it is one of the manifold plans of nature to help itself. If everyone were to be successful in love and thus procreation then the world would have blasted by now. Alternate Sexualities give a way to put a comma, if not a full stop, to at least a certain number of generations that would have again populated this world. They are representations of the Oroboros with a single difference and that is love. However the question of love's purpose remains unanswered. Existence is just—normal or abnormal. One cannot judge the nature of existence. But we can certainly question ourselves, when we classify and name stratus of sexuality into heterosexual or homosexual.

At the end of the story it is just love that melts down, not to procreation but to a purpose still unknown.

Consciousness as I had mentioned has many layers. It is a universe within this Universe. And when one reaches the highest point of consciousness, he or she is said to have reached the omega point. We as the human race are far away from reaching the omega point. The omega point shall make it clear one day, not the question of procreation as the important one but the ever lingering shadow of love that our mind has still not been able to realize. But that is again hypothetical. We are so

## **Reproduction due to the majority has become the subject of prime importance, but who gave the criteria for it to be chosen as an important event?**

limited as products of nature in our senses as well as roots that breaking the shackles would be next to impossible. Perhaps that is why "Alternative Sexuality" is given the trademark of taboo.

No one is ready to look at the scientific and logical side of this part of the population who are very much a part of others and are products of nature as any heterosexual individual is. When nature can lead to the existence of bacteria which is

asexual, cannot fall in love, yet reproduce then why not a p a r a d o x i c a l clone—homosexuals—who can fall in love but cannot reproduce? Reproduction due to the majority has become the subject of prime importance, but who gave the criteria for it to be chosen as an important event? It is none o t h e r t h a n ourselves—Humans. And then follows love, whose norms are again set by us even without knowing its purpose in nature. To make things even more complicated we have acquired tendencies of classification of anything, be it animals, plants, social cultures, geographical locations, gender or sexuality! Sometimes de-perception helps in analysing facts that goes beyond human made classification. It is we who are designing. We are actually trying to play the intelligent designer. But there exists no such thing. When we ourselves are products of evolution how can we try to prove ourselves intelligent designer by rules, norms, classification, etcetera etcetera. We have to go deeper and still deeper to find out the meaning of not only our existence but the existence of whatever does in this macrocosm.



*The author is a Doctor ( M B B S ) with a diploma in Psychology.*

*He has also done his Creative Writing from Sussex University Brighton and is an independent Queer Researcher*

# "The Shape KASHISH Took Was Beyond Our Own Expectations"

From providing a spring board to budding Indian filmmakers to nurturing talent, in its third year KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival had an entertaining mix not just for queer persons, but also their family and friends, says Festival Director **Sridhar Rangayan**

## **Gaylaxy: How has the third year of KASHISH been?**

**Sridhar:** When we started KASHISH in 2010, it was based on a simple fact that there was no queer film festival in Mumbai and there needed to be one. But the shape KASHISH took was beyond our own expectations. I mean we dreamt big, but it was bigger. It became the first queer film festival in India to hold a festival in a mainstream theatre, secure Information and Broadcasting Ministry clearance, have a very eminent and supportive jury, was attended by big Bollywood stars and we had more crowd than we could accommodate.

In 2011, we thought we had it all planned, with a 230-seater cinema hall; but we still couldn't accommodate everyone. The festival got Bigger, Bolder and Queerer, with more people, more celebrities and more media coverage. We even invited and hosted three filmmakers from US, UK and Indonesia. While the first year was primarily supported by organizations like UNAIDS, UNDP and Movies That Matter, the second year saw the collaboration with a corporate sponsor – DKT India.

This year, 2012, was more challenging because the expectations sky rocketed, not just from the queer community in Mumbai and across India, but also from the queer and filmmaker circuits all over the world. When you are in the spotlight, it is not very easy, you have to perform to the best. We received about 300 film entries, the highest till date and interestingly we received more qualitative films. This made the final selection tougher. The preview team and the Festival Programmer finally selected 120 films from 30 countries to screen this year. The films made everyone



giggle, laugh, cry, dance and also ponder.

## **Gaylaxy: Can you tell us something about the festival tagline 'For Everyone'?**

**Sridhar:** One of the primary objectives of KASHISH is to mainstream queer visibility. The festival is as much a platform for queer celebration as it is for non-queer people to come and watch films on queer subjects. One of the constant questions that we still get is – who are these gay and lesbian people we hear a lot in the media these days, what do they look like, what do they do? Are they interested only in sex, are they only activists? The films at KASHISH answer many of these questions – that gay & lesbian persons are just like any another human being, as 'normal' as anyone living in your own house or working in your own office; they have the same anxiety, happiness, hope, aspirations, dreams as anyone else. They are definitely not from Mars or Venus or an alien planet. The KASHISH audience feedback survey yielded very interesting data. In 2010, 27% identified themselves as non-queer and this figure rose to 34% in 2011. In 2012 we hoped

to make it an equally participative event for both queer and non-queer persons with the theme 'For Everyone'.

With this theme, we invited parents, friends, colleagues, classmates of queer persons to come to the festival. We also made a special effort to program films and have panel discussions that not only deal with gay, lesbian, transgender themes, but also those that relate to families and friends of queer people.

### **Gaylaxy: What about the presence of international filmmakers in the festival?**

**Sridhar:** Last year we invited and hosted Q. Allan Brocka from USA, Rikki Beadle-Blair from UK and John Badalu from Indonesia. This year KASHISH was privileged to host well know American filmmaker Rob Williams whose films, like *Make The Yuletide Gay*, have already been seen in Mumbai and have proved to be extremely popular. Rob Williams is regarded as one of the most prolific gay filmmakers. He and his partner Rodney (a screenwriter and co-producer) have made evergreen festival hits dealing with the politics of human relationships, pepped up with an attractive and talented cast and interesting scripts.

KASHISH 2012 showcases his three features, from his debut feature *Long Term Relationship* to his later productions, *Make The Yuletide Gay* and *Role/ Play*. A short film written by him – *Regrets*, is also screening in the short film package, *Crossed Paths*.

Also, very interestingly we had filmmakers from Australia, USA, Thailand and UK joining us on their accord, because they just wanted to be part of KASHISH! There were more than two dozen Indian filmmakers, not just from Mumbai, but also from Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi and other cities making their way to KASHISH to present their films.

### **Gaylaxy: What was different at this year's festival?**

**Sridhar:** Debut films! This year we have shown a record 40 films from first time

filmmakers, both from India and all over the world. Two feature films by debutant directors dealt with issues of (in)compatibility in a gay relationship in two different ways – while *Men To Kiss* (Germany) about a earnest banker and his bubbly flamboyant lover was a rom com, *The Last Round* (Chile/Argentina) about a successful macho boxer and a quiet shy kitchen assistant was an extremely sensitive drama.

A film that pushes the boundaries of queer culture was Jake Yugna's multiple award winning film *Open* (USA), a visually striking and emotionally tender tableau of humanity's progress at the dawn of the new millennium, where a pandrogynous couple are undergoing surgeries to become unified as one being. Two documentary features *Austin Unbound* (USA) about a deaf mute male-to-female transgender and *Rites of Passage* (USA/India) about an Indian Muslim woman in USA going through sex reassignment surgery brought about harsh realities for transgenders into sharp focus.

The debut short films were more diverse where the characters, the settings and the unexpected twists in the plot made you sit up and giggle, laugh or cry – from funny fleeting encounters in a laundromat (*No Clothes*), in a park (*Your Warmth*) or a tourist spot (*Cylicity*); to poignant dramatic encounters (*Silences and Stay*) or even to a terrorist encounter in *Manhunt*.

First time short filmmakers have been inventive even with form – like an advertisement for electronic gadget that provides pleasure (*Ms.Thing*), cyber love (*Plug & Play*), and super-funny musicals (*Handyman and Ketheron's Bucket-Mending & Hymen Emporium*). Shorts make KASHISH interesting, exciting and innovative.

### **Gaylaxy: What is your aim for Kashish?**

**Sridhar:** KASHISH seems to be emerging as a springboard for new talent and the international film community seems to have their eyes riveted on our festival to discover new directors and new films!



# KASHISH 2012













# STILL LOGGED IN

Winner of the People's Choice Award in Kashish for his movie Logging Out, **Nakshatra** says he is yet to Log Out from movie making

When the short movie Logging Out was released on Youtube in March, **Gaylaxy** wrote how the movie touches a chord inside of you and sends you down the memory lane. That Logging Out will in fact remain "logged in" over the next couple of months and win an award at India's biggest queer film festival was no one's guess. A thin, young but energetic boy, Nakshatra could best be described by his second name on Facebook – "still childish". Born and brought up in Mumbai, Nakshatra is a student of Mass Media and an active part of the gay community in the city. Ask him to describe himself, and he chirps in happily, "I am a full time happening human being and living a wonderful 'Queery Life'."

Directing a movie was his childhood dream and Nakshatra had been experimenting with video editing for some time, making videos of the places he would visit with his family and posting them online. "Since school days, I used to say to my Mom: 'I'll direct a movie in future, which will be a hit.' She didn't take it seriously. Finally I proved myself and now she is happy and proud of her son for winning this international award," he tells proudly. But Logging Out wasn't something he had planned over the years and as he says, "it all happened out of the blue," on one sleepless night when the idea came to his mind. "I have seen many of my best friends falling for people online, whom they haven't even met. So I decided to throw some light on the issue with a concept which people could relate to." And that people had no difficulty relating to the concept can be gauged from the fact that he went on to win the People's Choice Award at Kashish this year, which was given based on online voting. Calling the movie as a "gay themed short film based on online reality where people give importance to



your skin rather than your emotions," Nakshatra describes the plot, "Like almost all teenagers, the lead character of my film, who belongs to an orthodox Indian family, is trying his luck to find the love of his life through social network but then there is always a hard realization that 'love is not so easy to get.'"

Ask him about his Kashish Journey and his eyes light up instantly. "I still remember one fine evening; I was baking pizzas and received a call from an unknown number. The gentleman on the call praised my efforts for 'Logging Out' and sought my consent to screen the movie at his film festival. I discovered that gentleman was Sridhar Rangayan, festival director of Kashish. I said yes! Later it was also accepted in Kashish Coffee Break Online Contest, as it was already a hit online." And that was just the beginning of Nakshatra's success and his tryst with celebrities, for the movie not only went on to win the Coffee Break Online Contest for

which he received the award from none other than Oscar Award winner Rusel Pookutty himself, but it impressed actor Anupam Kher so much that he pledged his support for Kashish and was later screened at Queens Museum of Arts, New York too. The memory of that special moment is still fresh in his mind and he happily shares those moments, "Mr. Anupam Kher was present during the closing ceremony as well as when I gave my winning speech and Logging Out got screened for the second time in Kashish. Later, when he went on stage, he praised my short film as he liked the overall effort and that too with zero budget. When he announced his sponsorship of Rs. 50,000/- from next year for Kashish, I was so happy for Kashish and for our community's growth rather than my film getting appreciation at such a big level. Things are getting bigger and I am happy that somehow I am responsible for that!"

So did the sudden fame bring about a change in him? Not the least bit, is what he says. In fact, he made it a point to still be grounded and come back to his friends even during Kashish. "When I used to go to stage, special sitting zone, official photo-shots, I had to sit away from my buddies at Kashish's venue



and they thought I'll change with such celeb treatment. But after every single session I used to run to them and hugged them with all my love as it was their success too. Their expressions were saying that 'Natty is still the same, hasn't changed.' At the end of the day I was happy because I was still the same and was being me." And he doesn't forget to mention the other protagonist Ved either, without whom he says the film wouldn't have been completed

Having already earned the tag of 'the youngest filmmaker in Kashish's history', this young filmmaker has plans for more and says his future projects are also going to be LGBTQIH themed. "I just want to make films which will give something good to our community for its welfare," he says. His next movie is already complete and is a gay love story titled 'Book of Love' and will be released on 15th August. And this is just the beginning of a promising future. As he says, "You will see me soon because I haven't yet Logged Out."



# GENDER AND SEXUALITY DISCUSSION IN PUNJAB

Amidst the patriarchal Punjab, Hollaback! Chandigarh and Café Kaffee Kuchh held a discussion on gender and sexuality, reports **Rubina Singh**

On Sunday, May 12, Hollaback! Chandigarh and Café Kaffee Kuchh organized a discussion on gender and sexuality. The aim was to discuss the issues faced by LGBTQ individuals in the city. We also aimed to discuss the flexibility of gender norms and what happens if an individual does not conform to expected stereotypes.

Sometime back, we realized that very few organizations and individuals are working in the field of LGBTQ rights in the Punjab area. And that definitely doesn't mean that there aren't any LGBTQs in Punjab. Being a very patriarchal state, being different is never easy here. Even toggling gender lines is frowned upon to say the least.

Although I've been working in this field for a while, I have met very few people who are open about their sexuality. Many face constant judgement and feel uncomfortable discussing their experiences. By recognizing the existence of this problem, we want to ensure that there are forums available where these issues can be freely and safely discussed.

Many thoughts were raised and opinions were shared in the discussion. We talked about what it means to be a 'man' or a 'woman'. We discussed the role of hormones and environment in a person's

sexuality or gender choices. We also talked about what it is like to be homosexual or transgender in a city like Chandigarh. Although the turnout was lower than we expected, I believe this was a much needed start in the right direction.

As we started the discussion, the first topic to come up was the difference between gender and sex. A young man was confused as to whether both the terms meant the same thing or something different. In response, another young man shared that sex referred to a person's reproductive organs and gender was more socially conditioned. This further led to a discussion on how social conditioning affects a person's sexual preference. Arun (name changed) felt that there is a spectrum along which a person's sexuality is decided. A person can be a 100% gay or straight but if they are hormonally on another part of the spectrum, social settings could affect their sexuality. Others felt that being gay had little to do with one's environment but being openly gay had a lot to do with it.

Later on, Jasmeet (name changed), shared her views on changing gender norms and stereotypes. She questioned whether the terms 'men don't cry' and 'women can't drive' are believed as rigidly today as

they were earlier. While some pointed out that there are inherent differences between the two sexes due to hormones, others believed that it was a result of one's upbringing and beliefs. We also talked about why people who don't conform to gender stereotypes are ridiculed and what it is like for someone who is homosexual or transgender to live in our community.

We had some heated moments but overall everyone laid their point of view respectfully and sensitively. It was interesting to note the misconceptions about these issues and it further convinced me about the need for more such discussions and workshops in the city.

**About Hollaback!**  
**Chandigarh:** *Hollaback! was started as a blog in 2005 by a group of friends who wanted to use mobile technology to end street harassment. Inspired by a young woman who took pictures of a harasser on subway through her cellphone camera and uploaded them online, Hollaback! chose to use this powerful medium as well. Today Hollaback! has over 40 chapters and is one of the biggest organizations working on street harassment and LGBTQ rights in the world. The Chandigarh chapter was started in August, 2011 and has been working online as well as offline.*

# CHENNAI PRIDE 2012

Around 250 LGBTs and their supporters walked on 24th June at Elliots Beach, Chennai demanding gay rights





















# Kolkata Rainbow Pride Walk 2012

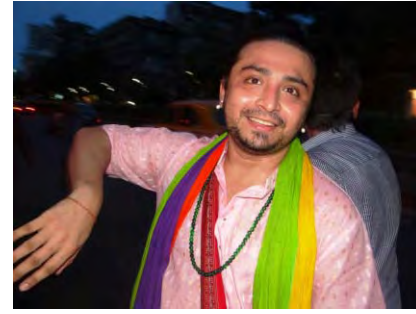
Nearly 1500 people marched on the streets of Kolkata on 15th July for the 11th Pride Walk in the city















Pictures Courtesy: Alka Kedwal



# GENDER QUEER PRIDE PARADE, MADURAI

Temple city Madurai held its first Gender Queer Pride Parade on 29th July, which was preceded by a month long festival







All Pictures courtesy:  
**Elen Govel**



# DUSK TO DAWN

## (After Sex)

Different people have different reaction after orgasm.

**Karan Sood** explores the various expectations and response of people post sex

Love consumes all, whether you agree or not, it does. Be it physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually, it coins our life to changes we certainly resist for their own reasons. And when I say "it consumes", it takes to no boundary that makes love a villain of our life. Indeed it's a hero, a savior, but how long a savior will exist without a suitable weapon?

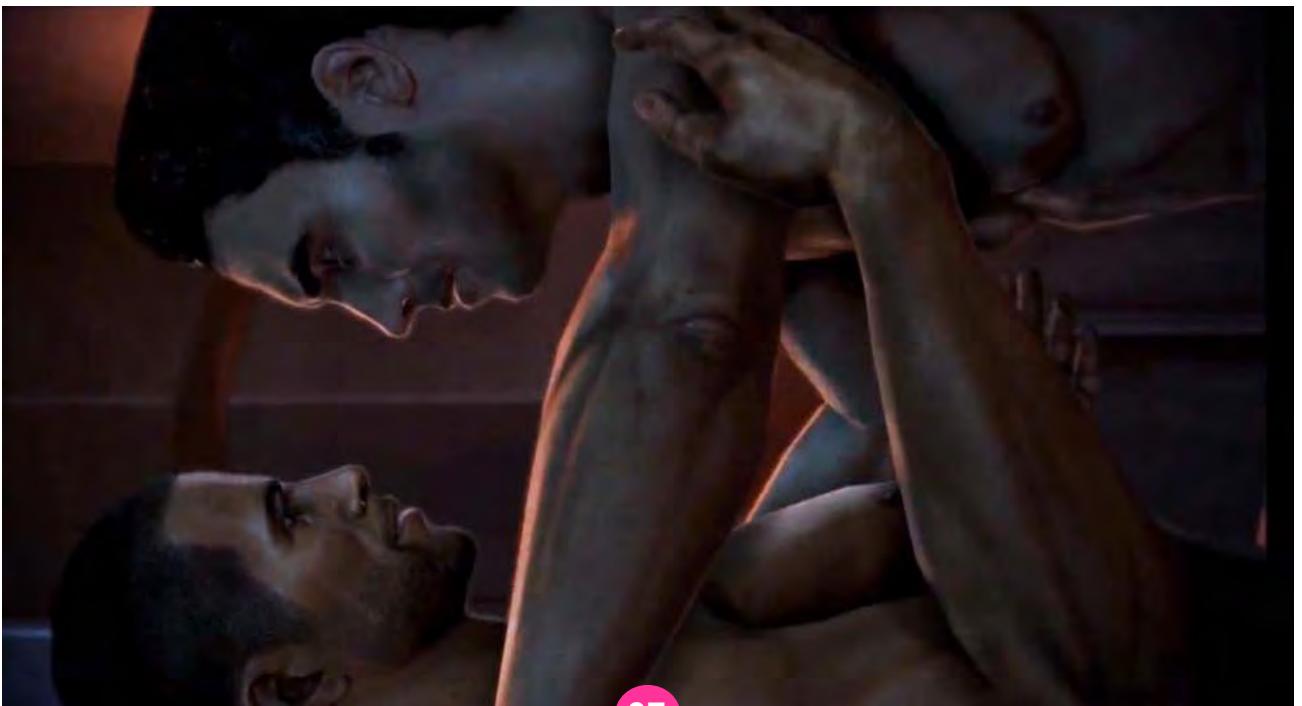
Of all the weapons, from trust,

mutual understandings, care and respect, one comes with the name called physical compatibility, a mere check of satisfaction measured from two different scales, and even if their values overlap, they don't correspond to the same value (Remember the Vernier Caliper you used in your ninth standard physics lab?)

That particular night, we made love for more than two hours, and we were lying

naked on our single bed, holding our hands, looking at the revolving fan over head. Within a few minutes, he had slept while I wished to talk. Talk of nothing but our mystic future, of inspiration that binds us together, of reasons to fight for our relationship during the hours that binds dusk to dawn after making love.

While most of us prefer to sleep after sex, few exist who





want to talk about serious stuff, talk of sex and just sex, few prefer to take a shower, or go out for some time, light a cigarette, or cuddle like babies. The moment a couple have orgasm, it may induce a certain level of weakness in the body depending on one's own stamina, so sleep after sex shouldn't be blamed anyhow even if it does happen. (And, if both of the partners are working, I know how hard it is to keep your eyes open for late nights after the hectic hours at work.)

Sometimes, in few cases, the orgasm is also followed by an inevitable guilt feeling. And the cigarette, shower or being sometime alone helps it out. And, if it's natural, what makes the other partner to take it otherwise?

Next comes cuddling after you made love. To cuddle seems

sweet and adds beauty to the act, but if it happens after sex it may make you irritating as you may be dying for a sound sleep and the guilt willing for some distance. So even if in this case, the scales don't match, ignore your emotions that expects a lot; and maturity is all it takes to make it happen.

But what about the urge to talk? And that too when it might be of libidinous nature and at times of serious emotions? This lands you in the situation where one partner prefers to sleep while other continuously gazes at the roof or the fan. Remember, it were your words at the first encounter that brought you both together, the way your frequency matched, things clicked and emotions attached with beautiful memories. It is your words that define you; and not

your hotness, your skills on bed, the size of your penis or the perfume you use.

These gradients in expectations and needs may add bitterness in the relationship. If not always, sleep can be sacrificed before these, when you know it will take just a few minutes, especially when your partner needs to talk something really intimate that he can't share with anyone.

And, to talk of sex after sex? I will prefer to sleep, but people vary so do the expectations, and you agreed to do that, that's what commitment says.

With a wish for a great love and sex life, I wish for all those happy or not-so-happy couples for the most appropriate weapon for the savior that binds you both.



# SAFE AND SECURE

On May 1st, ILS Adventure partnered with the **NGO Elaan** to hold a free self defence workshop at their upcoming studio in Salt Lake City, Kolkata. We caught up with **Dave Chakrabarti**, one of the instructors, to get more information about the Shield project

**Gaylaxy:** Tell us about your plans for these workshops. How did they start?

**Dave:** The idea behind the Shield workshops is to cover the fundamentals of self defence training for real-life situations, and to teach techniques that are effective without having to put in years of practice. I've had friends asking me to teach self defence classes every time I've visited Kolkata, for several years now. Kaustav Majumdar, my co-instructor and the CEO of the ILS Network, has had the same experience. We were already developing a Shield program that combined self defence training with adventure sports, so it wasn't that hard to extend that into a regular series of free

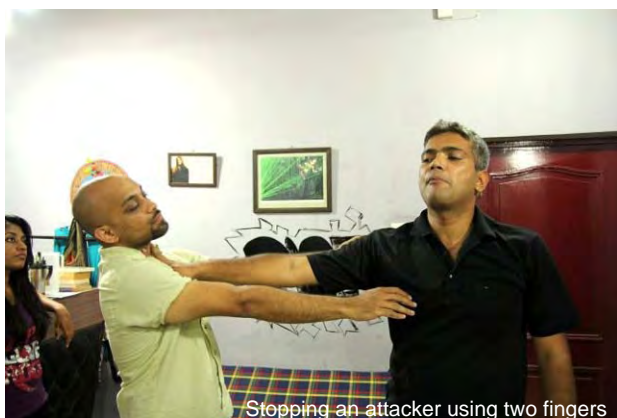
weekend workshops in the city.

**Gaylaxy:** Is there really a need for self defence training in Bengal?

**Dave:** After the highly publicized Park Street rape case and similar incidents, it's on everyone's minds. Self defence training also boosts self-esteem and confidence levels, builds situational awareness, and builds "bad victims... something especially attractive to gay men, women, and others whom the city has traditionally marginalized.

**Gaylaxy:** What style of martial arts is this?





Stopping an attacker using two fingers

**Dave:** Like most self defence workshops abroad, we're teaching techniques that are more similar to mixed martial arts than any particular style; we take and adapt techniques from several martial arts styles. So a participant might be using a *muay thai* technique from Thailand to block an attack, a judo or aikido technique from Japan to break their fall safely when a bigger, stronger attacker forces them to the ground, and a Brazilian jiu-jitsu joint lock or choke to defend themselves on the ground. This is very different from the karate class you probably took as a kid.

**Gaylaxy:** Can you expand on that a little more? What's the difference between what you guys are doing and a karate or tae kwon do class, and why are styles like "*muay thai*" better?

**Dave:** I hate these inevitable "My fighting style is better than your fighting style!" comparisons. It's immature. Fighting styles are different; you have to understand what they emphasize and what they're good at. I know a lot of *muay thai* students who cross-train in tae kwon do to improve their kicking power, delivery, and form. You have to take what's effective from each style you train in, and understand where their weaknesses are. A smaller man who trains purely in tae kwon do, for example, will be at a huge disadvantage if he's taken to the ground by a larger, stronger attacker (and 95% of all street fights end on the ground!). If I had

**After the highly publicized Park Street rape case and similar incidents, self-defence is on everyone's minds**



to characterize the differences in what we're doing, I'd say that we're completely focused on self defence (no belts, no bowing, no traditional forms or movements), and that training is very realistic. Participants will be actively practicing techniques against several large, strong,

resisting opponents in every class. We also cover things like situational awareness and how defending yourself from a rape is different from defending yourself in a bar fight; things that aren't usually taught in martial arts classes. Lastly, our participants learn to use everything as a weapon, including their attacker's shirt collar or their car

keys.

**Gaylaxy:** Who are the instructors for this workshop, and what's your background in martial arts?

**Dave:** Right now, Kaustav Majumdar and I are teaching, but we'd love to get more folks involved. This is especially true if any of your





Dave explaining a choke technique that can be used if an attacker is on top of you

readers has experience with filipino fighting styles; that's a gap in our current curriculum since we haven't found any qualified instructors (or serious students) in India. My background is a mixture of judo and brazilian jiu-jitsu, though I've also trained in tae kwon do, hapkido, and a couple of other things. Kaustav da has years of training in aikido. Both of us have taught co-ed and women's-only self defence classes abroad.

**Gaylaxy:** Who are the participants, and what has the response been like?

**Dave:** While I won't profile specific participants, I can tell you that we've had a mix of women and gay men at both workshops, with straight men being in the minority. Early feedback has been very good. Classes are fun! Participants asked for more hands-on training time, which we're planning to add as soon as we get some foam pads so we can train on the ground safely. Several of the smaller girls have been hesitant, but after a couple of classes they're learning that even the tiniest of them can defend themselves against bigger, stronger attackers with the right training. I think we're on the right track.

**Gaylaxy:** What's next for Shield?

**Dave:** Tons! Given how much interest we're seeing, we're planning to scale the program to include other NGO partners. We'd love to work with SAATHI, for example, and I was introduced to one of their founders at a wedding recently. There's a strong interest in making Shield available in schools and colleges, so an invitation-only pilot project with a couple of colleges is on the cards. We're also finalizing the logistics for Calcutta's first self-defence studio, where we'll be able to do regular self defence classes and eventually add a strength training and conditioning component. And lastly, I may be training and fighting in Thailand later this year, so we're exploring ways in which we might partner with other instructors and organizations.

**Gaylaxy:** How can readers get in touch with you?

**Dave:** The easiest way is through the [ilsadventure.org](http://ilsadventure.org) website, where we have phone numbers listed. We'll also be posting blog posts and pictures from self defense workshops and other events there. Thanks!

# VANILLA **SEX** MAKES HIM HOT

It's the act of making love and not the act of penetration that counts the most, and **Rohan Noronha** teaches you the perfect art of love making

**O**k we all are adults here and talking about sex I guess would be no harm. Did you know when you make love to him using dildos, before penetration happens, it would be a mind blowing experience not only for you, but for him as well. This is also a good way to connect with his needs and have control over the way you perform with him as well.

It is very advantageous to use anal sex toys and one of them is that you can concentrate on the pleasure you would like to give your man. This is because you now have control over the act, and watching the toy go in and out of him would turn you on as well. The best part is, the hardness of the toys would remain constant, if you know what I mean. And there are no chances of *cumming too early*, plus your partner gets all the satisfaction he needs.

Reach for the box of sex toys when your man starts stripping, and playfully turn him around to kiss, rim and

stroke him well. Appreciate how well endowed his buttocks are and knead them generously. You see it's the act of making love and not the act of penetration that counts the most while love making is on. Don't forget to cusp his testicles and play with his manhood. Lube your fingers well so that he feels no pain when you start feeling his insides. The main thing here to do before penetration is to have his sphincter muscles relaxed, so that the penetration act gets better.

The passive partner would now be ready to have a "*popping*" moment, which is a beautiful act by itself. If he is your regular partner, you would know what he likes the most. But if this is a first time sex date, don't be wild using a monster sex toy. Always start small and maybe the next time you could go one size bigger. You should learn how to work your way through this act, and it would surely help him breathe easy and stretch more down there. The thrusts

should be slow, the toy should be rotated, and the tip of the dildo should swirl inside, building a sensation later on with hard and rapid thrusts.

Keep him guessing for what would come next, and sensitize his prostate all the time. Before you actually start penetrating, he may or may not have an orgasm. And while the sex toy act is on, don't forget to speak sweet horny nothings in his ears. Cuddle him with the other hand and play a little with his nipples and his chest. Check how he responds to that, for it would keep his mind busy and you can go in deeper down there. Once the penetration is done and the two of you have had an earth shaking orgasm, *which is guaranteed* with this act, get a little more intimate with him and form that deep bonding and connection.





# MY CUP OF TEA



At first I was always the one to firmly propose that love doesn't have a place in me. The feeling of it used to sound rather absurd. Having some sexual relationships in the past (with men of course) I realized that finding someone to hook up is quite easy but it is finding someone to really understand you, to nix needles for you at time of despair is rather hard. I for one have been at the receiving end all my life and perhaps it is the queer community wherein I have gained acceptance and a warm welcome. But men who think deep (and go deep too!) are what truly catches my eye. It feels good to be molly-cuddled, apple of someone's eye for a change. In this process I consider sex as important as being with someone, however I have a different take altogether.

I feel sex is something which binds two people into one. Sounds clichéd and maybe it is, but didn't the *kama-sutra* say so? We search for our destiny and look for companionship but why does it seem so hard to get. I have always been a closet and I am going to be one till the fag end of my career. It screams a sense of cowardice, betrayal but it is me who can only fathom melancholy, ordeal, plague.

My need of my better half is nothing overly exaggerated, hyperbole, melodrama. I need someone to be a friend, *confidant* and by all means an animal in bed (sic). But could all such qualities be truly found in someone? Maybe not as much as I can fulfil

myself being splendid, illustrious, courtesan! It would be one of my many weird and perhaps abashed fantasies but I want to feel wanted, pantomime and felt at home. The strong arms which can provide solace and tranquillity, the fire which can ooze my seeds right away and the love which can cajole me into a sea of panoramic abundance would be need of my everyday hour. It's been years since I found someone.

Trying with experienced is no go as they appear settled, peaceful, horny but it is the lack of commitment which they are scared of. But isn't it what we all are benignly afraid of! It is like a cup of tea which we never want to avoid. The thought of watching the *Kama-sutra* is so lamenting and provoking that the embodiment of two souls truly exhilarates me. An open invitation to the world of solitude is tempting and also quite aggravating. I do feel like to be possessed not like *a la bella torn from Edward and Jacob* but like the world and he alone.

The comfort from him should be soothing. I have some wild dreams in sex also. For starters I like BDSM, and it is just not everyone's cup of tea. I want to be the weak one, the feminine but only during sex. I am man enough to prove that. A trajectory in my sexuality may astound or even surprise men alike but since when was I normal?

Being weird has now become a fashion statement thanks to the gay *messiah* Lady Gaga. But then there was always a sense of weirdness in me from the beginning. I am not a big fan of her but I like the way she portrays her inner self to the public. After the bouts of depression I used to have as young as I can remember I had always been a go-getter and took pride in being the yang, divergent, the opposite.





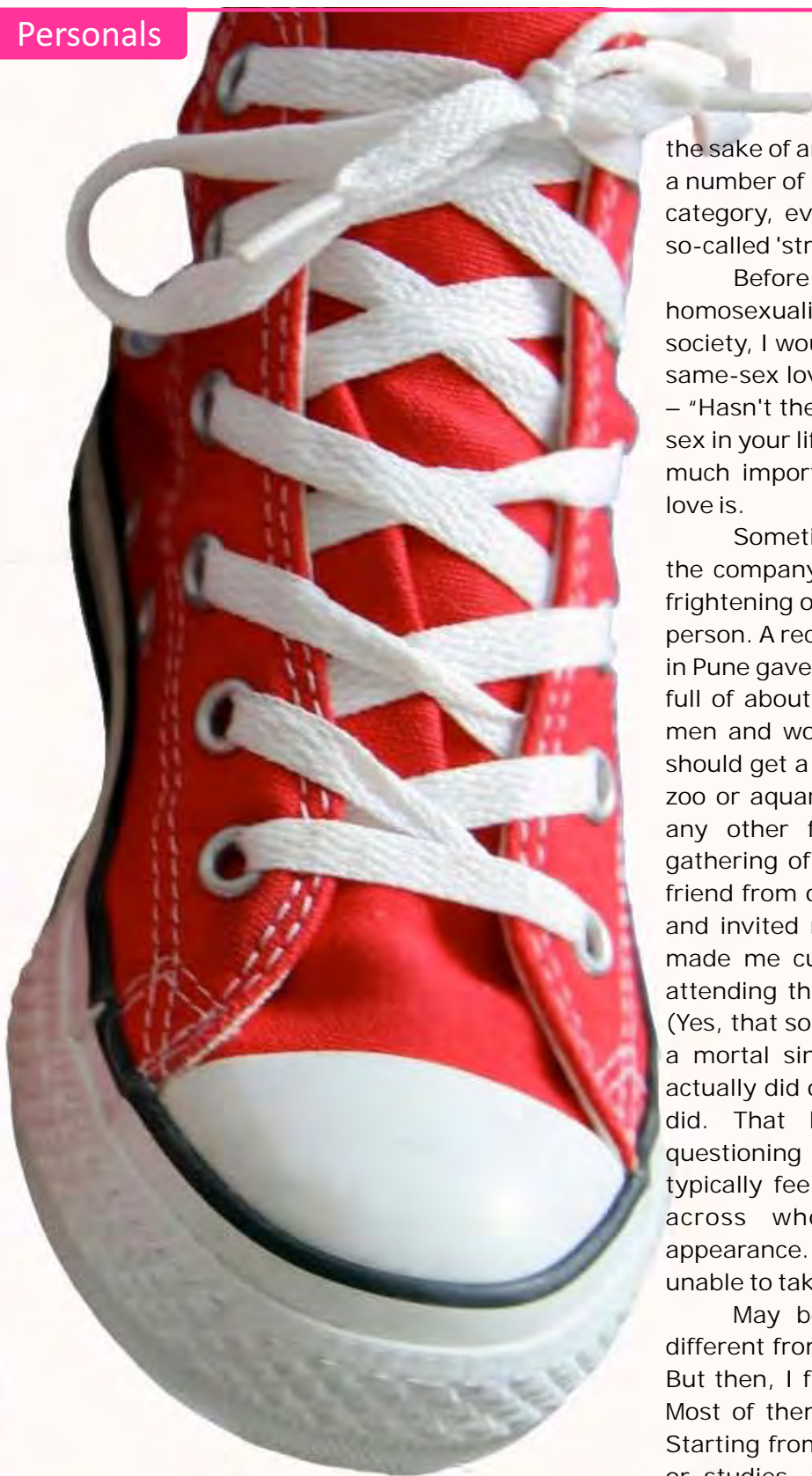
# STRAIGHT TALK: IN QUEER SHOES

- Abhijeet Prabhu

It was untouchability centuries back, plague few decades back, AIDS few years back and today it's homosexuality crying out for a fair eye from the society. "Yucks!!!" is probably what most of us straights would be uttering the moment we hear or read words like 'gay', 'lesbian' or 'homosexual'. Abnormal! Unnatural! Sick! We are never short of labels for most things we do not understand, leave alone same-sex relationships. The logic applied by a vast majority of us, who think that being heterosexual makes us normal and anything else is a violation of the 'natural order' would probably put Einstein's brain under stress! Somebody should, in that case, go and tell all those hunks in the gym who use protein supplements to pump their muscles up that they are abnormal as they have violated the natural biological process of tissue development. May be somebody should also write to the Ministry of Health that by advising the nation to use protection while having intercourse, the government is actually promoting unnatural practices and encouraging people to defy the natural law of mating! One should have sex only to procreate - isn't that a loud argument we keep hearing these days from those moral guardians debating against homosexuality?

In fact, by this ingenuous thumb-rule of what or who is normal, I can say, with much confidence and pride, that nearly 90% of the people I meet and interact with, daily, are abnormal. If homosexuality is to be considered abnormal or a disease, for





the sake of argument, I should then believe that a number of human feelings fall under the same category, even if they are experienced by us, so-called 'straight' people.

Before even considering whether or not homosexuality should be accepted in our society, I would like to ask any person who finds same-sex love unacceptable, a simple question – "Hasn't there been ever a person of the same sex in your life who loved you?" Let's not put too much importance on what the nature of that love is.

Sometimes the mere thought of sitting in the company of someone who is gay could be frightening or embarrassing for many a straight person. A recent gay-straight alliance meet held in Pune gave me the opportunity to be in a room full of about 30 odd gay, lesbian and bisexual men and women. I was wondering whether I should get a feeling similar to that of being in a zoo or aquarium. I tried hard but couldn't get any other feeling than of being one in a gathering of 'people'. Moreover, when my gay friend from office first told me about this meet and invited me to it, some sort of an instinct made me curious about how many gay men attending the event would start hitting on me (Yes, that sort of establishes that I am as much a mortal sinner as they are). None of them actually did or even if they did I never felt they did. That broke the myth I have been questioning since long. And that is, gays typically feel attracted to any guy they come across who has more than a decent appearance. As is the case with straight boys unable to take their eyes off most girls.

May be, that one aspect makes them different from an average straight guy like me. But then, I failed to figure out what else does. Most of them have a similar lifestyle as I do. Starting from their morning chores, their work or studies, the food they eat for lunch and dinner, the clothes they wear (might sound strange but, if you feel that gays have flamboyant dressing styles, I am no less a fashion freak than any one of them) to the way they party or hang out - I really fail to see any



difference that sets them apart from an average straight guy like me. In that case, I wonder, how much significance should be held alone by the fact that I can only love someone of the opposite sex, whereas they can only love someone of the same sex - a characteristic of their genetic construct they were born with? Yes, probably the fact that contrary to what most of the straight world believes, they have a far simpler and smarter approach to life than us.

In those few hours that I got to spend in their company and interact with a number of them, they not only made me realize this but also gave me some excellent take-aways which I will value my entire life as some of the most unbiased, neutral and unorthodox solutions to the commonest of life's problems.

➡ Many of them showed me an excellent outlook towards life. That it can be lived alone yet sustained with unbridled happiness and pleasure. A companion or more who can make a part or whole of your journey of life happier for you is just an added boon.

➡ Nurture what you have and what you are, rather than changing yourself for the world and the society, neither of which will ever stop criticizing you.

➡ Fight for what you believe is right than giving in to the pressures of family, relatives and society who rarely make the attempt to



**Somebody should go and tell all those hunks in the gym who use protein supplements to pump their muscles up that they are abnormal as they have violated the natural biological process of tissue development**

understand.

➡ Got scores of problems in life? Girlfriend or boyfriend left you? Feel that the world has come to an end for you? "Grow up" is what these people tell me. It's indeed a privilege to find hearts which pump joys and cheer despite the constant prejudice written all over their lives no matter where they go and what they do.

➡ A lot of us think that it's difficult to sustain our lives for long without marrying. A difficult question staring at our faces is that - how happy are we in our married lives anyway? Married or single, we strive for survival every day of our life and so do they. But their challenges are multiple times greater than ours and that, probably, makes their understanding of life far more profound than ours.

It's amazing how well they understand the various misconceptions that are harbored by the straight world and the irrefutable ways in which they can deal with them. In a mockery of the typical questions asked to gay people

by their straight friends, who make efforts in vain to 'correct' them, one of the questions asked to all the straights attending the meet was - "If you haven't slept with a person of the same sex, how can you say you will never be attracted to one?" If I were to feel extremely threatened by this question, my immediate defensive retort would be - "I will never sleep with a guy because I am attracted to girls." Valid answer. But how many of us straights who believe that homosexuality is a curable disease are prepared to hear a similar answer from a gay friend? Because, by putting the question the other way round, as they did that day, they showed that they could prove with ease that if homosexuality can be 'cured', so can heterosexuality!

As the event came to an end and it was time for me to say adieu to those 30 new friends that I made and who taught me a good deal that day, I was overpowered by the question that why are they so unfortunate to be organizing such meets themselves and having to invite their straight allies. It probably signifies that they are still having to persuade the wider society for acceptance. I dream of a day when such events would be organized by people like me and our LGBT friends would be invited as guests, with the honor they deserve.

I pledge my support for their struggle.

# WHY LGBT SIKHS SHOULDN'T FEAR COMING OUT

Living a closeted life goes against the teachings of Gurus, writes  
**Sukhdeep Singh**

I have never considered myself to be a religious person. For some reasons, it has been science that I have always turned to, and steered clear of religion; and this has also meant that accepting my sexuality hasn't been hard for me. But as certain things in my life recently have made me

realize, religion still remains an important aspect for many individuals, and accepting their own sexuality for religious people is often a very tough task. Many think that it is against God's will, and that their very existence on this earth is wrong/sinful.

Sikhism as a religion is very tolerant and advocates

equality. There have been articles by various people about how there is no reference to homosexuality in Guru Granth Sahib, and if our Gurus had considered it an important subject to be dealt by religion, they would have addressed it. One such article was published in this magazine itself previously.





However, Punjabi culture is often not so tolerant. Here, there is a need to distinguish between Sikhs and Punjabis. While Sikh religion clearly forbids discrimination of people on the basis of caste etc, the caste system is still prevalent in Punjab. Punjab (along with Haryana) has the most dismal sex ratio in India. Female foeticide and the desire of a male child runs very high among Punjabis. Yet, our Gurus had clearly treated women on par with males. When the Khalsa Panth was established by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, all Sikhs were given the title of Singh and women of Kaur (meaning Princess), which was to remove the identification of the caste of a person on the basis of his title. That Guru Gobind Singh Ji accorded the title of Kaur (Princess) itself denotes the high significance and respect he gave to women. Women participated in Langaras, fought as warriors alongside men against the Mughal forces. Yet, in Punjab (and among most Punjabis elsewhere), the story today is somewhat different, and can be gauged by the low sex ratio in Punjab.

To be precise, Sikh religion and Punjabi culture are not always the same, though often they are confused to be the same. Punjabi society in general is very patriarchal, conservative, and as the recent stance by some of the religious heads in the Sec 377 case proves,



**Guru Gobind Singh Ji never wanted his followers to hide their identity, yet, when you live in the closet, that is the exact thing that you do- hide your true identity**

homophobic. This however stands in direct conflict with the religion. As anyone having even the slightest knowledge of Sikh religion would know, during the Mughal times when there was a rule of tyranny and fear, Guru Gobind Singh Ji decided to form the Khalsa and gave the five K's to Sikhs. The aim was to give the Sikh community a unique identity and develop a clan of fearless people. The turban and hairs, along with the other K's ensured that a Sikh would be identifiable even in a crowd of 1000s and would be fearless enough not to hide his identity. This was especially significant during the Mughal period as Hindus were either being persecuted or forcefully converted to Islam. Thus, our Guru developed a community which would be easily identifiable at a time of atrocities, yet would be fearless and brave enough to

fight against oppression and injustice.

Now, when a LGBT Sikh fears coming out, fears the society and hides his identity, he is going against the very things that the Gurus taught. Guru Gobind Singh Ji never wanted his followers to hide their identity, yet, when you live in the closet, that is the exact thing that you do- hide your true identity. Guru Gobind Singh Ji wanted Sikhs to be brave and fearless, he had said, "Chirion se main baaz larraun, Tabe Gobind Singh naam kahaun," (I will train a sparrow to fight with a hawk) implying his followers, even if they would be fighting against a mighty enemy, would be brave enough to fight. Yet, when you fear the society, when you fear telling the truth, when you fear your family's reaction, you are being weak and fearful, something that the Guru never wanted Sikhs to be. If anything, Sikh religion is not against alternate sexuality, neither does it preach a person to live in fear or hide his identity. It is when you, as a Sikh, are living in closet, living in fear that you are going against the religion, against the preaching of the Gurus. Fellow brothers and sisters, if you are gay, or if you are being open about it, remember, that is what our Gurus would have also wanted you to do. If you are a LGBT Sikh and open about it, you are not going against the religion; instead, you are just being a true follower of the Guru.

# A SLUT IS BORN TODAY

-Rohan Noronhana

My best friend from Chennai had a break up last month, and his ex called him a SLUT when the break up happened. But before you pass a judgment on either of them, let me tell you why my friend was called a slut. Both of them are in college, and have been together right from class 12. My friend is a hopeless romantic, and was very open about his feelings for other men, especially his college math professor. However, he was very loyal and honest to his lover as well. My friend's name is Rishabh and his boyfriend's name is Manu.

The word "slut" directed at Rishabh was like a jolt out of the blue, it came unexpected this morning. Rishabh says he was quite unaware of why he was being called that, especially when he has always been honest about his feelings with Manu and towards the likeness of adoring other men around. And after having been together for so many days as a couple, such a slap from Manu only made

Rishabh go back into his shell. It was more like a *\*bitchslap back to where you come from\** situation for Rishabh, who now has sworn to make a new life for himself.

One needs to understand as you sexually and finally mature, and when you have lost your virginity ages back, you now would understand why the world calls you a slut. So is Rishabh a walking deception to the unholy word, which was once meant to embarrass or hurt someone?

Just like other friends, even I told Rishabh he isn't a slut. Most of us have negative connotations with the word. We associate it stereotypically with an individual who is promiscuous. Or maybe with someone who is sexy and trashy to the core. And sometimes for people who are nothing but attention seekers as well, such as many Bobby Darlings around. But it is certainly not a pleasant definition of anyone's character whatsoever.

Dictionaries term the word slut as someone who readily sleeps with many. Manu said he didn't call Rishabh a whore, because a whore takes something in return, whereas a slut would just do it because they like what they do. In this case, the "like" would pertain to Rishabh adoring and admiring other men, not sleeping with them though. Rishabh then says if this is what being a slut is all about, he is proud to have been one openly, even while being in a loyal and committed relationship with Manu for more than a year and a half.

Rishabh doesn't care anymore about who has to say what about his mental flirtatious acts. He knows he has enough confidence to walk out into the world and be a proud slut, if that's what the world wants to call him. That's where my friend nailed it (pardon the pun here). Supposedly the TOPS can have all the romping sessions they want, but when it's the BOTTOMS chance to even mentally flirt; the horny men are





damned by hornier devils that go watering other gardens. They believe that BOTTOMS have to use their brains and not their behinds to be rationale with their thoughts. And the hormones for men like Rishabh should be controlled, and never to be spoken of, especially if they are in a relationship.

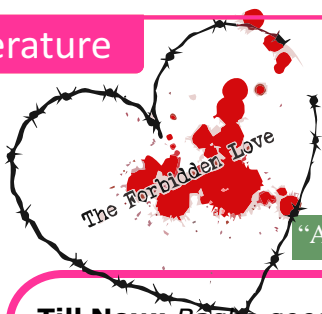
Oh, puh-lease! I certainly don't agree to this and that's what I counseled Rishabh on. If he likes to admire men, so be it. He doesn't have to masturbate in secrecy, we all have needs. And if his partner

legitimately cares for him and his needs, my friend here should have the benefit of laying his trust in his partner. Rishabh now needs to have a man who is a man and not an immature boy who thinks he can. He doesn't need a lover with benefits, but someone who would respect him for who or what he is.

Guess what TOPS, Bottoms are humans too. Everyone has animalistic instincts and needs. Hence the sexual compulsions within are but natural, and this is how humans are designed across the globe.

There isn't anything wrong with it and no clauses of immorality in it as well. If Rishabh and many like him want to admire a hunk or think of that man naked and making love to him, so be it. And they would now do it without feeling guilty of the bloody SLUT word fixed to their heads.

Rishabh knows his limits and I know he wouldn't cross that ever. And if admiring someone makes you a SLUT, so be it. You know what world, **a slut is surely born today**, and we are proud being one!!



# Forbidden Love in a coal mine

"A tale of love and lust between an upper class brahmin & an uneducated rural boy" by Victor

**Till Now:** Bagha goes to his village, along with the Mining Engineer.

I opened my mouth to say that I'd be missing him...he placed his hand on my mouth, stopping me in mid-sentence.

"Aap mujh par gussa hain?" (Are you angry with me?)

"Nahi ! Gussa kyun ? Yeh to hona hi tha." (No, why should I be angry? This was bound to happen.) I didn't say that I was hurt as I had to hear it the way I had.

An elongated pause..."Aap kapde badal lo...pura din chalne se bahut dhool ho gaya...lal mitti dikh raha hai." (Change your clothes, there is too much of dust on you.)

"Haan," (yes) I said "Tun bhi badal le...tera bhi to baal pura ganda dikh raha hai." (You also change your clothes, your hairs are all red due to the soil.)

Having said this, none of us moved. I slid my hand down into his shirtfront through the opening of his V-neck pullover. I touched his chest. The contours of his manly chest moved against my fingers. I felt a stirring...I pushed my hand further till I could feel the erect stub of his expectant nipples.

It is strange how men stride the two extremities of desire - there he was, physically eager for my touch on his body going by the want I could feel in every pore of his smooth lusty body, and at the same time thinking that he would be complete in the arms of a woman he had made love to and with whom he planned to spend the rest of his life. I guess men cannot understand what they want, and in the process hurt and pleasure others with whom they interact emotionally, at the same time.

I almost manhandled him while I pushed him back on the bed and pulled off his sweater and the works. The familiar body was in front of me, dark, hard, rough, hot and inviting me for a last hustle. I fell on top of him. He was as desirous as me, he kissed on my neck, bit it in places. I'd have probably discovered a hickey or two if I looked in the mirror the day after. But then, I didn't care. I just enjoyed it and got my own hands to unbutton his trousers and reach in and stroke the warm, blood-filled Bagha surging inside. He pushed it down fast and it landed in a heap at the bottom of our bed.

He was naked, like the innumerable times he had been, and raring to go. I picked him up, pulling him by his hair and lifting myself up to face him, our eyes level with each other, burning with wanton desire.



We were both kneeling now, and I felt his hand work its way into my jeans. I reached back with my own hand and held Bagha, as he again began to nuzzle at my neck.

He took the initiative in putting his lips to mine, and started kissing me ardently. My right hand was behind

his head clasping his curly coiffure and with the left, I dragged my lower apparels to my knees and subsequently to the floor. I felt his hard rod sizzle against my bare thigh while his other hand made me feel wanted and alive. These were the times I lived for, times I wished could go on forever, but alas! These were the last flickers before he would be gone from my life, forever.

I lowered my hands and grasped his hard and soft buns. They were pulsating with excitement I had never felt before. It was as if he was putting on a last recital for me, a goodbye gift. I got up and stood on the floor dragging him with me. He knelt on the floor. The floor was cold and Bagha bent forward and pulled a rug which was



lying at the corner and slid up on it. His mouth made contact on my throbbing member and took me in. His tongue swirled and I shivered in delight. His lips slurped and I shook in pleasure. There was an urgency in his sucking which I could not recollect having felt ever before. I had to deep control myself to not climax in his mouth. I withdrew from his mouth and pulled him up.

He turned away on his own and I grabbed him from behind. My manhood slid into the ridge between his two wonderful mounds. He reached back and grabbed it and tried to place it right. My mind raced...was he ready?

I rubbed his nipples with one hand and let the other hand down across his hard ribbed abdomen and felt the coarse and silky bush lightly grazing against my fingers. They came to rest on his tool, hard as a rock and wet at the tip. I pressed a little. He pressed back. I rubbed my face on his wide shoulders and pulled back and pressed again. His hand was holding it in place. I moved away from his chest and put that hand laterally on the abs and gave a little push to his upper torso - without any resistance, he bent down on the fulcrum of my arm across his tummy, his hands on the bed. His mounds were level with my vibrating rod, I presumed, waiting to be explored, this time willingly.

I made contact and the head of my plug was knocking at his door. He pulled back his hand from my root and brought it to his mouth. The hand that came back to touch me was wet and full of a glob of saliva. I contributed my quota too and rubbed the mixture on my head and pushed it on the orifice muscles. A pop was there and a miniscule entry was felt. I felt a slight shudder in him but he held ground. I pushed harder, he put more saliva on the mushroom at the entrance and I seemed to be

slipping in. He wiggled his backside, perhaps to ease the pain, and I moved in with each push, inch by inch. I moaned as the full feeling washed over me. I was burning in pleasure when I found he was still hard and throbbing even when I was almost fully inside. I had always wanted him to enjoy my making love to him.

Bagha began to move his hips now in a slow, serpentine-like, sinuous motion that was almost the way an exotic dancer would move their hips on the dance floor, and I had a sudden vision of him in a male harem outfit dancing a belly-dance for me, and there was nothing feminine about it, it was the raw raunchiness of the male beast whose heart was thumping loud enough for me to hear, for he gave all of himself to everything he did then. Even in pain, he

drove his body to the limits and every muscle of his was moving in strictly guided motions, and their goal this time wasn't the perfect downhill run nor the ideal slalom, but instead, to make me feel every pint of pleasure his muscular tome could generate.

As he did, I caught hold tightly of Bagha with my arms, and I began to thrust myself along with him. He felt me do this and as the velvet gloves of my lust(or love) came off, the

beast was allowed to run rampant across his body, and my hips turned into a monster of sexual energy, I was humping and ramming his butt, throbbing inside him, and I felt it. I felt his desire to perform his last dance with me to perfection and his energy, I felt the huge outflow of primordial power surge out of me and into him, and I converted that power into our delight, and as I did, I felt my body swell towards climax.

We melted into each other, two lusty souls with lusty bodies in synchronous rhapsody. Like two passionate lovers we explored with our hands every erogenous surface of our sculptures that

**We were both playing  
with each other,  
knowing fully well  
that there was no  
tomorrow in our  
relationship...we  
were near the end of  
our road together**



was possible while we made love. Clinging to Bagha and with him holding me with his hands behind his body, I saw a thousand stars as I emptied myself into him in ecstatic spasms and stroked him simultaneously. He phase lagged me by a few seconds as he spurted too in huge shots, all over my hand and the sheets.

I fell over his back, the imagery of the dance washing over my senses repeatedly. He had saved the last dance for me.....

You can dance-every dance with the guy  
Who gives you the eye, let him hold you tight  
You can smile-every smile for the man  
Who held your hand neath the pale moon light  
But don't forget who's takin' you home  
And in whose arms you're gonna be  
So darlin' save the last dance for me

Oh I know that the music's fine  
Like sparklin' wine, go and have your fun  
Laugh and sing, but while we're apart  
Don't give your heart to anyone  
But don't forget who's takin' you home  
And in whose arms you're gonna be  
So darlin' save the last dance for me

Baby don't you know I love you so  
Can't you feel it when we touch  
I will never never let you go  
I love you oh so much

You can dance, go and carry on  
Till the night is gone  
And it's time to go  
If he asks if you're all alone  
Can he walk you home, you must tell him no  
'Cause don't forget who's taking you home  
And in whose arms you're gonna be  
Save the last dance for me

'Cause don't forget who's taking you home  
And in whose arms you're gonna be  
So darling, save the last dance for me  
Save the last dance for me  
Save the last dance for me.

He turned back, smiling, flush with radiance, his dark face alight with a satisfaction which was contagious as I came alive too and we both started kissing again. However now we both realized that the recital was over and the reality dawned on us fast. I saw moist eyes. I kissed on his temple and then on his closing

eyelids. Sad and thinking of the parting, we both fell asleep in each other's arms.

Tomorrow was another day...inevitable though.

The D day came nearer, and by February 1<sup>st</sup> week, he had to go and join his new place. I planned to leave for Kolkata one day before to avoid seeing him go, leaving him the keys with instructions to hand them over to my neighbouring Bungalow when he left never to come back. I had decided by then that I would not be going for his marriage in June. I left a thick envelope for him as my gift for his wedding. He understood and came to see me off at the trekker stand the afternoon I left.

He didn't talk much. Neither did I. We held hands before I boarded the trekker to my destination. In full daylight, in front of bustling public, I embraced him, a last hug. Again, time stood still in the hustle and bustle of a public Bazar in the coal town as an engineer got entwined with a dark tribal mazdoor, oblivious of the quizzical stares all around, as we got lost for a wee bit more than usual in each other's touch and fragrance. Both of us recovered quickly and detached. I felt a tear drop transferred to my cheek. Not that I was dry anymore. Turning away from him with a squeeze on his hand for one last time I took up a seat at the back of the trekker, so I could watch him while we moved away.

I still remember his handsome face watching me from the road as my trekker left for the station, his waving hand and perfectly sculpted tribal body slowly diminishing with distance, until I could not see him any more in the haze of coal dust churned up by the wheels of the rickety trekkers following mine.

That was the last I saw of Bagha Emmanuel Oraon.

Within a week, I placed an appeal for a transfer to another subsidiary far away from the Jharia coalfields and luckily for me it got accepted in no time. I left the colliery and in time moved on in life, with the happy, loveful and lusty memories of Bagha and our forbidden love in the coal mine esconced deep within my bisexual heart.

**THE END**





LIVE TO  
SEE YOUR LOVE  
KILL GAY BULLYING NOT YOURSELF

# SUPPORT GROUPS FOR LGBT

## WEST BENGAL

### THE PRATYAY GENDER TRUST

**Contact person :** Anindya Hajra  
**Address :** 293 Jodhpur Park ,  
 Calcutta, Pin 700 068  
**Phone :** 033 2464 1893

**E-mail :**  
[pratyaygendertrust@yahoo.co.in](mailto:pratyaygendertrust@yahoo.co.in)

**Target populations :** Hijras,  
 MSM (particularly kotis)

### DURBAR MAHILA SAMANWAYA COMMITTEE

**Contact person :** Mrinal Kanti Dutta  
**Address :** 12/5 Nilmoni Mitra Street, Kolkata West Bengal, India  
**Phone :** 033 2543 7451 / 7560, +91-33 2530 3148  
**Email:** [dmsc@durbar.org](mailto:dmsc@durbar.org)  
**Website:**  
<http://www.durbar.org/>

**Target populations :** Female, Male and Transgender sex workers

### SAATHII CALCUTTA

**Contact person :** Pawan Dhall, Chief Coordinator  
**Address :** 229 Kalitala Main Road, Purbanchal (N), Kolkata Pin 700 064  
**Phone :** 033 2334 7329  
**E-mail :** [saathii@yahoo.com](mailto:saathii@yahoo.com) / [pawan30@yahoo.com](mailto:pawan30@yahoo.com)  
**Website :** [www.saathii.org](http://www.saathii.org)  
**Target populations :** MSM in general, male sex workers, transgender people, bisexual

### Sappho

**Contact person :** Malavika  
**Address :** 11A Jogendra Gardens(South),Ground Floor, Kolkata, Pin 700 078  
**Phone :** 033 2441 9995

**Email:** [malvi99@hotmail.com](mailto:malvi99@hotmail.com) ,  
[sappho1999@rediffmail.com](mailto:sappho1999@rediffmail.com)  
**Website:**

<http://sapphokolkata.org/>  
**Target Population :** Lesbians and bisexual women

### Prantik Bongaon

**Contact person :** Niloy Basu  
**Address :** C/o Niloy Basu, Peada Para, P.O. Bongaon, Pin 743 235  
**Phone :** 91 3251 257 029, 9332254855  
**E-mail :** [ajnil@rediffmail.com](mailto:ajnil@rediffmail.com) / [ajnil123@rediffmail.com](mailto:ajnil123@rediffmail.com)

**Target populations :** Hijras, Kothis, MSM in general

### Northern Black Rose

**Contact person :** Souvik Ghosal  
**Address :** C/o Hori Roy, M. B. Mukherjee Nursing Home, Hill Cart Road, Rajani Bagan, Khudiram Palli, Silliguri 734 401  
**Phone :** 91-9433009116  
**E-mail:**  
[northernblack\\_rose@yahoo.co.in](mailto:northernblack_rose@yahoo.co.in)

**Target populations :** Hijras, Meitis, other sexual minorities,  
**Astitva Dakshin**

**Contact person :** Debasish Mitra  
**Address :** C/o Bablu Bajikar, Baruiapur Ukilpara, Kolkata 700144  
**Phone :** 91-9836185589, 9830837440  
**E-mail :**  
[astitvadakshin@yahoo.co.in](mailto:astitvadakshin@yahoo.co.in)  
**Target populations :** Hijras, Kothis

### Madhya Banglar Sangram

**Contact person :** Arunava Nath  
**Address :** Kazi Ali Aftab Vill. Goaljan, P.O. Radharghat, P.S. Berhampore  
**Phone:** 91 9932760967, 9232694700  
**E-mail:**  
[sangram\\_06@hotmail.com](mailto:sangram_06@hotmail.com)

### SWIKRITI

**Contact person :** Rajarshi Chakraborty, Secretary

**Address :** 42/57 DumDum Road, Kolkata 700074

**Phone :** +91 9831743608, 9433009190

**E-mail:**  
[swikriti2003@hotmail.com](mailto:swikriti2003@hotmail.com)

**Target populations :** Bisexual women, lesbians, MSM in general, transgender people  
**PEOPLE LIKE US (PLUS)**

**Contact person :** Agniva Lahiri  
**Address :** 254, Bonomali Bannerjee Road, Kolkata - 700082, West Bengal, India  
**Phone :** 033 2402 9305

**E-mail :** [pluskolkata@gmail.com](mailto:pluskolkata@gmail.com)  
**Target populations :** Support group for young gender variants

### SWAPNIL

**Contact person :** SUMAN RUDRA  
**Address :** Kotalhat Dist-Burdwan, P.O. Burdwan, Pin 751015, West Bengal

**Phone :** 09932241372  
**E-mail :**  
[swapnil\\_burdwan@yahoo.co.in](mailto:swapnil_burdwan@yahoo.co.in)  
**Target populations :** MSM & TG Groups

## MAHARASHTRA

### Samapathik Trust, Pune

**Contact person :** Bindumadhav Khire  
**Address :** Samapathik Trust, 1004 Budhwar Peth, Office No. 9, 3rd Floor, Building Name: Rameshwar Market, Pune  
**Phone :** (020) 6417 9112  
**E-mail :**  
[samapathik@hotmail.com](mailto:samapathik@hotmail.com)



Send us your feedback, suggestions, articles and coming out experiences to:  
[editor@gaylaxymag.com](mailto:editor@gaylaxymag.com)

