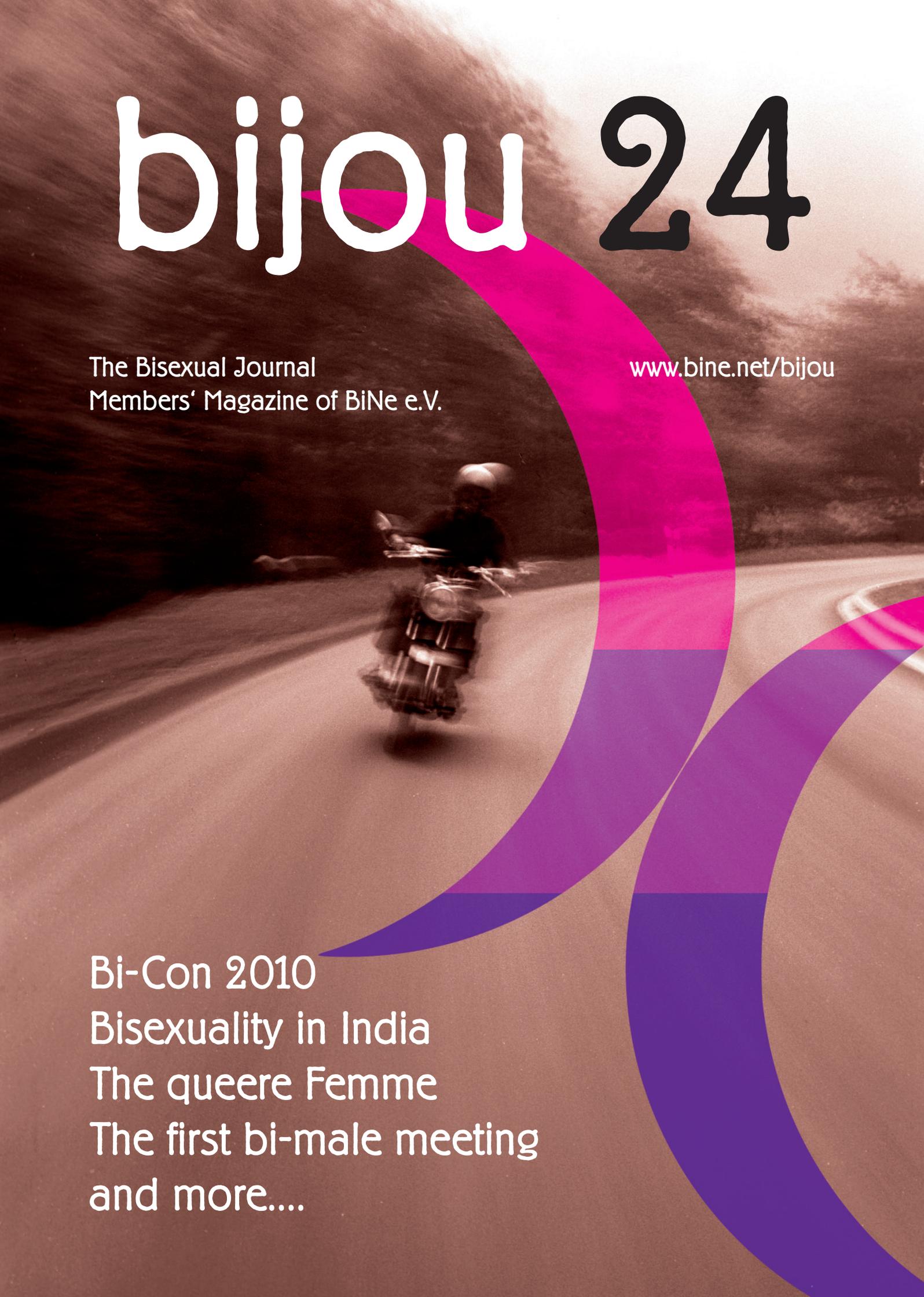


# bijou 24



The Bisexual Journal  
Members' Magazine of BiNe e.V.

[www.bine.net/bijou](http://www.bine.net/bijou)

Bi-Con 2010  
Bisexuality in India  
The queere Femme  
The first bi-male meeting  
and more....

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# Editorial words

The last two years, i.e. 2009 to 2011, were very moving for me ... and very active for the bisexual movement, I have the impression that there is a new momentum. Why?

- The Bi-activist, human rights activist and speaker, Robyn Ochs, went on a European tour with her book „Getting Bi“ and also followed my invitation to Hamburg (2009). /
- Also in Hamburg, we organized the parade for the Christopher Street Day, a particularly large group by foot with its own musical force and a „bi-Pope“, of whom there are a lot of CSD photos on the Internet. So we showed presence: „BiVisibility“ (2009)! /
- I gave a lecture at the “Pride Week” on bisexual studies, and while preparing I found some interesting scientific studies (2009). /
- There was again a major bi-stall at the Church Congress (2010)./
- In London, the great happening was the Bi-Con, the BiReCon (Bi-Research-Convention) and the ICB (International Conference on Bisexuality). There have been several recent studies that attempt to examine the issue of bisexuality seriously. For the first time a dozen Germans took part in this international event (2010). /
- The German Bisexual Network BiNe e.V. organizes two open meetings, a work seminar, low-budget meetings and a women’s meeting every year, but there was finally organized the first meeting of bisexual men (2011). /
- At the last second I could hear a great message: The former editor in chief Christoph is back and joins us again. Christoph comes into the team, so now we are two or three guys (with layout man Martin) - welcome! To great cooperation (2011)! /
- And finally, something happened that changed my life so vital and enriched it: I married a wonderful woman (yes, bisexuals can get married!), we celebrated our wedding with many bisexual friends, and now we have a baby together (2010 / 2011). /

The Bi-movement lives and gets new blood! Show yourself and do not hide!

*Frank  
translated by Frank*

Thank you for your warm welcome, Frank!  
And for all of us: enjoy the reading and make new discoveries in the 24th bijou

*Christoph  
translated by Frank*

## Bi-Con 2010: The Basics

From August, 26th-30th 2010 the 28th Bi-Con and the 10th International Conference on Bisexuality was held in London at the Docklands. And this time the Germans were also on board. In recent years, nobody from the German bisexual network BiNe e. V. has visited the British Bi-Con, so far as I know. This year would be different: About 10 people were there! And it was a great experience!

It just was fun to experience the different cultures with one attribute uniting us: bisexuality! But still there were differences: Not so much cuddling like at the German BiNe-meetings, and it was much larger and there were much more younger people.

Another thing was the multitude of workshops: much more workshops than in Germany, not just because of the longer time of Bi-Con, but also because there are shorter time slots (only about 75 minutes) with more workshops per time slot. The result: more time slots were a day. A little insight you get from the following short reports, and you can look for the time table at: [www.bicon2010.org.uk/static/grid/](http://www.bicon2010.org.uk/static/grid/)

The evening was mostly without special program, where many gathered in the bar, some enjoyed a social game, others met in small groups or watched a movie.

Except for the bar, the whole thing was not so crowded, the people were spread over the

campus, because the area was so large: At one end there were the houses overlooking the canal and the small airport. In the middle the bar was situated. And at the other end there was the university itself, where all the rooms for the workshops, the registration office and the long corridor were, where many were sitting or standing.

Before the „normal“ part of the Bi-Con began on Friday, the whole thing started with the BiReCon on Thursday. Funnily, at first I did not understand the meaning of „Re“ - it has nothing to do with „reunion“, but means „research“. Other people might not be so interested in the scientific stuff, but I was really keen on the new current studies, and it turned out that right now more than ever is going on in the market for bisexual studies!

All in all it was worth to have been there. It is quite different from the bi-meetings in Germany, but just as exciting and important!

*Frank  
translated by Frank*



*The UEL - University of East London*

## The Workshops

### Queering Shakespeare

I've loved William Shakespeare since my school days... written in the English language, mostly comedic, sprinkled with unaccustomed formulation, polite yet at times almost frivolous, the storyline plays around with plenty of mix-ups and transformations, and as tradition has it, all roles (including the female ones) are portrayed by young men!

It's practically asking to be interpreted in a bisexual context. And even if I didn't necessarily understand every line, it was fun to read into the whole thing and especially enjoyable to hear other people's ideas on the subject. The humour did have quite a British tinge to it; some of it did leave me wondering. But it was also unexpectedly liberal: so much so that some ended up groaning with cucumbers in their hand, imitating coitus. Slapstick at its finest!

*Frank*

### A Taste Of Tantra

Tantra has many faces: I'm not an expert in this area, but I was able to enjoy three or four workshops on the subject and each was in some way totally different from the rest.

This particular workshop was supposed to give us but a quick impression, and absolutely wasn't meant to be sexualised. And that, it wasn't. Instead we got to experience a few wonderful moments with other men and women. I was amazed at

how much warmth some people can radiate and how meaningful a simple eye-contact can be. I can't remember all of the exercises we did but I know they had a lot to do with just feeling and letting yourself go. We ended up dancing in pairs, where one could either lead or close their eyes and focus on the hands of their partner.

*Frank*

### Political Strategy: bisexual or queer?

On the 26th of August I held a workshop about political strategy of the bisexual movement at the Bisexual Research Conference BiReCon in London. The BiReCon was held along with the International Bisexual Conference ICB and the BiCon, the annual Bi meet for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. A special issue on the BiReCon/CIB/BiCon 2010 will come out in the Journal of Bisexuality, the world's only scientific journal about bisexuality. This is the short version of my article for the magazine.

There were about 25 participants who attended. First, possible goals of the bisexual movement were collated in a lively discussion. I wrote the suggestions on the board under two columns, political/practical goals and cultural/ideological goals.

Ideas for the first column were 'equality of law' and 'law to fit'. Meaning that all laws should

reflect all  
chosen  
lifestyles.

In contrast, 'Freedom from the law' would be more of a long-term claim. Other goals were civil partnership, marriage for same sex couples, and general equality in regards to marriage legislation. A lot of these goals have already been accomplished in the western countries where just a few more or less minor concerns such as adoption rights and equality in the tax legislation remain to be fought for. Under political and practical goals we also included 'no privileges for married people as opposed to unmarried people' and 'poly partnerships'.

The diversity in life situations and the wants and needs of bisexual people require certain prerequisites that have been fought for - or still need fighting for - throughout the centuries: marriage is not compulsory, there are other forms of partnership, one can change partners, he/she can be of the same or opposite sex, one can have more than one partner at a time, and one is not required to have a social gender.

'Freedom from the law' means that the state, society, church, neighbours, or whoever else should not be permitted to bother themselves with the private affairs of other people unless the people in question request for them to do so, or unless there are people involved that are unable to speak



for themselves. As opposed to the 'positive' claims in the previous paragraphs, these are the 'negative', 'defensive' claims. The softening of rigid gender boundaries promoted by the transgender/intersex movement points towards the abolishment of all avoidable references towards gender in state and law.

The cultural and ideological goals include 'visibility for bisexuality' and 'genuine inclusion of bisexuals'. People by far have not yet been able to wrap their heads around the idea of bisexuality even though their daily lives could be seen in as bisexual. In our daily work we still have to explain the most simple facts and combat the most primitive prejudices.

The second part of the workshop was meant to be dedicated to the strategies with which we could achieve those goals, but sadly there wasn't enough time. As main point I'd now like



to highlight the matter of alliance politics. Should the bisexual movement pursue its goals alone and by their own power, or as part of a bigger alliance, possibly even as part of a larger organization?

The lesbian-gay organizations have already partly introduced the 'B' for bisexuals and/or the

'T' for transgenders, turning their 'LG' which stands for lesbian and gay into 'LGBT'. They have more or less opened themselves up for bis and transgenders. With the help of bis and transgenders in their ranks, they've also accomplished their first group of goals by having successfully fought for fundamental equality of the homosexual lifestyle.

When we analyzed the goals, we came to the conclusion that there really weren't any that were relevant only to the bisexual community. Beyond the already achieved goals we are pursuing the softening or dissolving of the rigid comparison between two genders and moreover the demand for tolerance or promotion of partnerships between more than two people. We share the first claim with the transgender/intersexual movement, and the second with the polyamorous movement. The claim for recognition of the fact that a person may alternately love people of different genders and may form relationships with them is not directed at the state and law but towards the individual.

What about the queer movement? Well, the word queer has at least seven different meanings. In its narrowest sense, it is just another term for gay/lesbian, in its broadest sense it encompasses all movements that fight for the emancipation of human sexuality. We also meet a lot of people in pinning a special meaning to the word queer, the deviation from the mainstream, the principal challenge to the rules of society, the intention to be a stumb-

ling block for cultural opportunism. If we keep supporting the claims that we have in common with the trans- and poly-movements then we'll be placing these goals under a public spotlight making it more attainable for all of us.

What about the fear that we might lose our identity by joining a bigger movement? Well, the art lies in working independently and visibly within and in favour of the common whole. Many organizations are members of larger associations and still retain their identity. Condition for that, however, is that the all-encompassing LGBTIQP... (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, polyamory,...) or even the queer-movement does not discriminate us and that the 'B' in LGBT ...doesn't remain just a place holder.

From this standpoint we can also derive a picture in which the gay-lesbian wing of the queer movement appears as the wing that has generally already achieved its objectives. It could see additional claims as a disturbance to the truce they hold with the powers that currently reign. The other wing is made up of 'emerging', 'offensive', 'radical' movements or whatever other terms they can come up with. They are those whose claims want to drive the development of society forward, such as bisexuals, transgenders, intersexuals, polyamorous, BDSM, possibly even asexuals and others. There is no reason, however, to build up new confrontations as long as the hypothetical 'conservative' wing isn't actually turning into an obstacle to our movement.

The majority of the population receives the appearance of new sexual minorities with a fair amount of patience and open-mindedness. We can also stress that our claims do not just benefit the handful of people that acknowledge themselves as bisexual or those that may have political interests in the movement, but the vast majority who partake in bisexual lifestyles, though they might refer to it as straight, lesbian, or gay. Then, a lot more people will feel directly affected. After all, this is about human rights for all, not 'just' about the rights of minorities.

Which practical steps can we derive from this situation? The decisive and honest collaboration of the bisexuals of a nation within and outside of the larger common LGBT or queer organizations in favour of the common goals can and should without a question be developed further. Bisexual organizations and individuals are already working with transgender-/intersex-/polyamorous individuals and organizations in many different ways which often even overlap. Does it make sense for bisexual organizations to get together with trans-/intersex-/poly- and other organizations and develop a special collaboration to work towards the new, broader common goal? You can definitely enter the discussion at this point. Alternatively we can bring the discussion to you. Nowadays there's nothing easier than to build a neutral environment for a joint electronic discussion. Names such as 'initiative queer' or others can easily be found.

*Hartmut Friedrichs*

**Bi Press**

On one hand proud, on the other hand unpleasantly shocked, I realised that bijou is one of a mere handful of journals and magazines in the world that concern themselves with the subject of bisexuality. Besides the German bisexual journal which you are currently holding or reading on your screen, there are pretty much only the following other print publications available:



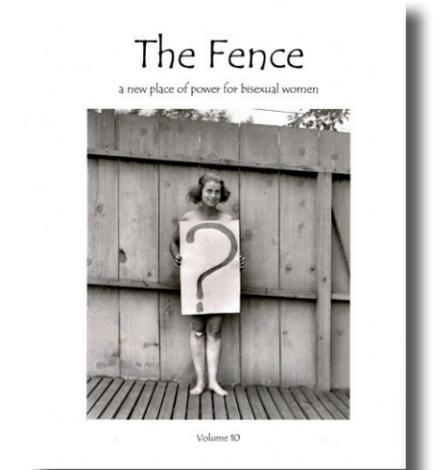
**BCN (Bi Community News) from the UK**

This approximately 16-page booklet (interior in black and white, cover in full colour) comes out much more frequently than our German journal: one issue quarterly and sometimes even more frequently. Because of that, December already saw issue number 104 into the printing presses. Similar to its German counterpart the organization is basically a one-man-show (alright, here in Germany we at least still have our gifted designer named Martin to add to the mix) – Jen does everything. Those who'd like to sign up for a £20 subscription, should check out their website: [www.bicommunitynews.co.uk](http://www.bicommunitynews.co.uk)

**Journal of Bisexuality from the US**

This journal of the American Institute of Bisexuality is a scientific journal which deals with studies, research, and scientific articles all about bisexuali-

ty. Though articles on movies and other media are included as well. Subscriptions can be ordered at: [www.bisexual.org/projects.html](http://www.bisexual.org/projects.html)



**The Fence from Canada**

This magazine for bisexual women is edited by Robyn Ochs (see other article) and is published in Canada. Website: [www.thefence.ca](http://www.thefence.ca)

**Bike Immunity News from the UK**

The small publication by Neil with short stories and poems that aren't meant to be taken too seriously can be ordered at the following website: <http://neiljameshudson.webs.com/bikeimmunitynews.htm>

Other than those I honestly don't know of any other bisexual publications in existence (except perhaps online). At Jen's workshop we sat together and gathered what we have and how we can pool our resources to better help and support each other in the future. A photographer offered to help, a couple of freelancers said they'd like to write something in the future – some with their own ideas, some willing to write on de-

mand, and a decision was made to look into translating guest articles as well.

Frank

### Information on bisexuality worldwide

I held a workshop at the International Conference on Bisexuality (ICB) in London on August 29th where I presented the plan for project 'BInfo' for Bi-Information. The internet has a lot to offer in terms of materials on bisexuality and some of it even gets printed. But the difficulty lies in finding this information. You'll have to click through endless websites of bisexual organizations, forums, and blogs, and ultimately you never know if you've found all the information relevant to you. Books on bisexuality exist as well, although mostly in English. There are also pretty good directories to aid in finding these sources of information. However there's still that issue of finding those directories which often only cover particular sub-sections on the subject matter.

Upon my suggestion an international group was formed that merged the existing directories in a database, made a list of the directories and linked them. What's special about this project is that we're basically connecting everything with everything as we are gearing towards relative completeness. Everything available should be taken advantage of as much as possible, not only sources of information and public databases but also existing websites and web portals. Sources in other languages can be included as well as long as we have editors for these languages. A list of (almost) all relevant text books

(non-fiction) about bisexuality worldwide might be a first interim result.

Hartmut Friedrichs

### Naked Lunch

Other countries – other customs! Normally we know the UK and US as fairly prudish and nudism is heavily frowned upon. Even a naked breast is already considered newsworthy! But not this time: every day we had naked lunch together. Many had already known each other for years and exchanged ideas about various topics over the dishes everyone brought, while the nudity really was just secondary. It didn't really matter to be honest. None of it was sexualised, no secret voyeurism or anything, just a bunch of people enjoying not having to squeeze into tight jeans for once during the day. On Saturday we even remembered a former naked lunch attendee with a sort of 'wake'.

Frank

### Genitalia Show And Tell

When dealing with sexuality there really is a big difference between the German and British Bi meets. While there exists a 'LoBBi' (lust oriented meeting place for bisexuals) at the BiNe meet in Germany, where there's a place where people can just come together physically or sexually without having to look for a room, there is no such thing in the UK. Everyone there gets their own room. And while German BiNe goes cuddle to exhaustion, that kind of thing can rarely be observed at the Bi-Con. Instead you can gather 'points' if you 'like to be hugged' so that those who re-

ally want to, still get to receive their sought after affections. I thought the idea pretty cool – you could stick lots of points on your Bi-Con pass, depending on whether you're single, taken, poly, mono, undecided, science fiction fan, trans, anarchist, or, as mentioned, craving cuddles. On another note, you could find a lot of different clothing styles at the Bi-Con – even Goths and S&Mers were easy to spot. It was also not impossible to find someone that would 'come up to your room' with you.

And now to the actual topic: I definitely consider 'Genitalia Show and Tell' a very bold idea for a workshop. If you're expecting an orgy, you're probably still not quite getting the context of this whole activity. At this workshop we spoke very openly about our sexual experiences and feelings, especially with the involvement of our primary sexual organs. Eventually pretty much everyone dropped their pants and showed what they had to offer. There were women, men, transsexuals, pierced schlongs, small labias, hairy balls, big clits, circumcised penises. We heard exciting stories about pleasurable experiences, needful longing, differently experienced orgasms, shaving mishaps, etc. Bottom-line is that we talked about something that bears so much importance in our lives, but is almost never discussed so naturally – precisely because it's always thought of in a stuck up-sexualised or shameful context. But here it was made possible. And boy was it colourful!

### When I get older: Imagining your bisexual future

I don't really feel that old yet, but especially as a bisexual you do think a lot about what your future might look like in terms of partnerships, love, and sex. Should you live in a monogamous relationship? How about having sex with others on the side? Or should you take it all the way to polyamory? Does the utopia of a bisexual relationship between four individuals have an actual chance to be realised? And how do children fit into the scheme of things?

So I went into this workshop and was tasked to become the artist of a painting. The most exciting part for me was in the end when our paintings were compared by a friend from the Netherlands, which was really very interesting.

Frank

### HSP: The Highly Sensitive Person

This was my fourth time at a Bi-Con in the UK and again it was a whole new Bi-Con experience! This time I lead a workshop on high sensitivity. Twelve participants attended.

First off, a quick self-test ('Am I an HSP?') afterwards elaboration on the questions 'If you don't know that you're highly sensitive, how does it influence your quality of life?' One identified, what questions and 'homework' is there, and how can one take advantage of one's high sensitivity? The last part of the workshop entailed the participants giving each other tips (most identified themselves as HPS in the self-test) on how to handle it in order for there to be fewer disadvantages. Peace and quiet in the workshop

room and the limitation that no personal anecdotes may be discussed ensured that the participants weren't overwhelmed and could retreat within themselves. It was an informative workshop and has brought several of the participants a good step forward.

*Maria Bosman, Netherlands, 48, Psychologist, bi, self-employed for the past 15 years in her training office 'Partners in Creation'. E-Mail: m.h.j.bosman@online.nl*



*The Docklands in London*

### Being bi in India

Following Robyn Ochs' reading of 'Getting Bi' a bisexual Indian woman got the chance to speak out at length: She spoke to us of her homeland. Her tale inspired its own article...

Frank  
translated by Aki

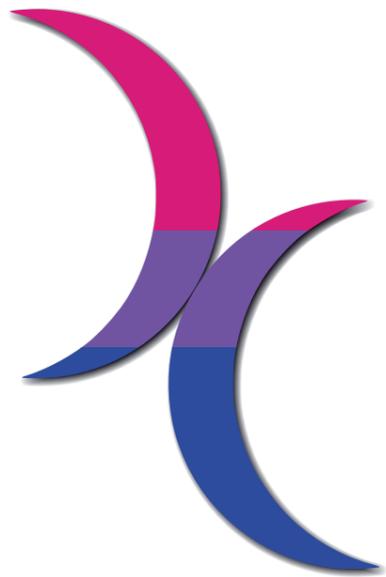
## Internationalising the Bi Symbol?



The german Bi-symbol by Vivian Wagner



The international Bi-symbol by Michael Page



New draft for the internationalised Bi-symbol with shadow

At a CSD a few years ago a gay friend of mine saw our bi post-cards with the rainbow collared crescents on black background and said 'That's so pretty! I might just turn bi just so I can wear that symbol!'

Indeed, there's something about this bi symbol... on one hand the pretty rainbow colours, on the other hand the ingenious idea with the crescents, which originated from a combination of the two gender symbols – perfect symbolism, being that we bisexuals are open to both sides...

This bi symbol designed by Vivian Wagner from Germany is completely unknown outside of Germany however. Here, the bi symbol is the bi flag with three hues of violet or magenta, lavender, and royal blue. It was designed by Michael Page in 1998 to give the bisexual community something to identify itself by.

Magenta stands for same-sex orientation, royal blue for different-sex orientation, and lavender for the spectrum between the two sexes.

I personally think that the German bi symbol should be internationalised.

And not only because purple has always been my favourite colour, even before I knew that I was bi.

No, it's mainly due to two things: Bisexuality, for me, isn't the same as homosexuality. I don't have anything against gays and lesbians and even call some of them my friends. But I just don't identify myself as gay. And when I wear the German bi symbol people just end up thinking I'm gay because as we all know the rainbow colours represent the homosexual community. Of course there are people that don't know the relevance of the rainbow colours or even think they stand for peace (the PACE movement uses the colourful spectrum in reverse order) or maybe a kindergarten. But when they do know it, they're guaranteed to only be aware of the homosexual connotations...

And so I still don't feel entirely comfortable because I don't feel properly represented...

Bi symbols to begin with, aren't really widely known, and then we go and use different symbols depending on which country we live in?

I think it would be great if we could just adjust in this case... although I don't want to adapt everything from the US, that's not really the point here. I just think it's cool that we have our own bi colours and hence I think we should use them... either way we'll still be part of the LGBTI community, and part of the rainbow. I also don't want to discard the crescents though, because let's face it, the idea is just way too awesome to be disregarded and it's already garnering a little bit of recognition internationally. Germany just needs to push the idea a little harder since it isn't

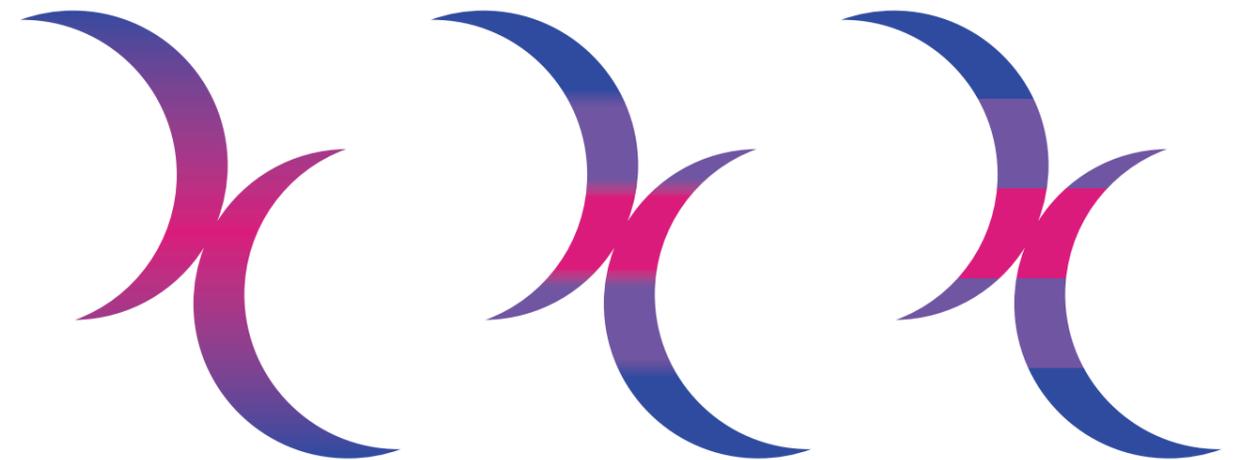
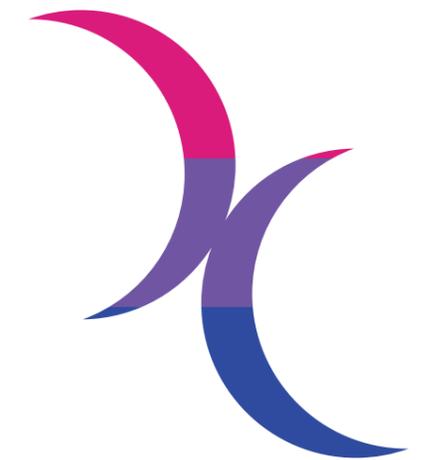
that widespread yet and could definitely use some more attention. What's Vivian, the German bi symbol designer's opinion on this? 'The rainbow colours of the crescents are intended that way. This is about solidarity with those that have HIV, and those that are afflicted by Aids. It also serves as a symbol of our belongingness to the lesbian-bi-gay community.' She also feels that with the purple colour scheme AND the symbols it becomes redundant. However she does validate my arguments and says she, too, can envision a reform in the German bi symbol ... even if she still prefers the rainbow colours, as it is her opinion that they aren't reserved only for homosexual people.

Now I'm curious about what you think about all this! Since BiNe e.V. is currently thinking about a new corporate identity (visual branding recognizable internally and externally) this might just be a place to start...

At the Concept Seminar 2011 the suggestion was hotly debated. We will be requesting feedback from the members soon.

Frank  
translated by Aki

New drafts for an internationalised Bi-symbol



### 72074 Tübingen

#### Bi Group

- every 2nd Tuesday 8pm at the Saints & Scholars – Irish Pub Wilhelmstraße 44, 72074 Tübingen
- Contact: [bi-treffen-tuebingen@web.de](mailto:bi-treffen-tuebingen@web.de)

### 24??? Kiel

#### Open Meet-Up/Stammtisch „Bi meets Bi & Friends“

- every 2nd Wednesday 8pm onwards in Kiel (Location differs, please enquire via email or telephone)
- Contact: Frank ([biauf@wolke7.net](mailto:biauf@wolke7.net)), Jutta (Tel.: 0170-4093946, [peterlustig654@hotmail.com](mailto:peterlustig654@hotmail.com))  
<http://kiel.bine.net/>

## Robyn Ochs - a fighter full of energy

„People love binaries – two boxes for every subject!“

People love to pack everything into two oppositional drawers - good and evil, right and left, male and female, heterosexual and homosexual. That's why „bisexual“ only confuses ...

And they say, if you are seen with a woman: „Look, she's become a lesbian!“

And if one is seen with a man: „Look, she's become heterosexual“ But if you say that you are together with both, it means either „Why are you telling me this?“ or „bitch!“

Robyn Ochs is certainly anything but a bitch, she does not even have multiple partners, but she lives with a woman in a monogamous partnership. And it did not matter, how many times she said that she is a „100%-bisexual“ and that she fights for the recognition of the bisexuals, she was still titled as a „lesbian“ by the newspapers.

Robyn was born 1958 in New York City into a family, where community involvement and protest rallies were common. She is a speaker and activist, not only for bisexual issues, who is electrifying and letting one feel why it is good to be bisexual and to fight for recognition. Robyn is a role model for me, and she makes it clear that there certainly is a reason to say out loud: „Yes, I'm bisexual!“

„Ask them what they heard!“

If you ask bisexuals, which prejudices they get confronted with, you hear:

- You're gay, but do not dare to come out yourself! /
- You are actually heterosexual, only a kind of tourist in the gay world! /
- Bisexuality does not exist! /
- Everyone is bisexual. /
- Bisexuals are real rare! /
- Bisexuals are promiscuous! /
- Bisexual people are not able to be monogamous! /
- Bisexuals will finally leave their partner! /
- To be bisexual, you have to have a girlfriend AND a boyfriend! /
- Bisexuals have lots of sex ... /

Concerning the last phrase, Robyn joked in the lecture hall at the Bi-Con 2010 in London: „Well, one prejudice is happening to be true!“ She immediately brought the right mood into the room when her „Keynote“ had begun. A „keynote“ is a kind of speech which is particularly important for a conference. First, she asked the almost 105 people, where they all came from: And there were bisexuals from Great Britain, the USA, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Israel, Australia, Denmark and many other countries.

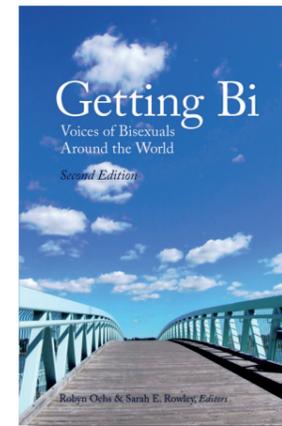
First I got to know Robyn as a woman who had a bad cold, getting off a train. Not in England, but at the Hamburg main station in the summer of 2009. I invited her to Hamburg for a reading - during the week of the Christopher

*Robyn Ochs in the middle*



## Bi-Con 2010: Studies at the BiReCon

Street Day in the „Hamburg Pride House“ at the lake Alster, where normally who find the „Christian Association of young



people“. Robyn Ochs was just on a European tour with her book „Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World“ in which one can read the stories of 184 bisexual aged 15-79 from 32 countries. Robyn has compiled them and read with enthusiasm from the book, but it was more than just reading, but she touched you, and she mobilized your own activism. It was a total transformation when the woman with headaches, colds and too little sleep went on the „stage“ in the small room: Suddenly she was in her element and showed what she was like as a speaker!

„You should challenge the binaries!“

I love to do this work.

And remember: You make a difference.

Remember the importance of your work - it is changing the world!“

*Frank  
translated by Frank*

[www.robynochs.com](http://www.robynochs.com)  
[www.biresource.net](http://www.biresource.net)

The BiReCon was full of wonder for us this year... a new spring for bisexual studies seems to be upon us. This is not an observation that I made exclusively at the BiReCon but in my online research as well, and also in the fact that even in Germany bisexuals seem to be a hot commodity with scientists these days.

Right now I will only be giving a brief overview of these bisexual studies – we might be bringing you some deeper insights in future bijou articles.

I found the observations of Ulrich Gooß<sup>1</sup> especially interesting and enriching. He differentiates between

- sexual behaviour,
- sexual identity and
- sexual orientation.

According to him bisexual behaviour can easily be determined if one is honest, the identity is established by each person individually (someone could for instance identify himself as heterosexual although he only practices sex and relationships with the same sex), it is only the orientation that is difficult to grasp, being that it's a subconscious state based on actual dreams and desires. There are a few models of bisexuality that exist in literature but they can generally be described as hostile and unaccepting towards the bisexual orientation:

- 'Transient Bisexuality' is only a temporary phase that will pass so that one ultimately goes back to living as a heterosexual.
- 'Transitional Bisexuality' refers to a transitional phase which serves its purpose once someone fully 'turns' homosexual.
- Resistant bisexuals on the other hand refuse to admit to their homosexuality.

However, that last type especially – according to Gooß – has been refuted by a number of other studies. He asks for bisexuality to be understood and studied as an independent type of sexuality rather than one derived from one of the monosexualities.

Lisa Diamond<sup>2</sup> refutes the transitional approach in her 10-year long term study and shows in 79 female participants a certain tendency towards monosexual behaviour. Meaning, for some reason, they were behaviourally inclined towards choosing one gender as their partner, although nothing changed in their orientation. She finally came to the conclusion that the preconception about bisexual women not being capable of being faithful was an unjustifiable claim.

<sup>1</sup> Konzepte der Bisexualität (Ulrich Gooß, 2003), Zentrum für Sexualforschung 2003; 16; 51-65, Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart

<sup>2</sup> Weibliche Bisexualität von der Jugend bis zum Erwachsensein: Ergebnisse von einer Zehn-Jahres-Langzeitstudie (Lisa Diamond, 2008)

A study by Ciani/Iemmola/Blecher<sup>3</sup> suggests that the male x-chromosome gene Xq28 – the only gender chromosome passed on by women – is responsible for homosexual orientation. Also a previous study (Hamer, 1993) referred to the gene and initially sparked jubilation among homosexuals, because they thought that this would prove that homosexuality was not an illness. Shortly after, the homophobes rejoiced because they saw this as confirmation that homosexuality was a 'hereditary illness'. This new study, however, states that the gene alone is not sufficient as a universal explanation. This and the study by Camperio-Ciani (2004) did show clearly, that mothers of homosexual or bisexual men bear more children on average than mothers of heterosexual men.

Emily V. Driscoll<sup>4</sup> points out that 1500 different animal species have been observed displaying homosexual behaviour. Eric Anderson writes that animals don't have a sexual identity, they just have sex. Therefore this animal behaviour isn't exclusively homosexual but rather bisexual. This was discovered as early as the 19th century but scientists had long feared that upon making these findings public they would either not be taken seriously or that they themselves would be accused of homosexuality.

Reasons for homosexual behaviour according to Driscoll are

<sup>3</sup> Genetic Factors Increase Fecundity in Female Maternal Relatives of Bisexual Men as in Homosexuals in Journal of Sexual Medicine Volume 6, Ausgabe 2, S. 449 - 455, (Ciani/Iemmola/Blecher, 15. Juli 2008)

<sup>4</sup> Bisexuelle Spezies: Unorthodoxer Sex im Tierreich (Emily V. Driscoll, 2008)

reduction of social stress, better protection of the offspring, maintaining fertility (when there are not females around), and fun. Bonobos (miniature chimpanzees) may be a peaceful breed but are practically sex maniacs having up to 50% same-sex intercourse, being highly promiscuous, rubbing each other's genitals in groups of four, and even oral sex has been observed. Oystercatchers often raise their young in groups of three, wherein sex between females also occurs.

Another cause for homosexual behaviour according to Driscoll, is stress, such as in captivity. Even the female koala – koalas are otherwise rather unsexual – relax from a stressful situation by having sex in groups of five. Eric Anderson writes that even humans minimise stress through homosexual behaviour – i.e. in the military or in prison.

And it's precisely this scientist, Eric Anderson, who inspired us at the BiReCon with his captivating lecture<sup>5</sup> about bisexual behaviour in high schools. He studied so called heterosexual football jocks, who, upon changing schools, suddenly became members of the cheerleading squad. The reason for that, according to Anderson, was that very few athletes would be absorbed into the new school's team, but wanting to stay in the same metier ended up on the cheerleading squad. Among the athletic women and few gay men that were on the squad to begin with, these men now

<sup>5</sup> The Decreasing Significance of Stigma in the Lives of Bisexual Men, Journal of Bisexuality (Eric Anderson, bis Redaktionsschluss noch nicht erschienen)

questioned their sexual identity: 40% ended up having intercourse with a partner of the same sex.

Anderson and his colleagues have established an unusual way of finding interviewees. After most candidates found through the internet only responded because they wanted to have sex with the scientists, the researchers went on the streets and called out that they were looking for bisexual men to take part in a scientific study. Out of 1000 this strategy invoked only one negative reaction. One lady even told her little daughter 'We don't know if you're bisexual yet but we'll find out eventually.' A lot of young men responded to the call.

John Sylla of the American Institute of Bisexuality introduced a few numbers at the Bi-Con. For instance 75% of all men that have sex exclusively (!) with men, identify themselves as heterosexual.

There were a lot of other presentations by scientists who conducted studies on bisexual people or on the subject of bisexuality, including ones by a Finnish and an Icelandic woman.

In Germany, meanwhile, studies on bisexuality are also being carried out and prepared: one study is being lead Prof. Dr. Martina Löw from Darmstadt. Interviews with bisexual men and women conducted between December 2010 and May 2011 were all about getting to know the life story of the bisexual individuals, so that not only the bisexual behaviour but the person as a whole will be examined. Another study in Kiel intends to include bisexual alongside ho-

mosexual men. Things are definitely happening.

Frank  
translated by Aki

Links:

American Institute of Bisexuality News: [www.bisexual.org/AIBnews](http://www.bisexual.org/AIBnews)

Eric Anderson's homepage: [www.ericandersonphd.com](http://www.ericandersonphd.com)

BiReCon-Videos on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/user/BiReCon](http://www.youtube.com/user/BiReCon)

Martina Löw's homepage: <http://raumsoz.ifs.tu-darmstadt.de/personen/loe-m.htm>

### 70199 Stuttgart

#### Bi Group

- every 3rd Monday 7:30pm onwards at the Ritterstüble in Stuttgart-Heslach Ritterstrasse 7

Contact: [stubigrufreenet.de](mailto:stubigrufreenet.de)  
[www.geocities.com/stubigrufreenet.de](http://www.geocities.com/stubigrufreenet.de)

### 46??? Oberhausen

#### Bi Group Ruhr

- Usually every 14 days at the Aids-hilfe Oberhausen

Contact through [bi-gruppe-ruhr@brls.de](mailto:bi-gruppe-ruhr@brls.de)

or  
Tel.: 0208-19446

## Bisexuality in India, Sri Lanka and the Hinduism

based on information from Apphia and Sahran

To understand India's attitude to sexuality, one must look at history: from 1813 to 1947 India was under the British as a colony. By the Western colonial rule values were brought into the country, and only that is why the open attitude (like in Hinduism and Buddhism, where the sexual act was celebrated religiously and it was a large public tolerance (see Erwin J. Haeberle)), was torpedoed and antisexual ideas were disseminated. Homophobia was not known before and only came with the British. We still find the „common law“ from the British colonial time application.



Ensign of Indien

To understand India's attitude to sexuality, one must look into the family tradition: "Everybody is everybody's business." That is, family is very important, and there are really no secrets - if one person said anything to another, it will be spread immediately. The latter can be learned from Apphia on Bi-Con. She gave a good look at her workshop, „Being Bi In India“.

Under the law everyone was punishable with up to ten years in prison if you get caught in homosexual sex. Section 377 was declared unconstitutional in 2009, but was also not applied before. Some gays and lesbians, however, were blackmailed, or there were arrests by the police. Bisexual visibility, there was none.

Currently, there is a lot of moving.

2009 prides took place in the cities of Mumbai (Bombay), New Delhi and Calcutta. In Bombay, 2,000 people took to the streets.

A lot of young people now make their coming-out as activists. In college, it's been very difficult to come out, since there is a lot of homophobic behavior: Two guys who hold hands – that is impossible. Two girls who hold hands are immediately seen as lesbians. Therefore youth groups and advice are well attended: 2009 there were 55 members, 2010 already more than 200.



Apphia

Nevertheless, there are extreme prejudices against bisexuals, making it very difficult for bisexual young people:

- Bisexuality of young girls is not taken seriously, they are identified as lesbian. /
- In the press there was an article that it was not necessary to come out as bisexual. /
- In an interview with a youth group it was said it would be okay to be gay or transsexual; bisexual, however, would be a taboo. /
- Many gay men do not like bisexual men because they view marriage as a kind of excuse. /

Nevertheless, queer kids are not thrown out at home when the parents know about it: There would be a lot of attention, if the children were thrown out, because everybody talks. And then the parents had to explain.

Therefore, they accept the „lesser evil“ to let stay their own children at home in spite of their sexual orientation.

Other interesting facts are:

- There is no kissing in public. /
- There are Facebook-outings like this: „I think I like boys and girls.“ /
- Men do not talk about her bisexuality, women say: „I am queer,“ which then means that they are bisexual. /
- Many men perform a marriage, but have a lover in the closet. /
- In the country everything looks different again, here there are more reservations about deviant sexual behavior. /
- In Hindu temples same-sex couples can marry. /
- Transsexual people were not allowed to work in the past,

but as lap dancer. /  
Apphia states: There is hope! In India there is a lot of changing!

After the workshop I met Sahran. He is from Sri Lanka, the Indian island in the southeast of the mainland, but now he lives in London and got involved in my interview.

He told me that he challenges the law in Sri Lanka for nine years with an organization and he wants to make his country a safer place for bisexual and homosexual men: It was once illegal to be that way.

Last year a parade was organized for the fifth time, so there is change.



Ensign of Sri Lanka

Unfortunately, bisexuals have done nothing in the past. His fear is that the longer bisexuals are silent, the more difficult it is to get rid of the stigma. Sahran talks about an incredibly high rate of bisexuality in Sri Lanka.

It has been no choice in society, whether one is gay or heterosexual. Therefore, men usually live a lie, by getting married and secretly pursue their same-sex desires. Sahran stressed again and again how many married men have sex with other men.

There is a group that supports bisexuals, but there is no one who fights for the rights of bisexuals. There is no fight against the current state of laws. Even in Europe, according to Sahran, bisexuals are not taken seriously, while homosexuals are accepted, at least in their identity.

Sahran reported that it was completely natural in Sri Lanka that



Shiva

almost anyone could have sex with anyone on the street. Police men had sex with other men; in school, there is already gay sex among young men, and the boss has sex with his employees – despite one’s opinion about it –, after work they

went into a bar, then go home, and there it happens. Nevertheless, these men do not identify themselves as bisexual or gay.

What about bisexuality in Hinduism and Buddhism, I asked the black man across from me. And he told me that sexuality is very fluid in these religions.

If you go to a Hindu temple, one sees male and female gods, even mixed-sex gods! An example is Lord Shiva: Lord Brahma gave him

## Bisexuality in Switzerland: Looking back at the bi-scene of the past 20 years

the opportunity to change his sex, so he could be pregnant. India was generally very progressive (think also of the sexual openness in the Kama Sutra), the uptight and antisexual opinion came only with the social etiquette of the British, who determined how men and women should behave. Even today, many laws stand in this tradition. The reason, why Sri Lanka is still more open than the rest of India, probably lies in the fact, that it is an island and therefore further away from the influence of others. In contrast, Thailand had never suffered from colonization and is therefore much more open.

Frank  
translated by Frank

I’ve been heading the Working Group Bisexuals of the homosexual working groups HAZ in Zurich since 2002. You can find more info at the HAZ website: [www.haz.ch/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=445](http://www.haz.ch/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=445) Shortcut: <http://is.gd/6tRJoK> Of course I’m bi myself and psychologist by trade. In December 1991 a friend ‘dragged’ me to a group of bi men in Zurich. This group had recently been rounded up by a bisexual man who wanted to share ideas with men of a similar orientation. After three more group meetings it became clear that the group needed professional leadership in order to produce sustainable discussions. After requesting for quotes from psychologists and receiving exorbitant demands, my friend talked me into taking charge of this task – at a more reasonable fee of course. This I did for nine years in which members came and went. On average, they stayed with the group for two to three years. Conversation topics were always very diverse, which is expected to be the case with bisexuals. Ages ranged from 28 to 65 although majority fell into the 40 to 55 bracket. From the very beginning we held an annual weekend getaway at a centre by the countryside. There we danced, meditated, massaged, hiked, and cooked together, and the nights, too, were graced by occasional encounters...

After the aforementioned nine years the group came to a bit of a standstill, it had turned into kind of an ‘old men’s club’, and it became difficult for new members to integrate themselves into the group. Because of this the group dissolved spring of 2001.

At the same time the 90s saw efforts to create a BiNe following the German example for all of Switzerland. I was part of this as well, and even got elected to be on the board, but left the group before long when I realised that one or two men were trying to monopolise and decide the activities of the group according to their own whims. From what I heard afterwards, a telephone hotline for bisexuals was set up, but quickly went back down for reasons unknown to me.

I turned to the HAZ in 2002, as it was my opinion that the issue of bisexuality was still very current. I convinced the people at the HAZ that this was an issue that belonged to them and so the WG Bisexual Men was formed – complementing the already existing Working Group Gay Fathers, majority of which in my opinion are bisexual as well. I recruited two or three more bisexual acquaintances and reanimated the ‘Discussion Group for Bisexuals’. Weekends were very popular for meetings and were met with much positive resonance

The attendees of the discussion group were very dynamic and eager to keep meeting up and sharing ideas, and thus

Ensign of Switzerland



decided to organise a scheduled monthly meeting which is now regularly being held since 2004. Very soon we realised that bisexuality involves both genders and decided that we wanted to introduce women into the mix. This wasn't very successful. The bisexual women that we approached about it made clear that they had their own community structures and did not respond favourably to being organised by men. At our monthly meets, which also explicitly invited women, we were happy to occasionally welcome a few women who then unfortunately didn't stay very long due to the absence of, well, women. We are still waiting for the women to step up and organise some of their own groups or activities...

I know of other gay organisations such as the HABS/Homosexual Working Groups Basle or HAB (Bern), where discussion groups and information evenings are held periodically, also including activities for gay fathers, but I can't say how well these are working out as there is almost no contact between these and our own organisation.

We don't really appear at the CSDs either. Only in the speeches are we finally being mentioned: 'Dear gays, lesbians, bi- and transsexuals!'

*Albert Vischherr, Head of the WG Bisexuals of the Homosexual Working Groups HAZ Zurich translated by Aki*

## The first bi-male meeting January 2011 in Goettingen

Since BiNe e.V. first came into existence and that would be over 19 years now, there's one question that kept being brought up – when is the first bi-male meeting going to happen??

*Men are people too!*

This question has now finally been answered – Michael decided to take charge of it and it turned out a great success!

*Men are incredibly smart!*

There were 17 of us men, who met at the forest lodge near Goettingen for the pilot project. After all, as opposed to us, the bi women have been having their own meetings for a long time running.

I used to dislike affairs that were segregated by gender, probably because I was always envious that there were so many bi women in one place, all possible partners compatible with a bi man such

*Men are natural*



as myself and I wasn't allowed in. But I've come to appreciate a certain male-only energy. And so the other members of my gender overcame their reservations as well and registered.

**Friday, 28.1.2011**

After dinner we started the evening's activities with two ice breakers (yes, not everyone likes them, but in the end they're still fun and set the

mood for the rest of the trip), 'international greetings' and 'mirroring'. After that we started to collate what we intended to do over the weekend – completely at ease and without any complicated structures. For the first evening most headed for the sauna, some others decided to converse over a glass of red wine.

**Saturday, 29.1.2011**

A few began the first full day with a morning meditation, while the rest joined in during the intensive exchange about everyone's own image of the male individual.

*Men are so easily hurt!*

But before that we discussed about the effect of the naked sword we had standing in the middle of the room – we never did get to have our sparring match though.

*Men have muscles!*

Then we took a closer look at each other's underarms and were surprised at how easily we were able to allocate each other's underarms blindfolded, relying only on our sense of touch.

*Men can do everything!*

In the afternoon we headed through the forest straying off the well treaded paths. Our numbers increased ... by one very gay man on a hunt for cellphone reception, and towards the end we climbed

a very large and mighty looking rock.

After drinking some coffee it was time for round two of the discussions on the subject of masculinity. In the evening I lead a massage workshop which was given a nice relaxing atmosphere by dimmed lights and relaxation music from Thomas. The kneading and stroking was done in groups of two to four.

*Men need affection!*

Others made use of the time by playing board games. Surprisingly no 'LoBBi' took place, and despite some touching, caressing, and an attentive environment the all male get together was as free of sex as mixed or all-female outings (the latter I only know due to

what was implied by the attendees).

*Men are pigs!*

This did not detract from the successful weekend however, as each man came out as incredibly enthusiastic.

**Sunday, 30.1.2011**

On the last day we took a group photo, two other men joined Michael and promised to help him organise the next bi-male meeting same time next year, we said our goodbyes, and the group slowly began to disperse.

*Men are cars!*

*Frank translated by Aki*

*Men are chocolate!*



**01099 Dresden**

**Bi Group „bi yourself“ by Gerede e.V.**

- every 1st Wednesday 6pm onwards at Café „Contact“, Prießnitzstr. 18, 01099 Dresden
- every 3rd Friday 7pm onwards at Café „Contact“, Prießnitzstr. 18, 01099 Dresden

Contact: Fanny Richter, Tel.: 0351-4702747

[www.gerede-dresden.de/content/view/42/](http://www.gerede-dresden.de/content/view/42/)

## Butzbach-Meeting 2010: Mosaic Tiles

### With the sun in the forest

This time my experience was shifted completely to the outside. During my first workshop I lead the small group to one of my favourite spots on a nearby mountain.

The spinning sun had us circling, following the half shade, from one fallen tree to the next. In the deep calm that this place granted us and that we had created for ourselves we were relaxed enough to speak about our lifestyles. About the source of our attitudes, about religion and beliefs, about strategies and techniques for dealing with ourselves, that's where our path led us.

### Sensual encounter in the forest

In the afternoon Helga led us to a very befitting small forest

behind the sports field. She invited us to take off our shoes and form pairs. We've all been barefoot in the forest before but walking on sticks and rocks? Here carefully over the barbed wire on the rising slope and then with bare feet on whatever surface! Not just grass and moss, pine needles, dry spruce branches, and all kinds of sharp edges that Mother Nature had scattered on the ground for us to step on. Slowly we were getting it. New wisdom gained: If I step very carefully, I can step on anything (broken glass and hot coals not included).

The human being has many senses. In pairs, one closes his eyes, the other leads. At a worthy sight (close, wide, macro) the sighted partner says 'Picture!' – the 'blind' partner opens his eyes, takes a mental picture, quickly closes them again and goes on to the next. Totally awesome, amazing, and supermegacool was the touching. The leading partner goes ahead and touches wood, moss, ground, shrubs, grass, and the one being lead follows and feels it.

After much learning of everything we've missed by not groping everything we see when we go to the forest, we reached these mossy trees whose branches intertwined at half-height which we then dutifully felt up as well. Well, the poet always thinks of only one thing...

Listening to the murmuring of the softest brook and the slightest breath of air to the profane four-cylinder-engine-explosion and the smelling and tasting of spruce tips completed our education. The grand finale came back at the meadow. Two groups, one lying down in the shape of a star, as naked as they were comfortable, the second massaging, or stroking rather, since the massage tools were delicate plant parts ranging from grass stalks to lilac umbels being the hardest. The warm air was just right, the sun was hiding, as few soft rain drops were just in place. It was beautiful. To me, the forest was now no longer what it used to be.

### Photography on demand

After this much forest, it only made sense to go back to the forest right that next afternoon. I had offered to photograph anyone according to his or her wishes. Aside from the camera I also brought along a notebook to be able to immediately judge the photos on the screen and make necessary fixes. Before anything else: 864 photographs of 6 models, including the poet himself, didn't leave much time to make corrections. Oh well, that just meant that I had to put in a little overtime that night to sort out the better shots.

### Barefoot in the forest



## Whitsun Meet Up 2010: Intensive insights from a Newbie

*Note: Most names have been changed!*

This was my first meet up ever. I had close to no idea what would await me at this BiNe meet up. I did have certain expectations since Kati had already told me a bit about the meet up and since I'd read the short report about it on the BiNe website. There, would I get to experience those thoughts that have been restlessly circling in my mind? I finally wanted to realise the fantasies that I've had in my head for so many years.

We write the year 2009. In this year one person had a decisive influence on my life – Kati. She brought me closer to the bisexual world by, among other things, giving me two issues of the bijou which I read with great interest. I was instantly fascinated. We talked a lot about this subject. She also told me that meet ups are held every now and then. The next one would be in October. Unfortunately we lost touch mid-year. But alas, in February 2010 I met her again. She told me that there'd be another meet up in May, on Whitsun. This was my chance. We chatted through a community so that I could find and fill out the registration form in time. A little luck and the NewBi(e) (what wonderful word play!) factor ultimately allowed me to take part in this meet up. But during the next three months of waiting doubts kept creeping up. Maybe I'd be out of place after all. It excites me when two men have sex or when I see two men kissing, no question about it. Also imagining myself having fun with a guy while a woman is watching... were those just porn fantasies? Would the others judge me? They might say 'You're all about sex... that has nothing to do with bisexuality as we live it.' What does it mean, being bi? It was these thoughts that bothered me. I was on holiday mid-April and remembered my mum's words. She said that after the holiday things would change for me. And they did. More so than expected!

The last week before the meet up went by quickly, thank God. Then Friday, May 21st 2010 came. Luckily I found a ride two days before. During the drive I chose not to badger the other three passengers. I decided to let it surprise me. If someone asked me what I was expecting I'd say 'The main conditions are always the same but the individual experiences one makes are always different for each person.' I can't remember the details on what I was thinking at the time when I saw the other participants at dinner but in retrospect I think that I stepped into a world that simply fascinated me. All these individuals, myself included, have one thing in common – they love both sides.

What can I say? The weather was nice, the models beautiful, the poses great, and the best part was that I had to give my right wrist a break every now and then from the continuous bombardment. None of us had any prior experience but now we are so much the wiser. We learned that all the model had to do was bring enough movement and perspectives to field and forest, in order to get a considerable amount of good shots among the hundreds taken. Automatic takes care of the rest. Weeeeeell, an artistic genius for cut, perspective, and composition, happens to be in my blood. So in the end it was really all natural.

*Hartmut  
translated by Aki*

### Discussion Group / Workshop Faith and Bisexuality

Actually the question on how Christian faith and being bi could be connected or IF it was even possible for the two to co-exist was the main question within this discussion group. Moreover, if one could still find a feeling of being taken care of in a Christian community. The result can't really be packed in a few short sentences because we quickly arrived at several basic issues, hypotheses, and possible theories.

I personally consider this discussion group to be an enrichment which opened up a lot of thoughts and perspectives and broadened my horizons.

*Katia  
translated by Aki*

After dinner some icebreakers were conducted. There was one in particular I found interesting. Post cards with different motifs were scattered on the ground and we were asked to choose the one which spoke to us the most. The point was that two to four people would approach the same card and instant bonding resulted. Smaller and bigger groups formed as a result and everyone shared with the others why he or she chose that particular motif.

After an introductory dance, the workshops were introduced. Among those were a role playing workshop, a sensual forest encounter, and even a painting workshop. Destiny was on my side as a healing



*Decorated room*

were put through a quick info session. Everyone introduced themselves and shared what got them to decide to take part in this experience. I was particularly impressed by a man who drastically changed during a mere 2-3 hours after the session. While he was still quite insecure and dominated by his masculine side during the info session, his feminine side, which he normally couldn't act upon due to his social environment, clearly came to light that evening and over the weekend. I was very happy for him.

I felt that he was a very kind person and that he liked doing things for others. Making others happy seemed to make him happy. And this is exactly what drives me, too. Unfortunately we're victims of society which – despite all tolerance – still considers it offensive when two men express their affection for one another or, dare I say, show it in public.

Some still sat outside on the long benches in front of the main hall late into the night. There was a lot of talk, laughter, drinks, and more laughter – a very laid back group. Once in a while I strolled towards the big fireplace that could be found above the dining hall, in which a cosy fire was crackling. If only I wasn't so restless I would have stayed with the group in front of the fireplace a while longer and just listened to them talk.

Instead, I went back outside and took a seat on the bench beside Markus. He offered to massage my back and I literally melted beneath his hands. That evening, during the massage, Kati complimented

ted me on having a nice back. Wow, I thought. I'd never received that kind of compliment before. After a while I got up to get me something to drink. When I got back I took the time to closely observe the people sitting at the table outside. At that moment, I felt incredibly happy. I'm not sure what it was but everyone began to slowly open up and so we enjoyed the rest of the evening.

### Saturday:

The day began with great news for me. My name had been drawn for the healing workshop. This healing was a very meaningful experience for me. I lay on a comfortable mattress in a room no more than four square metres big, and was worked on by two women and one man. I don't know what they did to me but after a short while tears started running down my cheeks. Unfortunately I didn't manage to fully let go. But even then I was completely exhausted. So many negative thoughts and energy was taken from me that the whole room was filled with it. At the same time I received a lot of positive energy in return. The healing was an intense experience but it was exactly what I needed. I also learnt a lot about myself, for instance that there is no end in sight in my soul's search for experience and knowledge. Or that in my previous lives I often died young and as a casualty of war. I sat outside on the stairs for a good while afterwards and was totally at my wit's end.

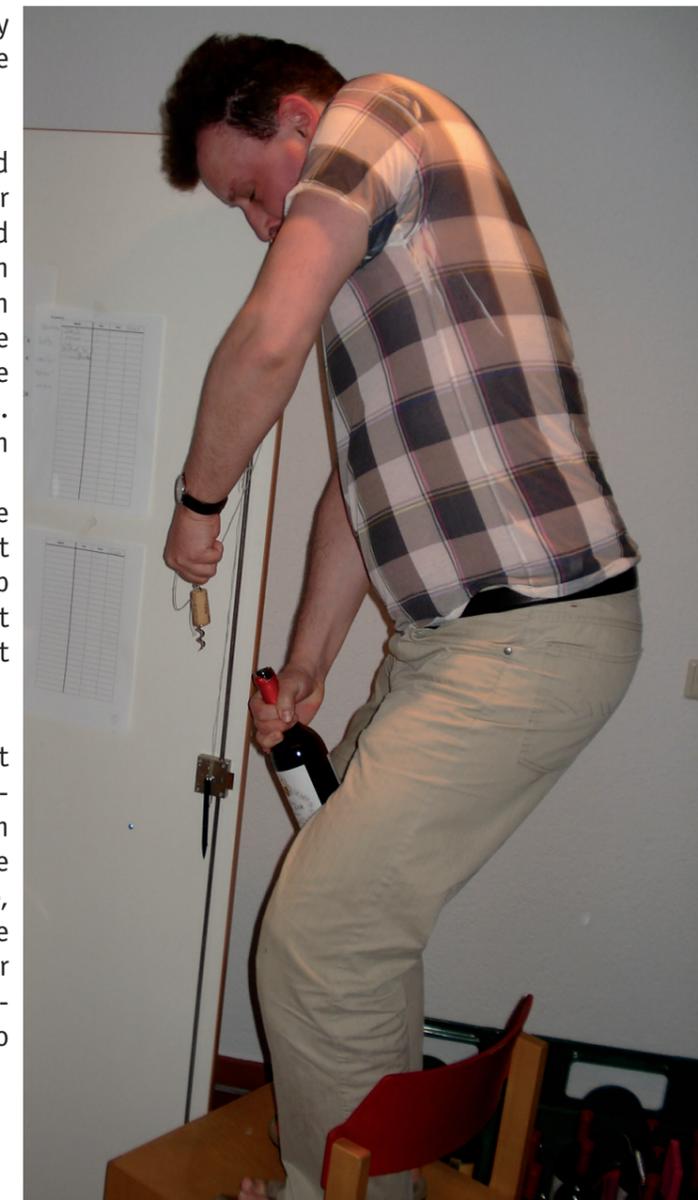
Later that day a very lovely and special lady named Marlene and I were tasked to gather firewood for Sunday's campfire. While we were collecting the wood I found a beautiful spot by the edge of the footpath which I chose for the photo shooting on Sunday. Down by the campfire site we layered the wood for the fire and set the rest aside. We stayed and talked for a while until Marlene left for her workshop at around 3pm. After dinner some began preparing the evening which was under the motto 'Garden of Desires'.

I kept getting asked what my outfit was going to be for that evening. Sad and a little upset I had to admit that I'd left it at home. After two hours I'd come up with an alternative – body paint! Kati offered to paint my upper body. She gave me a painted blue t-shirt decorated with gold stars and the bi moon.

When Kati was done painting my body I went straight for the hall. The lighting was reduced to a bare minimum to give off a feel-good atmosphere. Left from the entrance you could see an open pavilion where mattresses were laid out to lay down on, relax, cuddle, make out, or get heated up. As for the latter, people got the chance to go nuts at the 'LoBBi'. At the other end of the hall stood a DJ booth with a DJ that masterfully made us dance and sweat. A little further to

the right of the DJ booth was a long table with sweets and drinks for the dance crazy mob as refreshments. As my eyes wandered across the table to inspect the offered delicacies, they came upon a glass bowl with phallic fruits and vegetables. Upon closer inspection of the contents of this bowl I couldn't hide the smile on my face. Other than cucumbers, bananas, and zucchinis, actual dildos and vibrators were mixed in there too. My heartbeat quickened. All of the fruits and vegetables as well as various decorations made apparent why this evening's motto was 'The

*Bisexual wine opening*



Garden of Desires’.

Out of habit I danced by myself with my eyes closed so I could entirely give myself to the music. I should really stop doing that though because the outfits of the others were definitely worth looking at. One woman from the org team showed up in 50’s look with a short black leather jacket and leather pants of the same colour. As my eyes wandered to the door, my heart skipped a beat. Rebecca walked in. There’s something beautiful, attractive – there aren’t enough words to describe it – about her face. On her short black hair rested a crown of ivy and her slim body was wrapped in a large white t-shirt... I could have stared at her for hours. I went outside a few times to get some fresh air, and talked to people here and there.



*Comedy dwarf act*

When I went back to the dancing hall I took a seat on a chair around 15 metres away from the open pavilion but since my body was painted I couldn’t lean on anything. My back hurt like hell! From where I was seated I could see Rebecca having fun with some guy on the mattresses. They didn’t have sex though – that’s what the LoBBi was for. But they did heavily make out. Watching the two of them really turned me on. I felt a burning desire rising within me to join in. The mere thought of touching or kissing her or him took my pulse to 180. However, because of

the barriers in my head I wasn’t able to put my wish into action. Would it bother the two of them if I joined them? I would never want to impose or anything. Plus, all intimacy issues aside, I’d never done something like that. What should I do? My heart was racing as I watched the two of them. After a while I couldn’t take it any longer and went outside.

A girl whom I got along with pretty well came up to me and we talked. She wanted to know what expectations I had coming into this and I told her that I wanted to know if reality was going to be as wonderful as my imagination. Like I said, the thought

of having sex with a man really turns me on. I think the most important questions she asked me were ‘What are you going to tell your friends when they ask about how your weekend went? Are you going to tell them you were too afraid to live out what you came here to do? What experiences are you hoping to make?’ These really gave me something to think about.

We went back inside and danced. Okay, I guess you couldn’t really call it dancing. It was more like someone was holding me up. Suddenly something just went click. Without much thought, my trembling legs carried me to the pavilion where Rebecca was exchanging affections with two other guys. Just do it seemed to be the thought driving me at that point. Whatever was holding me, died right that moment. I lay down to the right of Rebecca putting her in the middle, and began to kiss her, first on her neck, then her shoulders and then her lips. An arousing shiver ran through me as I kissed her. Hesitantly and somewhat timid my hand explored her body, her arms, her legs, her tight stomach, everything about her felt good. Little by little, my hand wandered

from her body to Michel’s so that I could feel his strong forearm. I kept stroking him while he went back to kissing Rebecca. That really, really turned me on. Also, touching a man this way was strange and exciting. I can’t describe the feeling exactly. My free hand took on a life of its own and began to wander from his waist down to his thigh.

Again, Rebecca turned her beautiful face towards me and we kissed. I let go of Michel to caress her while our lips and tongues entwined. I was intoxicated. My heart beat like mad in my chest as she began touching my naked blue torso. Every touch from her and him made me dizzy. Meanwhile another man joined in and began to fondle me from the back, which aroused me. Sometimes I ask myself why evolution only gave us two hands and two arms. Otherwise I would have been able to attend to Rebecca and the guy lying behind me both at the same time. I turned around and looked up at him. I gave into my desire to kiss him. After a while Rebecca got up and left. The three of us stayed behind for a while, caressing each other. I enjoyed it to no end. I turned to the right and slid closer towards Michel so I could cuddle against him. While doing that I stroked his leg until he began to moan.

At some point nature called so I got up. I felt tiredness come over me and decided to head to bed. But then I remembered I was still covered in paint. Damn, I thought, got to get rid of that first. I have often gone to bed blue but this was another thing altogether.

7:30am – Dirk’s alarm clock tore me out of my sleep – damn it! Totally exhausted I dragged myself out of bed and headed for the washroom. I didn’t fully wake up until the coffee kicked in over breakfast.

After lunch Hartmut approached me so we could pick up another participant for the photo shooting. One of my long time dreams was finally going to come true – to have nude photographs taken of myself. We went to that spot in the forest that I’d found the day before while gathering wood. Then followed a quick discussion on how I envisioned the photos to look like. First, photos were taken of me shirtless. Since I had no experience on how I should move the photos perhaps didn’t come out too natural. So I just gave my best. I went this way and that way, gathered wood, jumped over a tree and tore my hand open on a thorn bush. No pain – no gain.

After that I got completely undressed. What I felt then will forever remain in my memory. My naked body was wrapped in a warm breeze. Standing there looking at the landscape, I just felt free. The weather was amazing. I have to admit, standing naked in front of a camera was something I was unaccustomed to, but it felt good. When the shoot was over, a real sense of happi-

ness came over me. My dream had finally been realised. Just a year ago I’d never thought that I’d someday stand in front of a camera... naked. It was such an amazing experience. We finished the photo session at around 2:30pm and went back because we all decided to meet for a group photo.

Later, Stephanie, Marlene and I sat outside on the stairs in front of the entrance to the main hall and talked about the previous evening. I’m not sure which of us got the idea going, all I know is that we decided to disappear into the LoBBi. Naturally Stephanie’s husband Uwe joined the party. As we entered the LoBBi, I let my gaze wander from left to right across the room. Left of the entrance was a comfortable looking couch, behind it, a bit separated from the rest of the room, I noticed a small S&M corner. My heart rate immediately increased. Slightly off to the right of the S&M area was a pavilion with three mattresses which was covered with a large cloth. A second one was right in front of us as the four of us entered. This room omitted a very pleasant atmosphere.

I convinced the others to experiment a little with the S&M toys. We began by trying out the various instruments. I wanted to make sure that the three of them felt comfortable with it. My attention was focused on Marlene as well as Stephanie. Now and then I turned to Marlene who lay behind me and also touched certain sensitive areas on my body. A few minutes later Stephanie and Uwe left to go to bed so it was just the two of us left. We kissed

and caressed each other. The LoBBi was the one place where I could finally let go. I was really glad to realise that nobody would be able to hear us. After a while we stopped and lay there together for a little while longer, cuddling and talking. Then it was time to shower and eat dinner.

Around six thirty Marlene suggested to stroll to a beautiful place on a path leading through the forest. Once we got there we sat on a tree trunk and enjoyed the view. Like I did when we gathered the firewood I enjoyed being alone with Marlene and talking with her. She had a very calming effect on me. I think we sat there for a pretty long time and I could have easily spent even more time with her at that place.



*Ruth Rosa in Butzbach*

Later we all sat by the fire and a beautiful moment presented itself to me as I took my seat beside Dirk and after some hesitation cuddled up to him, while watching the others. Some sang, some talked, some cuddled. I was starting to feel a little melancholy. I felt sad that this experience, this beautiful moment, and everything that I've experienced this weekend that had changed my life would be over tomorrow. Luckily this melancholy didn't last too long since I quickly found something to distract myself. Moving from one place to another like I'd been doing the past few days, I didn't stay in one place too long.

At the end of the 'evening' I only had one hour of sleep. At 7:30am Dirk's cell rang. I was totally used up. Shortly after breakfast we restored the rooms to their original condition before the closing session was held. Everyone told of their experiences. I was so shaken that I couldn't hold back my tears, not to mention that I was at a total loss for words. At the end, shortly before lunch, we danced the final dance which we had already danced at the very beginning during the introductions. I was already filled in on the 'turtle feedback' that was going to take place right before lunch. This is how it went down: Everyone got a large piece of paper stuck on their back, on which everyone could leave a positive message. Like 'You're a good kisser,' or 'You make me laugh'. I believe I primarily thanked the others rather than pointed out specific characteristics, because it's what felt right at the time.

I can only recommend to anyone who plans to attend to take an additional day or two off. My concentration on my first day back at work was practically nonexistent. My thoughts kept going back to the things I'd experienced. It's never happened that I was so impressed by something that I had to spend every free minute upon returning home writing down this experience.

Okay so some people might think that this meet up was all about sex with the same and/or opposite sex. Yes, there was sex, as the careful reader may have realised, but that wasn't the point of the meet up. It was about stepping into a wonderful new world. What I took away from this experience to a large extent were affection, gentleness, understanding, security, acceptance, and more, in utmost abundance. Everyone is welcome to this kind of meet up. Be it a het who just wants to understand how the bi world works, or someone like me who has had these tendencies for ye-

ars but hasn't had the chance to act on the things that have been constantly rotating in their mind. Here, nobody looks at you funny.

So to everyone out there, have the courage to realise yourself in every way. Come to this meet up and I guarantee you in one way or another it'll be worth it. I've already made up my mind to be there again for the next meet up and I look forward to meeting you there. No matter if male or female, here nobody bites... unless you ask for it.

*Andi  
translated by Aki*



*Andi  
27*

# Mottos at the Bi-Meetings from 1997 – 2011

The mottos at the open bi-meetings of the Bisexual Network are always something special – and so they make each meeting easy to remember. Here for you to revel and admire how creative our organising team can be:

<b>1997</b>	May	Butzbach	Roman Orgy
	October	Butzbach	Oktoberfest
<b>1998</b>	May	Butzbach	Fiesta Caribe
	October	Butzbach	Halloween
<b>1999</b>	May	Butzbach	Medieval Times
	October	Meschede	Afrikanische Nacht
<b>2000</b>	June	Butzbach	Octopussys Garden
	October	Bielefeld	Divas and Dandies
<b>2001</b>	May	Dortmund	Wild West
	November	Meschede	Red
<b>2002</b>	May	Butzbach	Terrible, ShriII, Beautiful
	October	Meschede	All Across the Galaxy
<b>2003</b>	June	Göttingen	Midsummer Night's Dream
	October	Butzbach	Night before the Revolution
<b>2004</b>	May	Butzbach	Black Magic
	October	Dortmund	Under the Spell of the Four Elements
<b>2005</b>	May	Butzbach	Orange
	October	Butzbach	Russia
<b>2006</b>	June	Meschede	Fairytales and Myths
	October	Göttingen	Green
<b>2007</b>	May	Butzbach	Hellas
	October	Göttingen	Opera Ball
<b>2008</b>	May	Butzbach	Big Screen
	October	Butzbach	Monster's Inc
<b>2009</b>	May	ZEGG	Love and Peace
	October	Butzbach	1001 Oriental Night
<b>2010</b>	May	Butzbach	Garden of Lust
	October	Meschede	Stone Age
<b>2011</b>	June	ZEGG	Velvet and Satin
	October	Butzbach	(not yet decided)

Frank  
translated by Aki

We grieve and say goodbye to our dearly beloved member

## Ulla Volk

In the beginning Ulla belonged to the 'pillars' of the bi-movement in Cologne and was an engaged founding member of the association 'Uferlos' (Shoreless). She was also actively helping the bi-women organisation team at their meetings. And even for us, the Bisexual Network, she was always a welcome ally. Her heart and soul belonged to the association and its members.

I, David, have spent many wonderful hours with her at meetings, with a nice glass of red wine, music by Rosenstolz, and great conversation. So I was all the more sad when I read Petra's mail telling about Ulla's suicide and asked myself if I couldn't have done something to stop her. Ultimately it was her own decision that I have no choice but to accept, but cannot comprehend.

In her I lost someone who accepted me without question and accompanied me in the many years during my work as a member and on the board of BiNe e.V.

Here I would like to add Petra's expression of sympathy:

'February 2009 – Ulla Volk: A wonderful woman has gone!

Dear Ulla,

Jacques Brel was supposed to be playing at your funeral service,  
Which we didn't attend,

As we only found out about your death later on...

Which song did you want to hear?

I'm thinking of <Le Moribond>,

He, who wants to die and dies, although it's becoming spring and the flowers are beginning to bloom.

It is spring now, too,

Now, too, the flowers are blooming,

Also in the youngest...

<Ne nous quitte pas>, we would have said at the slightest hunch,

<ne nous quitte pas>,

It has often been experienced,

That a volcano,

Whose fire melted away,

Began to flare up anew

and the earth grows green

und a new life begins

from burnt rubble

as the most beautiful of Mays.

But you always went your own way, active and determined,

You've given us so much strength along the way.

And once it was running smoothly you said, 'Now it's time for me to do something new!'

You were my anchor once, too. Thank you!

In our sorrow and powerlessness you're giving us a chance to do it ourselves.

I wish you your <Stairway To Heaven> (you thought of this song, too)

And that you've arrived there now,

Where you wanted to go, to come to rest at last!"

On behalf of the board of BiNe e. V.  
David Fehlow, translated by Aki

## Shoreless – the Cologne Bi-Stammtisch\*

Uferlos-Banner



As replacement for the evening parties we used to hold on every third Saturday of the month, the Cologne bi-group decided to organise a Stammtisch. One of our goals was to give bisexual individuals a chance to get together on a smaller scale, independent to the open bi meetings, and secondly to exchange ideas about anything and everything in a sociable setting. The Stammtisch has now been existing for more than seven years and has been through more than a few ups and downs.

The Stammtisch regulars aren't always identical with those that attend the open meets. There are those that can't make it on Mondays and are thus looking for an alternative on the weekends. Or those that are looking for a more informal and laid back passage into the 'bi-theme' and want to see who 'they' might be.

After initially meeting at Café

Bauturm, we realised after careful inspection of the café's pricing and service, that we needed a new location. We tried several alternatives and found ourselves spending at least a few meetings at the neighbouring La Pera, but ultimately returned to Bauturm due to its central location and lack of competitive alternatives.

The resonance to the Stammtisch differed from time to time. There were times where we chatted together in groups of 20, but there were also times where close to nobody showed up. It became clear to us that it was not going to work without having some responsible people appointed and identified as official points of contact or go-to persons. This initiative bore fruits and we were gradually able to welcome more and more attendees. We were also able to revive the Stammtisch by holding organisational meetings right before, which then smoothly blended into the social part. Once there are a few people present, others soon follow.

But no matter what difficulties we may face, one thing is for sure: it's always nice to

meet like-minded people on a fixed date, to exchange ideas, and (depending on the situation) to go partying afterwards. The many wonderful encounters that I've had the pleasure of experiencing, thanks to the Stammtisch, make up for the sacrifices that had to be made in order to keep it alive. The last meeting drove that point home once more, as we sat together



DJ  
Dr. Strange

with twelve people, including three newbies, having an evening full of fun and interesting conversations.

And so it goes on. Because of us, because of the cause, and because we're the only ones in our region offering something of this kind.

Peter  
translated by Aki

\**Stammtisch* (German: 'table for regulars') is a German term for a scheduled informal meeting group at an especially reserved table at a pub, restaurant or other establishment.

### 50825 Cologne

#### Open Bi Meet-Up

- Every 1st Monday 7:30pm-9:30pm at the Gruppenraum, Bürgerzentrum Ehrenfeld (BüZe), Venloer Str. 429, 50825 Cologne

#### Bi-Stammtisch

- Every 3rd Saturday 8pm onwards at Café Bauturm, Aachener Str.24, 50674 Cologne (near Rudolfplatz)

Contact:

[info@uferlos-online.de](mailto:info@uferlos-online.de), Susann (Tel.: 0221-2704453), Armin (Tel.: 0221-613730), Peter (Tel.: 0221-841804)

[www.uferlos-online.de](http://www.uferlos-online.de)

## From Catholic Ballet Girl to Open Poly Woman

Tolerance for bisexuals?

I myself am bi and have no problem with it. Also, I belong to the species referred to as 'femme' – so even more potential for attacks?!?

I come from a very catholic background, a strictly catholic family in a strictly catholic town, and had my first orgasm when by chance I got my hands on a book which depicted ballerinas showering together. I was eleven then, totally distraught, and unable to fathom what that really meant. In school I had a good friend with very large breasts who didn't have a problem showing off her cleavage. In retrospect I realise that I was attracted to this cleavage and that the same area on my geography teacher piqued my interest, too. At the time I was totally unaware that women who were lesbian or bi even existed. Since I didn't receive

any pocket money from my parents I couldn't buy teen magazines like 'Bravo' and this wasn't exactly a common topic of conversation among us girls either.

As, when I was 19, an 18 year old female colleague from work (who happened to be married) invited me over to her place and then suggested for me to join her in the bathtub, I was completely perplexed and became aware that there was more to it than just wanting to take an innocent bath. I was afraid her husband might come home – what would he say if he saw us naked in the bathtub together? But it never got that far. I still didn't know what was wrong with me then and pretty much fled the house. Thinking back on it now, I do sometimes wonder if I should get back in touch with her...

So I chose the path that was expected of me. I got married and even had a child. After the marriage failed I told a colleague of mine (from the '68 generation), 'I'm sick of men,' and he asked me, 'What about women?' That was in August 2002 and the beginning of my coming out. Today I'm glad to know that I'm able to love men and women equally.

My current partner considers himself a 'soft bi-man', and since I already had a girlfriend when I met him, it's possible for me to have both. My girlfriend has a life partner who accepts her bisexuality as well. It's really more of a scheduling issue.

There are national pure bi-women meets where bi-women can surround themselves with purely female energy. Lesbians, male-to-female transgenders, and heterosexual women are naturally welcome to join as well.

Important to me are also the mixed bi meetings with men and women. Those are national as well and we always have guests from Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, Norway, and other countries.

### 40??? Düsseldorf

#### Bi Meet-Up

- every 3rd Friday 8pm, different locations in Düsseldorf

Contact: Carmen

([bi-duesseldorf@web.de](mailto:bi-duesseldorf@web.de)), Jutta, Ina

### 30880 Laatzen

#### Bi Group

- every 2nd Wednesday 7:30pm at the Contactzentrum Kiefernweg 2, 30880 Laatzen

Contact: Volker von Thenen (Tel.: 0511-4503571),

[bigruppelaatzen@aol.com](mailto:bigruppelaatzen@aol.com)

[www.bisexuellengruppe-laatzen.de](http://www.bisexuellengruppe-laatzen.de)

[www.f27.parsimony.net/forum66118/](http://www.f27.parsimony.net/forum66118/)

Nobody has to justify himself here, and the feeling is light and lively.

I've never had any problem with lesbian women with regards to my bisexuality and haven't heard any negative talk from them. But maybe that's because that kind of talk happens behind my back. Who knows? I choose to stick to the saying 'What I don't know won't hurt me,' and am tolerant towards any other sexual lifestyle just so long as it doesn't go against the will of someone directly involved.

This year at the lesbian-gay film festival in my city there were some movies with bi characters that were presented. The film 'The Four-Faced Liar' was sold out and has a lot of lesbian women in the audience.

At the CSD, too, I got talking with some lesbian women at the bi-stand, who honestly said that they would like to try having sex with a man at least once.

As long as people live honestly and openly and nothing is done behind another person's back, it's totally fine by me.

With the growing amount of right-wing extremists, the LGBTI community should in my opinion stick together and not fight each other.

In this sense: Live however makes you happy and hold the flag of tolerance up high!

*translated by Aki*

## The Queer Femme Presenting the (in)visible Phenomenon

'Femme'. Many know this term from the French. And its German translation of 'Frau' (or English translation of 'woman') as well. It gained particular popularity through the notorious reputation of the femme fatale. And that's exactly what the queer femme is after: to make herself known and to gain people's awareness.

First, a brief digression into terminology:

Despite having the same spelling as the French 'femme', the queer femme is phonetically pronounced as 'fem'. Responsible for this deviation in pronunciation is the lesbian author and activist (co-founder of the Lesbian Herstory Archives in New York City among others) Joan Nestle, who first came in contact with the term in the lesbian bars of 1950's New York. Since the term presented itself before her mind's eye as 'fem' instead of 'femme' and she felt that the French pronunciation had something pretentious about it, which didn't correspond with her working class background, she decided on spelling it as 'fem'. This was supposed to stress that anyone can be a femme, no matter where she's from, what she does, and what she strives for.

In the long term the combination of conventional spelling and unconventional pronunciation prevailed. This way the neofeminist identity of the queer femme is best expressed. On one hand she sees herself as a woman just like any other woman does, on the other hand she empowers herself of her womanhood and femininity in a confident, determined way. Femmes represent female strength, confidence, independence, and pride. They are the detectives of the unwavering ever-progressive search for their gender- and sexual identity, to find their deserved place and acknowledgement among bi-gendered heteronormativity and queer, so far transmasculine dominated systems. Femmes are the embodiment of queerness and confident femininity in a person.

Now a glimpse at the history:

In the 1920s the image of the German lesbian scene was dominated by 'Bubis' and 'Mädis', meaning pairings of masculine and feminine homosexual women. In the 1950s this was also still the case, although the Bubis were now known as KVs (Kesse Väter). In the late 1980s this term was replaced with 'butch', a term originating from the US. During this entire time, across a time span of over 60 years, femmes were referred to as 'Mädi', 'Mädel' or 'Dame'. It was only in the 80s that the term 'femme' was implemented. And with that, the often quoted 'butch-femme dynamic' finally took hold in Germany as well. In the context of this Bubi-Mädi and later butch-femme relationships, the female part always played a more passive, weak role characterised by dependence.

During the days of fascism in the 30s and 40s the relations bet-

ween homosexuals, including lesbian circles, were violently smashed to the ground. The feminism of the subsequent three centuries looked down on femininity. So femmes had close to no opportunity to carry out further public identity development.

Another ten years later, from the 1990s onwards, a new, en-

build relationships with butches – without having to fear being affronted by feminist battle cries due to their feminine appearance. Femmes, who desired femmes however, were still not very welcome.

The year 2000 marks the time when femmes in Germany began to actively conquer space for themselves and to fight for an identity and presence separate and independent from heterosexual and queer masculinity. Back then Sabine Fuchs, author of the book 'Femme! radikal – queer – feminin' published in 2009, put together the first German femme meeting in Bremen. The story of the confident, independent femme, no matter who she desires, is still a very young one. A story, in the course of which, official avenues for getting to know and flirt with one another came into being.

On May 30th, 2006, The L-Word, a series that was intended to make a lasting change in the lesbian and femme scenes, was broadcasted on television for the first time. The series deals with the lives and loves of lesbian and bisexual women – feminine women. Seeing with one's own eyes, that aside from oneself other feminine women who are interested in feminine women exist and that relationships with them seem plausible, brought about great relief.

At this point an important differentiation needs to be done: the differentiation between femmes and feminine lesbians/bisexual women. Both differ in the essential point of queerness. For femmes it's part of their identity, for feminine lesbians/bisexual women it isn't. In addition, not all femmes identifies herself as a woman or as a lesbian – when for instance, she desires transmasculines instead of women. A femme is not necessarily a lesbian per se.

Even though the protagonists in The L-Word are more or less portrayed as feminine lesbians/bisexuals rather than femmes, the series did have a positive effect: the encouragement to fully savour and live your confidently acquired femininity.

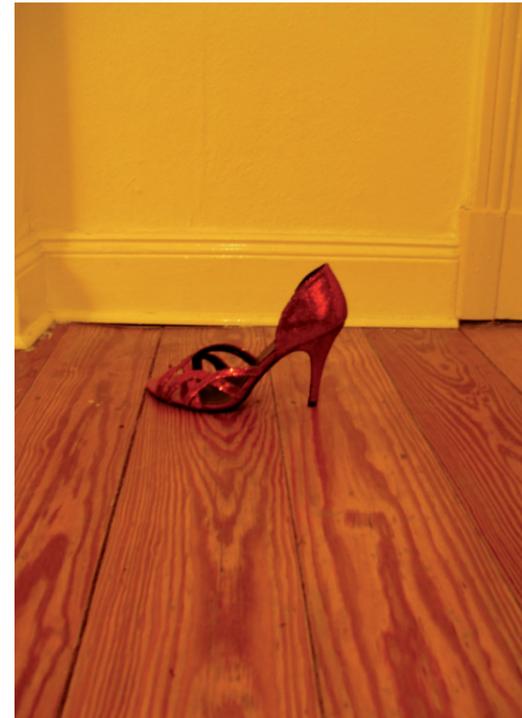
And this is where femmes meet femmes:

### Femme Table Hamburg

The femme table in Hamburg has been in existence since 2006. The femme table is an open meeting place for lesbian, bisexual, and queer (so even transsexual or transsexual desiring) femmes. The bi-femmes in the group are generally attracted to femmes. A lot of them have had relationships with men in the past and are now fully succumbing to their love for women. Reservations about bi-femmes practically don't exist in the group. All bisexual femmes who are looking to meet like-minded people are welcome. Trans-femmes, too, are heartily invited. More information about the group and the meetings, as well as info on sending in questions through e-mail can be found at: [www.femmetisch.de](http://www.femmetisch.de).

### Femme Mafia Berlin

This wonderful, artistically engaged group has existed in Berlin



*High heel of the femme table*

joyable, lesbian scene that saw the fun in sex, began to develop. A lesbian scene in which femmes could once again identify themselves as such and

### 80469 Munich

#### Bi-Group

- every 3rd Tuesday 7:30pm at Café Glück, Palmstr. 4, 80469 Munich

Contact:

[info@bi-muc.de](mailto:info@bi-muc.de)

<http://bi-muc.de/>

since the end of 2009. All femme/feminine identified queers of all genders are welcome. More information at: [berlinfemmefia.blogspot.com](http://berlinfemmefia.blogspot.com).

The subject 'femme' is a new and very exciting one which at the same time brings up a lot of questions. For answers and recommendations for further reading, feel free to write to webmistress@femmetisch.de. We look forward to a lively exchange!

*Herdis  
translated by Aki*

## 100 Years Women's Day – Workshops in Hamburg

I work for the city of Hamburg and we have a women's representative who pointed out that we can apply for educational leaves if we register through the union. My boss thought that he had no shares in this and said I needed to take my request directly to the HR office.

From the wide range of offered workshops at the town hall and nearby chamber of commerce I'd already decided on two:

### 1. Hamburg women's library/ women learn together e.V.: 'A sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses!'

This poem and song was created 100 years ago and still stresses today what the worldwide women's movement is fighting for. The DENKTRÄUME-TEAM reads from selected works of international women's literature. [www.denktraeume.de](http://www.denktraeume.de) / [www.hamburger-frauenbibliothek.de](http://www.hamburger-frauenbibliothek.de) The readers made some wonderful choices and I got a glimpse of the historical development and historical events from 1911 throughout the centuries up until the current situation.

What particularly impressed me was that women's literature in the previous century was only published and acknowledges if the women wrote under a male pseudonym. I learned about the woman's peace treaty at The Hague and about the introduction of suffrage to women.

### 2. 'Sexwork – a world of its own' by Dr. Elisabeth von Dücker

An author reading from the book of the same title (original German title: Sexarbeit – eine Welt für sich). It offers a glimpse into the world of prostitution with biographical examples from different cities. Women, men, transsexuals, and customers were interviewed and presented their views on the inside dealings of the sex industry. A short presentation informed about gainful employment between strong demand for paid sex and social stigmatisation. Elisabeth von Dücker had already organised a corresponding exhibition at the Museum of Work in Hamburg in 2005 and 2006 which received international recognition. A book

about the exhibit and another containing the interviews are available at 24,80 Euros each. Unfortunately I had to rush to another event in order to meet the criteria for the educational leave, otherwise I would have gotten the book for 12,80 Euros as a 100th international women's day promotion.

Both workshops were moved to other facilities but were still easy to find. Packed lunches were distributed by the DGB as well.

1pm to 3pm a panel discussion was held at the assembly hall: 'Emancipation does Justice'.

Present were three interesting professors, two works council leaders (Karstadt and IG Metall) and one of the editors of the magazine missy. Several women from different parties of the senate were present as well. There were discussions about equal pay and everyone agreed on a quota for women. 'Why is there currently no movement visible with the women?' was one question.

The conclusion I took home from this was that in the future it's no longer about a women's mo-

vement but that issues need to be socio-politically addressed. That men and fathers need to be more naturally involved in child care – as possibility for men and to lighten the woman's load so that women can work fewer hours and earn sufficient income, can be more politically engaged, have time for culture and arts and can create some space for themselves.

I had a wonderful seat in the press box and a great view over the whole scenario.

From 3pm to 4:30pm the workshop participants were gathered together and the evaluation of the workshops were conducted with questions about what affected us the most, what was the most positive, which was the most outstanding issue and what we want to actively do in the future. In groups of four women each answered the questions according to her own experience. This was briefly summarised and written on index cards and then attached to the body. Later we formed a circle and it was interesting to see how all the women experienced things differently.

Unfortunately I didn't make it to the senate reception and the women's fest at the chamber of commerce that evening. My time was just enough to allow me to look at the information desks of the women's network area at the chamber of commerce and to gather some information on migrant women, rural women's work, the women's cemetery in Hamburg, Terre de femmes and many more...

A quick side note: I registered for educational leave but the topic of the union 'Workshop for women of the union: Women get to decide, too' didn't pique

my interest as much as the above mentioned.

I'm happy to have experienced this day. When else do women get to take over city hall? There was a lot of media presence and some men were tolerated, too. Oh well, maybe times will change and someday we'll have international days for men?!?

*Marlies from Hamburg  
translated by Aki*

### 20357 Hamburg Mixed Stammtisch „Bi & Friends Hamburg“

- every 1st Saturday 7pm at the „Variable“, Karolinenstr. 23, 20357 Hamburg, near subway station Messehallen
  - every 3rd Thursday 7pm at varying locations (see website), Hamburg
- Contact: Frank [www.bigaystammtisch.de](http://www.bigaystammtisch.de)

Hello, dear readers! My name is Irina und I am 25 years old. I like dogs, fruit wine, and slice of life novels. I don't like wasps, beer, and crime novels. I like men and women; I don't like sex...

## I am bi-aseexual.

What does that even mean?

Due to all of the prejudice that asexual have to face, it couldn't hurt to start with mentioning all the things asexuality is NOT. Being asexual does not mean that one fears intimacy, has made bad sexual experiences, is incapable to feel love or is so ugly that they couldn't find a partner even if they wanted to. Nor does it mean that one has decided not to have sex – asexuality should not be mistaken for abstinence. An asexual person simply doesn't feel the need to interact with another person sexually and doesn't feel sexually attracted to other people. Sexual attraction is not the same with libido. Asexual can feel sexual aroused, some masturbate und feel pleasure while doing so; there just isn't the imminent desire to share this feeling with another person. To some asexual the feeling of sexual arousal is completely foreign. Asexuals are – just like people in general – very different in terms of their wants, needs, and ideas. Some who are in relationships

have sex out of love for their partner, for some this would be unbearable. Some like touching and kissing, some can't stand any sort of physical contact. Some seek a life with a steady partner at their side and maybe even feel the desire to have children, some prefer to live alone. Even in terms of sexual and emotional orientation asexual differ from one another. They might see themselves as a man or woman, are transsexual or don't feel like they belong to any gender; they don't fall in love with other people (this is also commonly known as aromantic), are only interested in people of the same sex, the opposite sex – or both sexes. Members of this latter group call themselves bi-asexual, biromantic, biphil, etc. I classify myself under this group and this is what I will now discuss in further detail.

Since there are currently hardly any studies about asexuality and it is not even possible to exactly say how many asexual exist (it is currently assumed that around

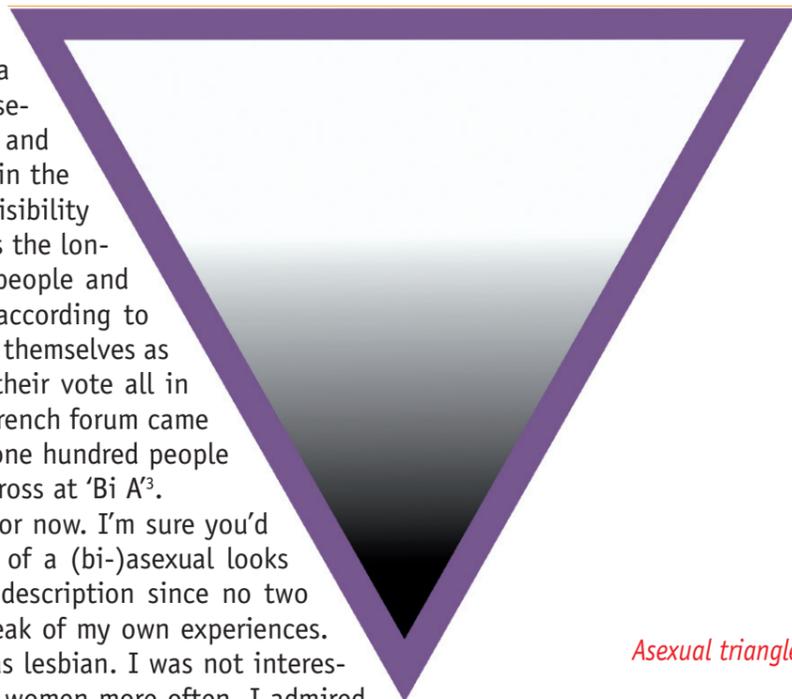
1% of the world's population is asexual)<sup>1</sup>, there is no reliable data on the question of how many asexual fall in love with both men and women. There was a survey held in the English forum of AVEN (Asexual Visibility and Education Network), which is the longest running forum for asexual people and also claims the most members, according to which 23.7% of the users defined themselves as bi-asexual. 1531 people placed their vote all in all<sup>2</sup>. The results of a survey in a French forum came out similarly. Out of the almost one hundred people who took part, 22% made their cross at 'Bi A'<sup>3</sup>.

That's enough facts and figures for now. I'm sure you'd much rather know what the life of a (bi-)asexual looks like. I can't give you a general description since no two lives are the same, but I can speak of my own experiences. Until I was 20 I defined myself as lesbian. I was not interested in men, but fell in love with women more often. I admired those who were unreachable for me for different reasons, usually from afar and dreamt up many scenarios: intimate conversations, physical tenderness, activities we might do together – but never sex. This topic was a long way off for me. I figured that my sexual interests would activate themselves once I had a partner. To my great surprise I fell in love with a boy for the first time when I was 20. We had a very close friendship, often cuddled in his bed and I felt totally comfortable. I would gladly have taken the place as his steady partner but I couldn't imagine having sex with him, didn't even want to kiss him. At that point I be-

<sup>1</sup> According to a study by Anthony F. Bogaert in 2004, in which 18.000 people were questioned. Quoted from Sastre, Peggy: No sex. Avoir envie de ne pas faire l'amour, Paris 2010, S. 96ff.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.asexuality.org/en/index.php?/topic/873-faq-orientation/>  
Stand: 2.10.2010

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.asexuality.org/fr/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=3466>  
Stand: 2.10.2010



*Asexual triangle*

gan to deal with the issue of asexuality, found my way to the German forum and realised that a lot that other members had written rang true for me, too. Out of curiosity and longing for some closeness I had a sexual experience at the age of 24 with another man. Kissing him felt uncomfortable and touching of the intimate area was more or less irritating. I felt disgusted by his genitals and took me a lot of time to overcome myself and touch it. I did like to sleep in one bed with him and will always think back on it with a smile, as well as the walks we took together and pub nights. Throughout the year I've had a pretty sad experience with another man whom I was very in love with and whom I really wished to have a committed relationship with, but he didn't show any understanding towards my orientation. My gentle touch and loving glances didn't seem to weight heavy enough on his scale.

When I picture my future life I can imagine a relationship with a man as well as a woman. I haven't made any physical experiences with women but I can imagine that I might develop more sexual desires for a female body than I previously had for men. I don't want children since the love for a partner as well as my many interests, and

my family and friends fill me out pretty well. I often wonder how far I would go sexually out of love for someone else, without feeling too uncomfortable. I'd have to put it to the test with a very patient person who accepts my orientation, won't try to change me, and won't force me into anything. I don't believe that an asexual is doomed to spend his life alone, especially since there have already been a good number of couples who have found each other through the internet forums. These forums (I'm a member of both the German and French ones) play a very important role in my life as that's where I share and exchange ideas and experiences with other asexual. My orientation is part of my identity.

I think the biggest problem for asexual is the fact that the term is still widely unknown. Because of this, one has to constantly explain and justify oneself and is often met by doubt and little understanding. But at least we're lucky enough to have the words to describe those feelings. Most asexual don't even know that they're not alone and are 'allowed' to be the way they are. I hope from the bottom of my heart that the word 'asexuality' will start meaning something to people so that life might become a little easier for those of us who just happen to not be interested in having sex. Still got questions or want to exchange with other asexual? Then [www.asexuality.org](http://www.asexuality.org) is your first address. There's a highly recommended YouTube channel called 'Hot Pieces of Ace' that has been around for a few months now. The videos talk about different aspects of the asexual life.

I can be found at the German AVEN-forum under the nickname Fiametta and can also be reached through Bijou.

*Irina*

*translated by Aki*

More here: [www.berlin.asex-web.de](http://www.berlin.asex-web.de)

*Asexual ensign*



# Are Bisexuals the Glue that Holds Poly Together?

*And some numbers for how many polys there are.*

A few days ago on BiNet USA ([www.binetusa.org](http://www.binetusa.org)) („America’s umbrella organization and voice for bisexual, pansexual, fluid, and all other of us ‚somewhere in between‘ „), a columnist posed the question in the title above.

...At this point in the conversation, someone made the comment that while bisexuals aren’t necessary to hold poly relationships together, they certainly do help. That got me to thinking.

In most poly situations I know of, the folk ARE bisexual... but that may be because I am bi and therefore have a natural affinity for bi community. Perhaps the majority of poly folk aren’t bisexual, I don’t know. That’s why I am posing this question.

Are Bisexuals the connection that makes triads, and quads, so common?... If you remove the bisexuals from the equation... would the numbers of poly community be drastically reduced or just unnoticeably reduced?

Read the whole article (April 16, 2009) on [binetusa.org](http://binetusa.org)<sup>1</sup>. A discussion<sup>2</sup> about it has also sprung up on the LiveJournal BiPolyPaganGeek<sup>3</sup> community.

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There’s no question: bisexual

1 <http://binetusa.blogspot.com/2009/04/op-ed-are-bisexuals-glue-that-holds.html>

2 <http://community.livejournal.com/bipolypagangeek/932156.html>

3 <http://community.livejournal.com/bipolypagangeek>

people are way, way more abundant in the poly world than elsewhere. Some statistics:

In Loving More magazine’s survey of 1,010 polys taken in 2000, 667 stated their sexual preference; of these, 51% said they were bisexual. (The complete survey data<sup>4</sup> are now online at the Kinsey Institute; see page 23 in the documentation.) My own experience is that when you ask a roomful of people at a poly conference how many consider themselves bi, something like 30% or 40% raise their hands. Workshops at poly conferences on exploring your bisexuality are well attended. Other informal estimates have put the proportion of bi polys at 30% to 60% of all polys.

This compares to just 2.3% of the general population. (That is, 1.8% of men and 2.8% of women age 18–44 in the U.S. gave their sexual preference as „bisexual“ when surveyed for the CDC’s 2002 National Survey of Family Growth<sup>5</sup>; see tables 12 and 13 on pages 30 and 31 of the PDF doc. If the link remains broken, try here and see page 3 and Table 8. Note that nearly another 4% chose „other“ rather than either homo-, hetero-, or bi-.)

So to answer the question in the title of the article: if bi folks disappeared, the poly world would immediately shrink by roughly 45%. And I suspect that this particular 45% plays

4 <http://www.kinseyinstitute.org/resources/Nearing.html>

5 <http://www.kinseyinstitute.org/resources/Nearing.html>

a role beyond its numbers in binding together intimate poly groups and households.

Interestingly, statistics also exist on the other side of the coin: That is, how many bis are poly?

Psychologist Geri D. Weitzman, in her paper „Therapy with Clients Who Are Bisexual and Polyamorous“<sup>6</sup> (Journal of Bisexuality, Vol. 6, Issue 1-2; 2006), summarizes some of the little that’s known about this:

Page (2004) found that 33% of her bisexual sample of 217 participants were involved in a polyamorous relationship, and 54% considered this type of relationship ideal. West (1996) reported that 20% of her lesbian respondents were polyamorous, while Blumstein and Schwartz (1983) found that 28% of the lesbian couples in their sample were. Blumstein and Schwartz found that 65% of the gay male couples in their study were polyamorous, and that 15-28% of their heterosexual couples had „an understanding that allows nonmonogamy under some circumstances“ (p. 312).

The references, if you want to look them up, are in the paper’s bibliography.

Pepper Mint has written (on the LovingMore\_Polyactive Yahoo group, May 24, 2007):

Kassia Wosick-Correa from UC Irvine has unpublished numbers that peg self-identified polyamorous bisexuals as 44% of all bisexuals.

6 <http://www.numenor.org/%7Egdw/psychologist/bipolycounseling.html>

Also see the studies supporting similar conclusions in Footnote 1 below.

All these items together lead to another interesting point. If roughly 45% of polys say they are bi, and roughly 45% of bis are say they are poly, this implies that roughly equal numbers of each exist in the general population<sup>2</sup>. So if 2.3% of Americans call themselves bi, then about 2.3% of Americans should be poly. Numerous caveats apply! One, I think, is that both communities have grown significantly in self-awareness and self-identification, perhaps unevenly, since those surveys were done.

Lastly: We are not the only ones to take an interest in this. Stanley Kurtz, a leading anti-gay-marriage writer for top-of-the-line conservative think tanks, warned darkly in a cover story for The Weekly Standard nearly four years ago that bisexuals are an unrecognized hidden force behind the polyamory movement and its plans to bring down civilization<sup>7</sup>. Enjoy.

Alan M.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/006/494pqobc.asp>

<http://polyinthemedia.blogspot.com/2009/04/are-bisexuals-glue-that-holds-poly.html>  
(Shortcut: <http://is.gd/t3WGox>)

## It’s your fault!

You’re not going to like this article. And that’s exactly how it should be. This article isn’t nice. And that’s just the way it is.

What’s this article about anyway? It deals with a pretty unpleasant topic ...but it’s time to break the taboo. Something has to be done in order for there to be change. Too many are suffering. And society, and that includes you, isn’t doing anything about it!

We are talking about sexual abuse!

It’s unbelievable but this topic has been made taboo over and over again. As soon as a case becomes public, everyone screams that the offender should be executed or castrated. Emotions unravel.

And what good does that do the victims exactly? It doesn’t. It, in fact, harms them. Nobody cares about the victims... the state isn’t willing to cover costly therapy, and even if they were, they’d be stuck on the waiting list for at least a year! It’s unbelievable!! And nobody’s doing anything about it... because they’re too busy picking on the perpetrators. The victims are no longer of importance and are soon forgotten. Only the act itself is remembered!

This just makes me shake my head... who are these perpetrators, really? What all those psycho thrillers make us believe is that they’re all some sort of lonely perverted sex offenders that lie in wait in the forests at night. But what’s the truth? The truth is that most perpetrators are lurking within the families: uncles, brothers, grandfathers, even one’s own father... or a close family friend perhaps.

Sounds scary – but it’s reality. And unfortunately, these are not just exceptions to the rule. There are many women that had to go through something like this during their childhood, and even some men.

That is fact.

And what are you doing about it?  
 You're not even aware of it.  
 Or you shrug your shoulders 'What am I supposed to do about it?'  
 First of all you should talk about it, break the taboo. Even if it isn't easy, it needs to be talked about.  
 And you needn't feel guilty just because you're talking about it. You don't automatically become the victim or a potential offender just because you're touching on the subject. On the contrary – you're making sure that maybe another such act could be prevented.  
 I know more than a handful of women that spoke openly to me about being sexually abused. And what they had to report wasn't pretty.  
 What's worse is that it's not something that can be talked about freely. People would rather chance the topic, people get overwhelmed by it. But it can't stay that way. Something needs to change.  
 What I want is for there to be active prevention. Talking about it, getting informed about it, exchanging ideas – without getting too emotional!

Fact is that most of the time this happens within the family!  
 Fact is that sexual abuse within the family is not an exception!  
 Fact is that even children, especially teenagers and young adults possess sexual appeal!  
 Fact is that some men have trouble dealing with that!  
 Fact is that some men would surely be willing to undergo therapy if they weren't immediately judged and put on the spot upon talking about their illness!  
 Fact is that some men would stop if children firmly said 'no' – we can't expect kids to do that but we can encourage them to say no when they don't like something, especially something that is being done to them!  
 Fact is that victims of sexual abuse often think that they're at fault.  
 Fact is that most people can't talk about it.

Together, let's make a change!  
 Do something!  
 Talk about it! Make it relevant! Break the taboo!  
 Call onto the politicians to offer therapy for the victims and raise awareness!  
 And don't take it as a personal attack when this gets talked about in school. I'm in favour of parents being forced to attend awareness seminars at school and that statements such as 'this doesn't happen in our family' should not be permitted.  
 On RTL2\* they are currently airing a show entitled 'Crime Scene Internet – Protect Your Children!' That they are dealing with this topic is commendable. Whether it is the right way to go about it is debatable. What I fear most is, that this is just another fake out trying to hide the fact that most acts of sexual abuse are done by family members. In those cases banning kids from using the internet will serve no purpose...

Frank  
 translated by Aki

\*a German television channel.

### 60316 Frankfurt am Main

#### Bi-Stammtisch

- every 1st Wednesday 7pm at the „Eckhaus“, Bornheimer Landstraße 45, 60316 Frankfurt am Main

Contact: Werner (Tel.: 0611-598947), Hartmut (0160-94471764)  
<http://frankfurt.bine.net/>

## TORCHWOOD - Aliens, omnisexuality and the rest

A team, in which sexually there seem to be very little limitations, led by an immortal and (at least) bisexual agent of time... those who'd like to know which British Science Fiction series deals with bisexuality, won't get around a brief introduction:

### WHAT IS TORCHWOOD?

Even those that have never seen the British TV series Doctor Who, have probably heard of it at some point. That's partly because the science fiction series about the 1000 something year old time traveller, the 'Doctor', has been around the UK since the 60s and has reached undeniable cult status.

During the run of the series this doctor has drawn upon himself the wrath of British Queen Victoria, who then created Torchwood Institute. The institute's job is to find aliens, their weapons and technology especially, and to find ways for humanity to make use of these. The rights that Torchwood receives from the crown in return, place it 'beyond the government and outside the police' – or in other words, they don't have to justify their actions to anyone nor ask anyone for permission – regardless of what they do. The series Torchwood is a spin off from the main series Doctor Who and is

set in Cardiff, Wales in the last remaining bastion of the institute. The other stations in London, etc, were destroyed in the great battle against the aliens. The team now only consists of a handful of employees. Toshiko Sato, a shy computer specialist, Owen Harper, an incredibly arrogant doctor, Ianto Jones, the jack of all trades who used to work for Torchwood London, Gwen Cooper, a former police woman who is the heart and superwoman of the group, and heading the team, Captain Jack Harkness, a man about whom even his own team known hardly anything. We quickly find out, however, that he may or

may not be immortal, but after being killed, did promptly come back to live.

Jack Harkness is the character that links the two series Doctor Who and Torchwood. Jack, who travelled the universe as time agent, once travelled with a doctor, the last living time lord, in the doctor's time travelling spaceship.

Since losing contact with the doctor, he's been searching for him. Since Jack is stuck on earth, there couldn't be a more perfect place for him to work than Torchwood, which hasn't only gathered plenty of information on the time lord but is looking for him as well.

Each episode of Torchwood deals anew with finding aliens or alien artefacts. From friendly contacts to world threatening attacks – there's a bit of everything.

The agents don't get to have much of a life, which is a central theme. Only one of the employees, Gwen, manages to have a solid relationship – all the others are busy being bogged down by work.

### WHO WITH WHOM?

The sexuality of the characters is only ever mentioned if it's relevant to the plotline. The sexuality at no point becomes the plotline. The relationships of the characters happen 'on the



side' and are as significant as the fact that they all drink lots of coffee or order pizza on a regular basis. They merely round off the characters to make them more real and tangible.

At first glance all characters in the series appear to be heterosexual. The little things you notice upon closer inspection would suggest it. Gwen has a boyfriend, Owen uses an alien artefact to sleep with hot women, Jack flirts very openly with Gwen, Toshiko is quite obviously head over heels in love with Owen, Ianto is hiding his girlfriend from the team.

But then other elements start to surface.

It quickly becomes apparent that Jack and Ianto have feelings for each other, which soon gets confirmed by hot exchanged glances and kisses.

Gwen once heavily makes out with a woman whom the team took prisoner.

In one episode Toshiko has a relationship with a woman.

**WHAT'S SO SPECIAL? – THAT IT'S NOTHING SPECIAL.**

What's special about the motley mix of sexual orientations of the characters is that it's staged in a very 'un-special' manner.

When Toshiko suddenly lands in bed with a woman it's – despite her crushing on Owen – so not noteworthy that we as the audience don't even think twice about it.

When Ianto and Jack start getting closer, it's so normal that the only response it elicits it 'oh ok' and that we would be happy for the two of them if it worked out.

The reason that this works is due to three things:

1. The characters themselves

don't appear as if the same sex sexuality even remotely surprises them. Toshiko makes no mention of it and neither Jack nor Ianto say a word about the fact that they're supposed to be into the opposite sex. The most interesting thing at this point is most certainly Iantos' thought process as he explain to his parents why he, who has also had serious romantic relationships with women, now loves a man, 'It's not men in general – it's just him'. So he doesn't see himself as bisexual in general but loves 'only' one single man. Of course that means that the bisexuality is there – and he doesn't see it as a problem – but he is only realising it this one time.

2. The environment does not react. Neither colleagues nor other people with whom the team communicates, reacts in any way as if the more or less apparent same-sex sexuality were something unusual. Jack and Ianto are approached about being a couple in a few rare cases, but only as an observation, not as a question posed in disbelief.

3. The characters who love both the same and opposite sex are completely normal. Of course each of the Torchwood people has his or her special traits, after all they're main characters of a TV series, but none of them is a genius, psychopath, paranoid, sociopath, or anything of the sort.

**GAY, LESBIAN, OR BI?**

None of the Torchwood employees are gay or lesbian. But at least three of the five are bisexual. Ianto, Jack, and Toshiko have relationships with members of both sexes, sexual

as well as emotional, and even Owen who strongly tends towards heterosexuality kisses a man at some point (granted, he did it in order to get a woman). What's especially interesting is that nobody in the series assumes that a man who loves a man is automatically exclusively gay or a woman who loves a woman automatically exclusively lesbian.

So Gwen flirts with Jack Harkness relatively uninhibitedly even though she already knows that he and Ianto are a couple – and in a way there is a certain chemistry between them which makes it quite clear that Jack doesn't respond to the flirting out of mere friendliness.

**OMNISEXUALITY: ONE MORE TO TOP IT OFF?**

Torchwood even takes its 'normal' representation of diverse sexual orientations a good deal further as might be 'permitted or desired'. So an ex-colleague of Jack Harkness with whom he used to travel the universe with and who shows up a bit later in the series explains that he's into anything that has a 'postal address' while shooting loving glances at a poodle until Jack drags him away.

In no way is this meant to promote sex with animals – this scene is meant as a joke – but it clearly shows that to the team, it really doesn't matter whom one loves.

**CAPTAIN JACK HARKNESS**

Jack is the focal point of the series Torchwood. On the constant search for 'his doctor' who has been his unrequited love for an eternity, his thoughts often revolve around sex. A running gag of the Doctor Who episo-

des in which Jack travels with the time lord, is the fact that he flirts with anything and everything while the doctor constantly tries to put a stop to it. Jack does perceive the attractiveness of the other person – it's not irrelevant to him what someone looks like – but he is neither interested in the gender or race of his object of affection. Regardless of whether it's green, yellow, or polka dotted, has antennae or speaks from its fingertips.

He was married to a woman from earth, he had a child with another woman during his days at Torchwood, he was even (we're talking Science Fiction here, okay?) at some point (before his time on earth) pregnant, he loves the doctor, he loves Ianto Jones, he loves Gwen Cooper...

**CONCLUSION**

Perhaps the ubiquitous but never very focused on sexuality of Captain Jack Harkness, the charismatic leader of Torchwood, is the reason why everything that might come across as strange in other series fades into 'normality' next to Jack.

But that would mean that multi-sexuality – the fact that in the TV series Torchwood nobody settles on any particular sexual orientation – is being downplayed. And that shouldn't be the case, because no matter how unspectacular multi-sexuality is being portrayed in Torchwood, it's generally pretty noticeable how extremely casual the subject is being dealt with. So the bottomline here is that there is probably no other logical conclusion than that all these normal, unexciting, disregarded relationships among the characters free of any sexual

determination are intentional. Torchwood shows – so unobtrusive that one only realises it in retrospect – that bisexuality can be lived and perceived from the environment just as normal as homo- and heterosexuality.

*Article by: Satia, Admin of the Tardis-Torchwood-Team translated by Aki*

PS: If you're interested in the series you should definitely check it out and if it turns out that you like it or if you're already a fan you are welcome to mingle with other fans at our forum: [www.tardis-torchwood.com](http://www.tardis-torchwood.com)

**Book about Torchwood and Sexuality:**

illuminating Torchwood: Essays on Narrative, Character and Sexuality in the BBC Series. Hrsg. A. Ireland, D.E. Palumbo and C.W. III. Sullivan. Published 2010 by McFarland & Co Inc.

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# Rushing Genders

His manliness, her warmth!

The longing awakes, the desire skips and bounces.

The feelings are forbidden, real passions!

Breasts and loins sing of this festivity.

Storms, thunder, lightning, showers, and wild raptures,

Inching closer to the man filled with lust, depravity, and frivolity

Tenderness, gentleness, feathers, the smell of roses, the roar of the ocean,

Showering the woman with kisses, exchanging sensualities with her

Embracing her, calming her, and dreaming with her

Hard, bare steel shines and urges on further action,

Making it glow with heat, bubbling over together with greed

Soft hot pillow pualtes and pleasures bit by bit.

Calmly holding him in her arms, like an exhausted little child,

She, still fidgeting full of excitement by the wind.

Grinning from ear to ear , the energy of the genders switched,

With them life rages and calms, it rushes, it rushes!

*Frank*

*translated by Aki*

# Torn

Loving you and  
Being loved by you.

Wanting to be a home for you and  
Feeling at home with you.

Wanting to fall into a future with you –  
Letting go of what separates us, and saying yes to togetherness.

But no, what separates us keeps us apart:  
Your desire to be mono and not-bi  
My desire to be poly and bi.

Angst, pain,  
Certainty about the impossibility of having both.

...

There are days when I hate being poly and bi.

*(Anonymous)*

*translated by Aki*

# Swingers Clubs and Bisexuals:

## 1. Changes in one's own sexuality

I've always perceived my bisexuality as a life between two worlds. On one hand there was the heterosexual world, in which I freely moved around but apparently did not entirely belong, and the homosexual world, which gave me the same feeling. I could move around perfectly fine in both worlds because I could relate to how these people felt. But when I came out I wasn't accepted by either side. Homosexuals often told me 'You'll figure out eventually where you really belong,' and from the heterosexual side I kept hearing that the liking men thing was just a phase and that it would pass.

It did not. And so I took turns living first on one, and then on the other side of these worlds. I had homosexual relationships and I had heterosexual relationships. I really enjoyed going to gay saunas and that way got to know a lot of similar locations in Hamburg and Berlin. There was gay sauna which developed more and more into one of my favourites, the Talstraßen-Sauna in Hamburg. Especially when they made Thursday bi-day and women were allowed in the sauna, too.

And women did come. Young, pretty women. Young, pretty women who wanted to have sex with me. I was past my mid-thirties by then and didn't really get up any hopes of nailing a willing 20-year

old. But it did happen, again and again. The other nice thing about these Thursdays was that other than the usual gay audience there were predominantly bisexual men present. So on Thursday I always got to have plenty of sex – sometimes with just two of us, sometimes three, or on the 'playground' with a whole lot at once.

Up until then my sexuality had always remained pretty much constant. I've known of my bisexuality since I was fourteen and have always openly lived my sexuality instead of merely dreaming up scenarios.

I've always loved anal sex, but only passively, so it played no role in my relationships with women.

Going back to the Talstraßen-Sauna: The bi men that went were beautiful, 'normal' men,

Tom



not overly twinkly and they did to me exactly what I liked most. The more time I spent at the sauna the more addicted I became. I wanted more events like that. At the same time I began to develop my sexuality. I got to know my first transsexual woman (transsexual woman means male-to-female transsexual). I learned that I could make these people happy by playing a one hundred percent male role in bed and ignoring the fact that there was another penis. A few months later I met Christin. I was instantly hooked and wanted to have a relationship with a trans woman. I continued to go to the Talstraßen-Sauna on Thursdays, where I one day discovered an ad in a magazine about a swingers club in Altona which also held a bi-day once a week. I couldn't get it out of my mind – bi-day at a heterosexual swingers club. I had to go. I didn't want to go alone though, so I asked my best friend but she chickened out. One evening I was hanging out with Christin and told her what was on my mind. Christin is a post-op transsexual. She was instantly on board and said 'Hell yeah, we're going there together!'

The swingers club opened at 6pm, we were there at 6:30. The club was scarcely attended and other than Christin there were no other women. Also, the men there weren't re-

ally my type. This promised to be a boring evening, I thought. I tried to keep my mood up with a few trips to the sauna while Christin seemed to find the men in that place a bit more appealing than I did. In no time she had six guys gathered around her on the playground, and had them taking turns fucking her. I wondered if those guys knew that she was trans since they all appeared very heterosexual. At some point Christin called me over. She wanted to make out with me while she was being fucked by another guy. And suddenly this dreamy Persian God stood in the room. My breath stocked as I saw him. Christin broke away from the human knot, took him by the hand and led him to the playground. Without a word, the two began to kiss. All other men in the room were suddenly condemned to inactivity as both of them seemed to have become a single entity. It was very nice watching this extremely beautiful blonde woman play with this man with the Adonis body. I enjoyed my role as a spectator. Even if only a few centimetres separated me

from the pair, I couldn't bring myself to disrupt them. After some time Christin began to involve me again and made out with me while she was being fucked by the Persian. A good while later Christin said to the Persian, 'Now I want to see you fuck my friend'. Puzzled looks on the faces of the men. Even the Persian initially seemed a bit unsure, but then pulled on a fresh condom and began to apply the lubricant. I lay down spread legged in front of him and he entered me. I could tell he wasn't a first timer. It was very painful in the beginning because he was very well built. But the sight of him as he knelt over me and the play of his muscles made me forget about the pain pretty quickly. Christin now started making out with him again and I could feel how much he was enjoying it inside of me. Unfortunately our Persian friend didn't last very long in this game. After he came I became aware of all the other men again. It seemed like they'd all been watching, entertained. Some were carrying an erection.

No sooner had we laid down a

little bit to relax and had begun to chat a little bit, than the club's owner showed up and told us that he wanted to close up now. We certainly could have carried on this evening endlessly. But like they say, it's best to quit when you're having the most fun.

Christin and I still revelled in these memories weeks later and even today I still like to fondly think back on that evening.

Tom

translated by Aki

## 2. Bi-contacts unwanted on Bi-days?

Now, since I've always felt attracted to men I hit up some swingers clubs. But even the slightest touch made some almost aggressive. I politely apologised and said as an excuse that it was pretty tight and badly lit.

Although bi-evenings were being held there, none of the men there seemed to want to admit to it. I could merely ob-

serve two men 'working on' a transgender. So there were men who wanted contact with other men.

I moved clubs and went to Philipsburg near Karlsruhe into the swingers club square. There they had a wall with peep holes. I looked through it and approached a man who was there with a woman.

Very gently I stroked his but-

tocks and was pleased to realise that he didn't mind.

We then agreed to go into one of the rooms together. There, we all got a little closer and agreed to meet again at the next bi-evening.

I couldn't wait for that evening to come and was excited to see them again. After some small talk and a small refreshment we went about our business. We

spent a really wonderful evening together. Since then we met up every time a bi-evening was held. Up until today we still keep in touch.

The best part about this club is that there are areas marked for bisexuals so that no misunderstandings may arise among the patrons.

*Reinhard  
translated by Aki*

### 3. Tolerance issues in swingers clubs?

The fact that bi women are a welcome sight in swingers clubs is widely known. It's like porn – it's no good without a proper lesbian scene. But two men touching each other? Scandalous! No (het) man would buy something like that! And isn't it the exact same thing in swinger circles!?

Because of a lot of forum posts I'd read on the internet I'd acquired the notion that swinger men (and to some extent, women) were still pretty stuck up and didn't show much tolerance for bi men. Even worse, I read about clubs that explicitly prohibited sex between men!

In Hamburg there are bi-evenings at a club (Mystery): Here most men really do appear to be genuinely bisexual, and not just acting it. And the women present are totally cool with the men having fun with each other.

These days a gay sauna in Hamburg (Dragon-Sauna) also started offering a mixed bi-evening where the male ratio is quite high but a few attractive couples and a woman or two looking forward to a gangbang can be seen as well.

There is also a private party series specifically highlighting bi men and transsexuals. Finally,

there's another sauna swingers club with bi-days.

But what's the general consensus of tolerance in swingers clubs? First of all towards bi men, and secondly towards non-smokers?

I contacted a few swingers clubs and asked them about it – for the initial attempt simply within a random postal code region unfamiliar to me (region 0).

#### Are swingers clubs in postal code region 0 bi friendly?

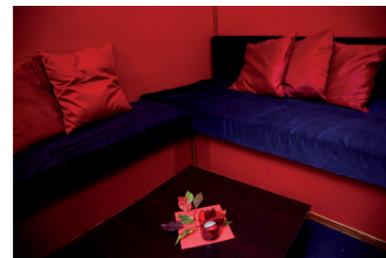
**Swinger- und Pärchenclub Saphir** ([www.swingerclub-saphir.de](http://www.swingerclub-saphir.de)) in 04435 Dölzig answers: 'A lot of our guests are bi – it's just up to you to find them. We are a non smoking club with a closed off smokers' pavilion.'

**Pärchentreff zur Haltestelle** ([www.paerchentreff-vogtland.de/CMS/](http://www.paerchentreff-vogtland.de/CMS/)) in 08233 Treuen writes: 'You can definitely express your inclination in our establishment, but of course it always depends on the audience. As for the smoking, well, that's another story. A lot of our patrons are smokers but we do have a non-smoking area with cozy seating arrangements.'

**Clubhotel Ollywood** ([www.swinger-ollywood.de](http://www.swinger-ollywood.de)) in 01445 Radebeul holds traffic light parties where bi interests can be expressed with wristbands.

**Pärchenclub Schiedel** ([www.pcschiedel.de](http://www.pcschiedel.de)) in 01917 Kamenz OT Schiedel offers occasional girl's nights out which are evenings especially for the bi-interested, -curious, or –beginners among us. 'Most rooms are non smoking zones.'

**SC Venus** ([www.sc-venus.de](http://www.sc-venus.de)) in 06536 Roßla writes: 'We only allow smoking in the bar area, everywhere else smoking is strictly prohibited. Of course



you are free to express you bisexuality here, there are a lot of other guests who are bi as well, so there's no problem.'

**Club 29 „Je t'aime“** ([www.club29-colditz.de](http://www.club29-colditz.de)) in 04680 Colditz says however: 'We have bisexual women every once in a while and it's tolerated. Bi-



sexual men might have more of a problem. We've observed issues in the past. It's something you'll have to decide for yourself. We are definitely glad to see you here.'

**Swingerclub Schloss Milkersdorf** ([www.schloss-milkersdorf.de](http://www.schloss-milkersdorf.de)) in 03099 Milkersdorf reports: 'When it comes to tolerance you can be sure that you'll experience what you want for yourself, too. No means no, and all guests respect that. (...) On the subject of smoking, it's easier to write where it is allowed – in our fireplace room, and on the covered and heated terrace. Everywhere else smoking is strictly prohibited.'

**Big Mamas Haus** ([www.bigmamasha.de](http://www.bigmamasha.de)) in 08451 Crammshaus offers bi parties: 'He who only feels attracted to the opposite sex is missing half of life. Staying true to the motto 'A little bi, never hurt anyone' this evening all swingers are

welcome but especially those that also love the same sex, just want to try it out or are just curious about it might even get infected by our frivolous games. Each guest receives a coloured wristband for bi or bi-curious. And a big shout out to all the men out there: Not every man who allows himself to be touched by another man or tries it himself, is immediately gay. The evening is under the slogan 'open-for-everything party'. But here too, no always means no. Experience shows that even on evenings like these, men are still very cautious amongst themselves, which doesn't mean that nothing ever happens. Of course het guests are allowed to these evenings as well. After all couples do exist where one partner is not bi. All in all bi parties are very well received and attended. A bisexual among the men on other nights is pretty seldom but not unwanted.'

Also the **Pärchen- und Singleclub PC Butterfly** ([www.pc-butterfly.de](http://www.pc-butterfly.de)) in 04509 Werlitzsch organises bi parties.

At **Number One de Saxx** ([www.number-one-de-saxx.de](http://www.number-one-de-saxx.de)) in 09116 Chemnitz they have the 'open-for-all parties'. 'This means that we invite and welcome any sexual orientation. Mutual tolerance and acceptance determine this very special evening. At the bar trans lady Rebecca awaits you.'

Even though not all clubs responded, in summary I'd have to say that the swingers scene is more tolerant than its reputation – at least in postal code region 0. For the most part non-smokers can look forward to smoke-free rooms and either there are bi-evenings or at the very least bi men are generally welcome.

*Frank  
translated by Aki*

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## Info

The Bisexual Network (BiNe e.V.) exists since 1994 und networks, as the name says, bisexuals with one another (through group lists, the website [www.bine.net](http://www.bine.net), nation wide bi meet ups, etc). It stands for awareness and tolerance, conduct counseling, supports bi activities (e.g. at CSDs) and makes this magazine possible

### Become a member and support BiNe e.V.:

[www.bine.net/mitglied](http://www.bine.net/mitglied)

### Future Meet-Ups:

2.-5.6.	2011	Oppen Bi Meet-Up	ZEGG (Bad Belzig)
4.-7.8.	2011	Bi Women's Meet-Up	Altenbücken
1.-4.9.	2011	BiCon UK	Leicester, UK
23.9.	2011	Bisexuality Day	Worldwide
30.9.-3.10.	2011	Open Bi Meet-Up	Butzbach
??.??.	2011	Low Budget Meet-Up	Fredelsloh
26.-29.1.	2012	Bi Men's Meet-Up	Waldschlösschen Göttingen
16.-18.3.	2012	Concept Seminar	Butzbach
25.-28.5.	2012	Open Bi Meet-Up	Butzbach
26.-29.7.	2012	Bi Women's Meet-Up	Altenbücken
23.9.	2012	Bisexuality Day	Worldwide
1.-4.11.	2012	Open Bi Meet-Up	Meschede

More information at [www.bine.net/treffs](http://www.bine.net/treffs)



Registration for the Bi Women's Meet-Up:  
[bi-frauentreffen@web.de](mailto:bi-frauentreffen@web.de)

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