

What's in a name?

by Lyn McGinnis

Our language defines our world, but there are problematic exceptions. We are not heterosexual. This sentence illustrates our dilemma. In a heterosexual culture, language defines the norm so we cannot articulate our reality.

Hence all the terms floating around. Before Stonewall, we had few choices. While underground codes developed in certain urban ghettos, for most the choice was between clinical labels and abuse. These efforts had mixed results. They illustrated our defiance of our oppressors while displaying our internalized homophobia.

In our post-Stonewall culture, we have taken these labels and transformed or discarded them. Usually, once a "chosen" name is established we leave the label behind. For instance, today very few men will refer to themselves as a "homosexual," as opposed to a "gay man."

This process is not over. We still use the terms "bisexual," and "transgender." Within these cultures there are chosen names, but they usually have not surfaced in the rest of the community. There are ways of simply trimming the label to make it our own, such as those identifying as bisexual referring to themselves as "Bi."

Irony and satire have always been tools of the oppressed, and we have found many humorous ways to say who we are.

Then came the acronyms such as LGBT up to LGBTQIP2SAA. This is a creative way of taking our names along with inherited labels, and making them our own. It also has the added virtue of including all the diversity existing within

our community.

What about the abuse? One of the best known is "Queer." Like other oppressed groups, we took a term intended to destroy us and turned it into an affirmation. This process began in the 1980's when a group emerged in North America called "Queer Nation." One of their slogans was "We're here! We're Queer! Get used to it!"

This represented an entirely different strategy. Instead of saying "don't say that mean word, say this nice one," we say "go ahead, say it cause we own it!" This represented an admirable measure of self confidence and clarity about the sickness of our culture. It took this struggle out of the personal and into the political.

This led to intensive examination and discussion similar to the early days of the feminist movement. It showed great promise for an aggressive challenge to both personal and political manifestations of homophobia. Unfortunately, we have backed away from this exuberant personal defiance and political sophistication. Now we aspire to blend into the middle class banality of our culture.

This is a mistake. We have unique perspectives on a wide variety of issues surrounding sexuality and gender our complacent culture needs to hear. We are the "gadfly" to a society very much in need of reexamining its inherited assumptions. We must challenge heterosexism both internal and external, clearly present in language, as an ongoing part of our civilization's evolution.

"We're here! We're Queer! Get used to it."

This is a modified version of an article that appeared in The Voice Magazine - December 2000

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FREE



Rainbow Community Calendar

The **Rainbow Community Calendar (RCC)** is a monthly publication serving the LGBTQ community of Waterloo Region. It is named in tribute to the **Pink Triangle Community Calendar** created in 1989 by community activist Lisa Simkins. The **RCC** is issued by the **Rainbow Community Calendar Collective**, an action group of **SPECTRUM-Waterloo Region's Rainbow Community Space**. Print copies are available at SPECTRUM, ACKWA, and various bars, clubs, cafés et cetera in Waterloo Region.

Online at: <http://www.grandriver-rainbowhistory.ca/RainbowCommunityCalendar.html>
Send events to: info@ourspectrum.com by the 20th of each month.

SPECTRUM's **Resource Centre and Drop-in Space** is in Unit 210 at 283 Duke Street West, Kitchener, N2H 3X7 (corner of Duke Street West and Breithaupt). Park on Breithaupt Street side of the building, near the loading dock. Go in the Duke Street entrance, up the stairs, through the door, down the hallway to Unit 210.

Website: <http://ourspectrum.com/> **NEW!** (with hours of opening and much more)

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SpectrumCommunitySpace>

Twitter: [@our_SPECTRUM](https://twitter.com/our_SPECTRUM) **E-mail:** info@ourspectrum.com **Phone:** 226-779-9695

October Events

October 1

SPECTRUM Saturday Symposium

2-5 PM Saturdays, **October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29**. We meet Saturday afternoons to discuss a topic of interest to our community. Ideas for topics will usually come from participants and be posted here ahead of time. Our inaugural meeting was held Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 2 PM. The group dynamic is expected to change weekly as each topic will likely attract a different crowd, though one is not expected to be of a particular bent to attend. All are wel-

come every Saturday. Attendees are free to participate or not in the discussion according to their own temperament. You need not be an expert on anything to contribute as we are all here to learn from each other. We emphasize speaking about your own experiences. Come with an open mind. The group is mildly moderated at SPECTRUM.

Starting October 2

Friends of Dorothy Bowling League

Event. 1:15pm practice; 1:30 - 4pm bowling, Sundays: **October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**. at Brunswick Frederick Lanes, 385 Frederick Plaza, Kitchener.

Starting October 2

ORG-SPECTRUM's Outdoor Recreation Group. Sundays. Events alternate between Lite and Regular:

October 2 - 'Lite': 3 - 5 PM. Golden Hawks match versus the Lions. Wilfrid Laurier University Stadium on Seagram Drive near Albert Street, \$5.

October 9 - 'Regular': 1 - 5 PM. K-W Oktoberfest 2016. Meet at SPECTRUM, Discretionary spending money.

October 16 - 'Lite': 3 - 5 PM. Fall colours. Meet at My Art Lounge, 31 Manitou Dr. #2, Kitchener. Coffee Money.

October 23 - 'Regular': 1-5 PM. Bike Ride. Meet at SPECTRUM. Free

October 30 - 'Lite': 2-4 PM. Riverside Park, Preston. Meet at City Café Bakery, Preston, 172 King St E, Cambridge. Coffee Money

Starting October 4

Queercraft - a Queer Crafting Group. 6-8 PM, Tuesdays: **October 4, 11, 18, 25.** Bring your portable craft to SPECTRUM!

Starting October 5

Older Adults Group. 7-9 PM, first and third Wednesdays of the month - **October 5** and **19** at SPECTRUM. We see things differently as we age. Priorities shift. Social circles change. Join us in a **new** discussion and social group for older LGBTQ adults. And if you are concerned about whether the group is a fit for you, then try it out to see. Lately, we have been sharing stories about our lives. We will also continue to think about what kinds of discussions and activities we might like to have in future. We hope that this will be a step in the direction of creating a community support for us as we age.

Starting October 6

Rainbow Connections - Kitchener meetings, 7-9 PM first and third Thursdays of the month: **October 6, 20.** LGBTQ and Mental Health Group Main Floor, Self Help Alliance, 67 King St E. Kitchener. If you will be late, please

contact us in advance so we know when to let you in. Also note that there is now a 15 minutes time-period that we can let you in, otherwise it becomes disruptive to group. We will be in the downstairs room, so ring the downstairs doorbell to be let in. Call 519-570-4595 to speak with either Jasmina, ext. 4052, or Brenda, ext. 4061 to verify meeting date and time, or for more information.

Starting October 6

Trans Peer Support Group. 7-9 PM on the first and third Thursday of the month. **October 6** and **20.** New day - new time - new facilitators. A safe and normalizing environment for anyone identifying in the trans/gender variant umbrella at SPECTRUM. More information: trans@ourspectrum.com

Starting October 7

day5games. 7-11 PM **October 7, 14, 21,** and **28** at SPECTRUM. Join us as we gather at our space to play board and card games, assemble jigsaw puzzles and fiddle with constructions in an informal atmosphere.

Starting October 11

OK2BME Youth Group. 6-7:30 PM Alternate Tuesdays- **October 11, 25** More information: <http://ok2bme.ca/>

Starting October 12

Transgender Peer Support Group. (new) 7-9 PM on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. **October 12** and **26.** For individuals who identify as transgender and questioning. Self Help Alliance, 67 King Street East, Kitchener. Call 519-570-4595 to speak with either Jasmina, ext. 4052, or Brenda, ext. 4061 to verify meeting date and time, or for more information.

October 13

Rainbow Newcomers Thursday, **October 13,** Wednesday, **October 26** at SPECTRUM. A place for LGBTQ-identified immigrants and refugees to socialize with each other and with LGBTQ people who have been in town for a while, and discuss issues related to being a newcomer to Canada. More information: RainbowNewcomers@gmail.com

October 15

Secrett Mystery Bus Tour

8 AM - 9 PM Saturday, **October 15.** This tour has had two successful journeys with passengers asking for more! Departure location and exact time will be determined soon. Approximate travel time is two hours to the destination; we will take a short break. Cost \$35. Ideas of what to bring: Water bottle, snacks, spending money, comfortable shoes, camera, umbrella, I.D.

October 15

Pride Prom 2016 - A Night at the Carnival. 6:30 PM on Saturday, **October 15.** Join us for the Ninth Annual Pride Prom for high school students aged 14-18 who are part of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. Tickets are free and must be reserved in advance by e-mailing youth@kitchener.ca. Please include your first name, last name and age of people you are reserving tickets for.

October 16

Trans Fams Event. 4pm, **October 16** (Sunday). Are you interested in meeting other families with Trans and Gender Independent Kids? Want to join our family and others for some fun activities? Contact Holly for more info at: hb-mathers@gmail.com

October 18

Waterloo - Wellington - Perth PFLAG, Parents Family and Friends Peer-Support Group 7-9 PM on the third Tuesday of the month. **October 18.** Are you having difficulty coming to terms with the sexuality, gender identity or gender expression of someone close to you? Join us in a warm, welcoming and safe place for all family and friends of people of the LGBTQ community at Pre-School Room, Downtown Community Centre, 35-B Weber Street West, Kitchener. More Information: <https://www.facebook.com/PFLAG.WWP>

October 25

Good Laughs. 7 PM until closing, last Tuesday evening of the month: **October 25.** A safe space for trans people to explore their identity in the community; open to allies as well at Symposium Café, Waterloo (corner of King and Erb) - back room. More information: goodlaughs81@gmail.com

October 27

SPECTRUM Reading Circle 6:30-8 PM on the fourth Thursday of the month. **October 27.** In our Reading Circle we read short stories and articles aloud on the spot; no prior reading is required. Then we reflect on what we have read. We often spend longer discussing the literature than we do reading it. Participants are encouraged to bring readings. Join us for this exploration of LGBTQ literature and what it means to us personally at SPECTRUM.

Sexual Health Awareness Drop in 5-8 PM on the fourth Thursday of the month. **October 27.** Sponsored by ACKWA at SPECTRUM, 283 Duke Street West, Unit 210.

SPECTRUM Lending Library

The SPECTRUM Lending Library was opened in Spring 2013 as a lending collection. It is composed of a set of films and books assembled for the entertainment of members of the local rainbow community. New films are being added every month. Our collection contains over two hundred films. Our book collection has over seven hundred book titles, arranged in 20 categories on the shelves. If you have suitable themed films that you no longer watch, or books you no longer read, please consider donating them to our collection.