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Monadnock Men's Resource Center

We are committed to providing all men with a safe space for growth, sharing, connection and community building... and to overcoming men's violence in all our lives.

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the directors view

What Guides Us

Welcome to the first issue of the Monadnock Men's Resource Center's community newsletter. We at the MMRC would like to share with you a couple of other significant landmarks as well: first, we will soon be convening our one hundredth consecutive Open Men's Support Group in Keene, NH. In addition, we will be celebrating our second anniversary as an organization serving the Monadnock region. We are proud of what we have accomplished so far and excited about the future. We also realize that we have not done it alone and we are so very grateful to all of the organizations, businesses, and individual women and men who have supported and encouraged us in so many ways over the last two years (see a list of our supporters on page four of this newsletter).

You may be asking, "What is the Monadnock Men's Resource Center and what is your organization's purpose?" You may be wondering why men need a "resource center." We are about supporting men and challenging violence. Many men today are in pain. They hurt themselves, each other, and the people in their families and communities. Many men in our society are divided against each other, having learned how to compete, but not cooperate with each other. We realize masculinity is in transition, and our understanding of what it takes to be a successful man is going through big changes. We are being called upon to develop new ways of relating to our emotions, our partners/wives, our children, and our work. These changes can leave us feeling confused, disoriented, and overwhelmed.

At a men's center, men find others who are facing the challenges of these changes. Together we support each other in developing diverse ways of being a man that express our highest

values and vision. We join with other men who want to make a contribution to the lives of all people in their communities.

Assumptions about men are often made which are based on stereotypical
(continued on page 2)



"What Guides Us" continued from page 1...

definitions of masculinity. But these assumptions – that men don't know how, or need, to relate, that men are unemotional, isolating, violent, angry, or are the victims, adversaries, or targets of women and feminists – are often self-fulfilling prophecies. At the MMRC and in men's centers around the country and the world, men are working to replace these old assumptions with some different ones. The following are some assumptions about men that guide our relationships with each other and our work with men at the MMRC:

- * Men are naturally loving, caring, and sensitive with other men, with women, and with children.
- * Men are often trained to be masculine in a way that confuses self-esteem, intimacy, and power with domination, and emotional repression.
- * Isolation and violence is not an inherent part of male nature, but the result of this training.
- * Men are both privileged and damaged by sexism.
- * Patterns of violence and domination are sometimes used by men to try to control underlying feelings of fear, isolation, and powerlessness.
- * Men are both the perpetrators and the victims of violence and abuse.
- * Men need compassionate connection and loving attention from other men.
- * Men have much to gain from and much to contribute to the work of undoing sexism.
- * Men can be proud and powerful allies with women in challenging all forms of oppression and dehumanization.

We look forward to continued growth and service to our community.

~ *Damien Licata* is Co-Director of MMRC



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...

OPUS™ by Berkeley Breathed



LIBERTY and JUSTICE

by Schultz

The Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) would define marriage as only between a man and a woman. Passage of such an Amendment would be nothing short of giving in to the prejudice of those who oppose civil liberties for all Americans. It would codify discrimination.

Let us be clear that we are talking about "civil marriage." Civil marriage has not existed for more than a few hundred years. Prior to the founding of the United States with its constitution and its first ten Amendments, the rights of the common people were generally unprotected. And three hundred years ago the rights of minorities were thought not to exist! We have, indeed, come a long way. We have over two hundred years of increasing protections for and inclusion of all minorities. Let us not do a terrible thing that will take us backward, like passing the FMA.

Many people who support the FMA are heard quoting the Bible to support their feelings against homosexuality. This is very disturbing for many reasons. Our founding "fathers" were sick of the terrible consequences of government that is under the influence of those who hold that their religious beliefs



are the only ones that are correct and valid. The framers of our constitution carved out the concept of a separation between the church and the state for which we can and should be very proud. For over two thousand years, there were people who quoted the Bible on a regular basis to support slavery. You will find twenty times as many references to support slavery in the Bible as references to condemn homosexuality.

It is not clear that a majority of Americans in the 1860's were in support of the ending of slavery. Even in the north, in Boston, there were riots against abolitionists. I hope all will agree that ending slavery was the right thing to do.

There are those who say that marriage always has been about procreation, the bearing and raising of children. This is clearly untrue. I have never heard of any heterosexual couple applying for a marriage license being told that the success of their application would depend on whether or not they intended to have children. Many people my age, who are well past our childbearing years, with no desire to have children, have received a marriage license without question.

In 1967, the Supreme Court struck down the anti-miscegenation laws and finally allowed people of different races to marry. Religious conservatives said the court was wrong and many of them still condemn the court for its decision. The Supreme Court was right to protect the rights of all the people. We cannot allow those who quote selected passages from the Bible to write our laws. If we do, we may be sure we are not living up to the American Dream.

~ *Schultz* is a member of the MMRC steering committee



**How Can I
Help Support
The MMRC?**

- **Drop-in to a group**
- **Spread the word**
- **Volunteer your time**
- **Donate money**

Call (603) 357-5780
for details.

THANK YOU!

If the human race wishes to have a prolonged and indefinite period of material prosperity, they have only got to behave in a peaceful and helpful way to each other.

~Winston Churchill



MEN SPEAKING

When people are even mildly enlightened, oppression of the body and mind will disappear.

~Thomas Jefferson

The main task of man is to give birth to himself.

~Eric Fromm

What luck for rulers that men do not think.

~Adolf Hitler

Teach us to care and not to care.

Teach us to sit still.

~T.S. Elliot

The proportion between dignity and humiliation, pragmatic optimism and despair, is often enough to decide a country's future. The same may now be true for the future of the world.

~Jedediah Purdy, author of "Being America"

**Always Open • Drop-In
SUPPORT GROUP
for all men
SUNDAY EVENINGS
7:00 PM SHARP
LifeArt • 43 Central Square • Keene**



MMRC COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Every Sunday night, 7pm:
MMRC Drop-in Support Group, for all men,
LifeArt, 43 Central Square, Keene, 603-357-5780

First Tuesday, monthly (3/2, 4/6, 5/4, 6/1) 7-9pm:
PFLAG (Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians & Gays)
St. James Church, 44 West St., Keene 355-1040

Sat. Mar. 20th, 11am: **"The World Still Says No To War"**
International Day of Rallies, including Keene's Central
Square. For more info call 603-835-6190

April 3rd:
Coming of Age for Teen Boys Teachers Workshop
Peterborough, NH 603-224-4071

April 25th: **March For Women's Lives**, Washington DC
Bus info at www.ppnne.org, or call 1-888-600-9319

May 3rd:
Sexual Violence: Men and Women in Conversation,
W. Lebanon, NH 800-488-9638

May 16th:
Fun & Games Schmoozefest for gay & bisexual men
Northampton, MA. Call Allan 413-253-9887

May 21-23:
20th Granite Men's Gathering, "The Circle of Life"
Tuftonboro, NH. *More at...* www.granitemen.com

*We wish to express our
gratitude and appreciation to the following
businesses and people for their generous support
of the MMRC over the last two years...*

Thank You!

- LifeArt Community Resource Center
- Monadnock Talks
- Susan McNeil
- Monadnock Aids Services
- Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention
- Kathy McLaughlin
- Planned Parenthood of Northern New England
- Good Fortune • The Pawn Shop
- Panera Bread • Armadillo's
- Hannaford Super Store
- Ted's Shoe & Sport
- The Vacuum Store
- Keene State College Counseling Center
- Franklin Pierce College
- The Richard D. Smith Co.
- Bank & Business Forms Printing
- Power of Breath
- Salwen Studios Graphic Design
- Publishing Solutions by Steve Salamin
- ... and especially,
- The spouses, partners and families of MMRC volunteers
- ... and finally, Steve Botkin and
- The Mens Resource Center of Western Massachusetts