



MEN TALK

THE MEN'S CENTER NEWS

February/March 2006 VOL. 30 #1

Death of a Gender

— © 2006 BY CHARU BAHRI

The past decades have been marked by a male fetish for the perfectly formed woman, slim at waist yet with unrealistic bust and hip line, or what was commonly referred to as 36-24-36. A few decades ago, it was a wife's nightmare to have her man feast his eyes on such a draw. At the beach or on a hot summer day, she would try to, often in vain, to switch scenes to avoid her man being exposed to such babes. Perhaps, in part, to save herself from feelings of inadequacy.

But no longer... preening oneself before a mirror and overtly showing signs of an obsession with locks and skin used to be a feminine bastion. Now, with a certain merging of gender roles, men, have fallen prey to the "look good, feel good" mantra. All the better for women!

It's not easy to make the mark – you need immaculate skin, no wrinkles in sight, biceps and pectoral muscles that bulge and protrude, the list goes on. In fact, men have fallen so acutely into this trap that they seem to be building bodies for their own satisfaction, not so much for the pleasure of women.

Having suffered from the body beautiful syndrome since yore, smart women now take the looks race in their stride and have learnt to manage the competition.

Men, however, are the new entrants, who have just realized that they need not necessarily be relegated to a burping-farting pot-bellied middle age. But their obsession with themselves has become so intense that it forms the subject of serious study. The Adonis Complex, a term used to denote a male obsession with physique is being talked about in academic circles as the next worst psychological trauma afflicting men.

Men suffering from body dysmorphic disorder are the worst outcome of the role generalization of the new century. Surrounded by surreal masculine frames threatening their masculinity, they end up wanting to emulate Adonis, a Greek God who was considered half God and half man, and possibly, the most beautiful man of all.

The traditionally nonchalant about his looks man has bitten the dust; having been redefined as a metrosexual or retrosexual man. Sadly, the challenge to his image and identity has sapped him of his conventional strength. No longer is man the He Man – the sole master of the universe. Man's insecurity has certainly helped turn the tables in favour of women, who surprisingly, are also complaining, whining about where the ideal man of yesteryears has gone?

Apparently, a man with bulging muscles is not very cuddly. Interestingly, Leit et al calculated that the average Playgirl centerfold man had dropped 12 pounds of fat and put on 27 pounds of muscle

over the past 25 years (between 1973 and 1997).

Somehow, in getting carried away by the looks monster, both inhabitants, from Mars and from Venus, have missed the bus. A pressing need to reach ones deathbed (or at least old age) in good shape and without blemish, having yielded to nicks and tucks along the way, prevails. The body beautiful syndrome triumphs – a healthy body has given way to a body conforming to a certain image.

In succumbing to vanity, some men have forgotten a vital truth, that no-body is perfect and to extract meaning from and spread happiness is to truly make the most of one's life – a good enough reason to live. Has the spirit of life got lost in a gym?

I'm averse to alcohol, yet this quote by Steve Parker sums up the spirit (pun unintended) of my perspective, "Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, champagne in one hand, strawberries in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming Woo Hoo What A Ride!"

Charu Babri is a freelance writer from India (Punjabi, but residing since 8 years in the west Indian state of Rajasthan). Qualified as a cost accountant and software developer, Charu now works part-time for a not-for-profit hospital - writing and designing the hospital promotional literature and regular newsletters. She has authored two non-fiction books, "Aligning the Economic Cycle with the Time Cycle" self-published through iUniverse in February 2003 and "Sexual Dualism to Spiritual Oneness" released by a traditional Indian publisher (Krantz Publications, New Delhi) in August 2004. The book covers may be viewed at <<http://www.ryze.com/go/cbabri>>.

Library Corner

—DON JENSEN,
LIBRARIAN



One of our most important resources is the Men's Center Library that is available to all members as a free privilege of a current membership. We have more than 1000 books on nearly every subject of interest to men. A moment spent browsing our library may bring into your hands a tool that can yield rich dividends for improving your life, your health, or healing your pain. Wherever you stand on the journey of life, there is a book here that can speak to the problems or challenges you are facing. Be sure to check it out on your next visit to the Men's Center! You won't be disappointed.

And while you are enjoying our many book resources, consider browsing our large and growing selection of periodicals.

- Men's Health
- Lavender
- Transitions
- Bi All Means
- Edge Life
- D.A.D.S #1
- Voice Male
- Men's Journal
- Rainbow Families
- Essential Wellness
- Everyman
- And even more

Some of these books and periodicals have become so important in some of our member's lives that they seem to have been out a very long time. Please return them to make them available to others. Thanks!

Address Change Notifications

from the post office cost the Men's Center \$1.14 each. Please let us know in advance of mailings! Thanks!

Men Talk is a bi-monthly publication of the Twin Cities Men's Center, a non-profit organization. Call 612-822-5892 for subscriptions, or e-mail us at tcmc@tcmc.org

Editor
Bill Dobbs

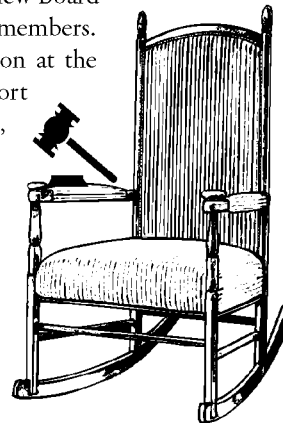
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Greetings from the Board Chair

I would like to welcome the new Board members and Men's Center members. 2005 was a year of transition at the Men's Center. As some support groups matured and move on, new support groups such as the Transition Group and Healthy Sexual Boundaries emerged to address new social issues and concerns of the community.

The Annual Meeting on Saturday January 14, 2006 had a good attendance and participation. It is encouraging to see so many members their experience and opinions. Such participation is always welcomed at the Men's Center.

I would also like to acknowledge the Men's Center office staff and volunteers—Randy G., Ray C. and Don J. The Men's Center office organize and categorize the library, coordinate the Men's Center presence at several events and conferences, and continually provide assistance as a resource to



voicing

the community regarding men's issues. The Men's Center office staff is an integral part in the Men's Center accomplishing its mission.

Another integral part is you—Men's Center member, volunteers and facilitators. You are the reason why the Men's Center has been a part of the community for the last thirty years. Your time, energy and skills is greatly appreciated and recognized.

As we start 2006, the Men's Center will continue to work with our members and the community to address issues and concerns of men and the community at large.

Thank you for being a part of the Men's Center, and I look forward to the exciting ventures for 2006.

**LIVE LONG AND PROSPER,
L. DUDLEY, BOARD CHAIR**

Anger Management Is Life-Long Work

— BY BOB ANDERSON

It's a truism, almost a cliché, that anger management is a life-long practice. But some men take it to heart -- Bill S., for example. He took the Men's Center class two years ago at Christ Presbyterian in Edina, then again recently in Hopkins.

"I got much more out of it the second time around," he said. He had wanted to follow up on the first class, with its great feeling of camaraderie. The guys even had a party afterward. Bill knew he needed continued support to sustain the progress he was making, but like so many anger management classes, the energy wasn't sufficient to sustain an ongoing support group. So Bill took another class.

"I fell in love with the new group right away and they did with me too," he said. "The acceptance, brutal honesty and caring were there from the start, and the guys called during the week to check up on each other."

It was just what the doctor ordered. The lessons in the course are deep, requiring fearless self-scrutiny, a willingness to learn new patterns of thinking and feeling, and the courage to take full responsibility for one's life. Repeated practice is the only way to make progress.

Bill has struggled with two major issues in his life, drinking and anger. Both stem in part from an abusive, tyrannical father and a religious upbringing that laid the shame and blame on thick and heavy. The drinking he dealt with some time ago, but the anger persists.

"For years people told me I was an angry man but I denied it, the way an alcoholic denies the truth. I'd rage at the drop of a hat. I've got a right to be angry, I thought, look at what life has done to me."

He's appreciated and depended on the openness and honesty of the men in the class. "You're not alone, we're all in it together, and that makes it easier"

To encourage taking the class additional times, the Men's Center offers a \$50 discount on repeats.

Alumni Group Offers Additional Support

An Alumni Group for anger management classes is offered the first Tuesday of every month, at the Men's Center, from 7 to 9 p.m. Anyone who has gone through the course is welcome to attend, on an occasional or on-going basis. This is a core group of three guys who have stayed together since their class of three or four years ago. See, it can be done. All it takes is commitment.

Here and There

– Edited by Andy Mickel

Upcoming Monthly Men's Sunday Brunches (bring something to share/cook up): **Sunday, February 19th** at Eric Mann's 632 Morgan Ave S., Minneapolis, 612-729-1220 (on the north side of I-394, Penn Ave Exit). and **Sunday, March 19th** at Jeff Haas's 1423 E 35th St. Minneapolis, 612-721-7010 (on the south side of Powderhorn Lake).. These brunches are **open to all men from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.**; plan to come and chat and eat for a 1/2-hour to 2-hour period anytime – inevitably some men stay on until 2 p.m. 12 men attended December's Men's Brunch at the Rick Gravrok's and 11 were at January's Brunch at Frank Brandon's in St. Paul. - Andy Mickel, 2006-01-24.

Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota (PCAMN) is pleased to announce **Child Abuse Prevention Strategies** a community workshop, various Minnesota locations, Tuesday, February 21, 2006, 8:45 - noon. Call 651-523-0099 or 800-621-6322 to register. Also the **fifth annual Minnesota Conference on Child Abuse Prevention**, April 27, 2006 in St. Paul. PCAMN seeks proposals for workshop presentations in one of six tracks: Parent Leadership, Early Care and Education, Advocacy and Systems Change, Health and Wellness, Family Violence and Abuse and Neglect Prevention Strategies. One hour will be allocated for each workshop. Registration is \$90 before April 3; \$110 after; \$25 for fill-time students. FFI: <<http://www.pcamn.org/>> PCAMN is particularly interested in workshops that address cultural competence and diversity in child abuse prevention programs. Access the request for proposals here: <<http://shared.mcpa.com/clients/23/uploadedimages/CI23ID1542DOC1.pdf>> - Paul Masiarchin, State Coordinator, Minnesota Fathers & Families Network, 2005-11-14.

"...In your library corner I note you list some of the periodical and newsletters that you have available for members to read. As Volunteer Curator of the **Changing Men Collections (CMC)**, an archive of **men's work worldwide**, I am familiar with several of those titles and they are archived in the CMC....Much of the CMC is built on donations [of materials]. As a result of these donations, there are often newsletters received that are duplicates of those we already have. As an example of the duplicates here, there are copies of several issues of **Wingspan**, which is no longer published. Does your library have capacity for storing / displaying / using issues of some of the men's movement publications which are no longer being published? Are you interested in them for the Library? If so, I would be glad to send them to you..." - Ed Barton, Volunteer Curator, CMC at Michigan State University libraries, 517-336-7073, <bartoned@msu.edu> - 2005-12-14

The next **ManKind Project-Minnesota New Warrior Training Adventure** will be held April 28-30 at Eagle Lake Camp near Brainerd, MN. The cost is \$595, with payment plans available. To learn more, attend an Open Circle event: Observe, Ask Questions (or Participate if you like) in a safe container with a group of men who are practicing authenticity and connection to feeling at **Open Circle of Warriors** events at the Men's Center every 2nd Wednesday, 7-9 p.m. Contact **Andy Mickel** with any questions 612-279-6416 or see: <<http://minnesota.mkp.org/>> for Open I-Group dates/times. Register with Eric Lucas, 20388 Idaho Avenue, Lakeville, MN 55044, 952-469-6497, <welucas4@frontiernet.net> - Andy Mickel, 2006-01-18.

Thanks to the dedicated and efficient efforts of Ray Clare who volunteers in the Men's Center office, **publicity about Wednesday presentations is regularly going out to the local media (community newspapers, radio, community access cable, daily newspapers) and is getting results!** Notices for the Men's Center have been seen in the Minneapolis Star Tribune's Source section. - Andy Mickel, 2006-01-12.

Logo is MTV Networks' channel for the **gay, lesbian bisexual and transgender (GLBT) audience**, providing a mix of original and acquired entertainment that is smart, inclusive and authentic. Appealing to a broad range of GLBT viewers and to anyone enjoying great entertainment, Logo features a vast library of major film titles, documentaries, news coverage and quality original shows and specials. As an accurate reflection of the lives of the gay audience, Logo is a place where viewers can see themselves, and be themselves. <<http://www.logoonline.com/>>

"Convenience" is a musical about family, the ties that bind and the ones we struggle to break. A single mom and her estranged son have news for each other, but neither can find the words nor the courage. She is remarrying, and he has a boyfriend. Will the doors between them be sealed forever, or will a new one open? Area Premiere, Minneapolis Musical Theatre, Feb 24 - March 19, Hennepin Stages, 824 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis. <<http://www.aboutmmt.org/>> 612-673-0404.

Visit our web site, <<http://www.tcmc.org/>> for all kinds of Men's Resources for Twin Cities men! - Andy Mickel. - 2005-07-17

Annual Facilitator Training

Hank Bruns led 14 men who participated in this important training. We went over various Men Center policies and discussed ideas various people had to make groups more meaningful. Thank you Hank for leading this training again.

NORM PETRIK,
PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIR

The 20-Something GLBT Group
will re-start on Mondays,
from 7:30pm - 9:30pm, beginning Feb. 6

Hosted by one of the original founders of this group, John Rudd, this is the place for 20-somethings in the Twin Cities.

All people are welcome.

20 x 12 Honor Roll

This is a new type of membership that is designed to acknowledge and make it easier for those members who have consistently supported us.

Here's how:

- Join by paying \$20 a month (or \$240 at once)
- On the Honor Roll, you no longer need to donate money at meetings
- You are recognized on a Men's Center plaque

Call 612 / 822-5892 today!

The Men's Center ALL-PURPOSE FORM

Clip this form and mail to The Men's Center. A regular annual membership at The Twin Cities Men's Center is \$20. With that you get access to the extensive reference library on Men's Issues, receive the Men Talk newsletter, participation in the annual meeting, and enjoy reduced fees to Men's Center sponsored events. If you are able to afford a membership at the Patron (\$40) level, you get free admission to all Wednesday workshops in addition to all the regular membership benefits.

- I want to sustain the activities of The Men's Center by becoming a "20 x 12 Honor Roll Member."
- Please ENTER/RENEW my membership at The Men's Center for the next 12 months:
Enclosed please find \$_____ \$20 (Regular) \$40 (Patron).
- I want to make an additional, tax-deductible gift of \$_____. Thanks much.
- My new/correct address/phone is printed below.
- Please remove me from The Men's Center mailing list; the pre-addressed gummed mailing label is attached.
- I have these feelings, thoughts, opinions, ideas, news items for The Men's Center:

Date _____

FROM: name _____

Mailing address _____

Home phone _____

Work/other telephone _____

MEN TALK ADVERTISING RATE SCHEDULE		
Full Page	7 1/2" x 10"	\$200
1/2 Page	7 1/2" x 4 7/8"	\$125
1/4 Page	3 5/8" x 4 7/8"	\$65
Biz Card	2" x 3 1/2"	\$25

Anger Management Program

The focus of the twelve week anger management class is both education and support. Through class interaction, experiential exercises, lecture, and homework assignments, men will develop new ways to manage their feelings of anger.

Following completion of the class, participants can join an ongoing support group to reinforce their new skills. These ongoing support groups will also be facilitated by the trained volunteer facilitators.

Length of Class:

12 consecutive weeks

Number of Participants:

Space is limited to 12 participants with 2 facilitators per class

Cost:

\$185 for Men Center Members
\$195 for Non-Members

Starting Dates:

Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. Please call TMC at 612-822-5892 to be placed on the waiting list. State name, address, telephone, preferred starting class. Or call our Anger Management coordinator, John Hesch, if you are interested in planning the event or need further detail at the new Anger Management phone 612-229-3102.



Men, Meditation, Midlife and Merton Retreat
Mar 24, 7:00pm – Mar 25, 4:00pm
\$75
Benedictine Center of St. Paul's Monastery
2675 Larpenteur Ave E., St. Paul 55109
www.stpaulsmonastery.org or 651.777.7251 for info.

PRIME TIMERS MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL
A GROUP FOR MATURE GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN 50+ WHO ARE ENRICHING THEIR SOCIAL LIVES.
CONTACT BY VOICEMAIL AT (952) 200-6683
WWW.PRIMETIMERSWW.ORG/PTMSP

UPTOWN AREA SPACE TO RENT
The Men's Center, 3249 Hennepin Ave S
Space Rental Rate Schedule:
Not for profit Profit event

Full Day (8 hrs)	\$50	\$100
Half Day (4 hrs)	\$25	\$50
Hourly	\$7.50	\$15

(612) 822-5892

TMC Office Hours: M, Tu, Th, F ;1-4:30pm. Our telephone (612) 822-5892 is answered 24-hours per day by US West voicemail, and an attempt is made to return calls within 1 or 2 days. Our FAX number is (612) 821-6424.

TMC is in the lower level of "Uptown Office Park," a brick office building on the Northeast corner of West 33rd Street and Hennepin Avenue in south Minneapolis, Enter through the door on the north (3249) end of the building (it has 2 numbers: 3249 and 3255!), immediately turn left and descend the stairway through the fire door to Suite 55. (Formerly) handicapped access is easiest through a side door on West 33rd Street.

Check out our web site: www.tcmc.org or correspond at our email address: tcmc@tcmc.org

The Men's Center
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MEN TALK

The Men's Center News

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CRY LITTLE BOY

– © 2005 JERRY ESNOUGH

Cry little boy at the end of the movie

As the credits roll and the picture screen becomes dark

The man shell you wear

Cold and rigid

Who would guess you had a heart

People flock to you

Now that you are gone

To reminisce sad trails of lost love

People love a gloomy story

It makes them want to change theirs

"I don't want to end up like that"

A little boy crying inside the shell of a man

Cold and rigid

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