



Summer 2009

Volume XXVII, No. 2

Convention 2009: Philadelphia
“A Blueprint for Change: Yes, We Can, Together”
See You There!

Independence Hall, Philadelphia, PA

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Great Places
to Eat in
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Now You Can Follow
Us on Facebook and
Twitter!



The National Association of Black and White Men Together



P.O. Box 90239
 Atlanta, GA 30364
 Phone: (412) 421-1000
 or (800) NA4-BWMT
 Email: nabwmt@nabwmt.org
 Website: www.nabwmt.org

The Quarterly, the official newsletter of the National Association of Black and White Men Together, is published four times per year and is a benefit of NABWMT membership.

Co-Editors

Mario Allen
 marioallen@tmo.blackberry.net
 Ralph Ewers
 Owen228445@aol.com

Editorial Staff

"G" Garnett; lexmact@yahoo.com
 Jon Parks

Newsletter Design

Zebra Designs, Inc.
 Jarrin: jdavis@zebradesigns.net

NABWMT Board Officers

Co-Chairs

Norbert Young, Wisconsin
 nyoung1996@aol.com

Scott Duty, Maryland
 finnicky@comcast.net

Treasurer

John Williams, Massachusetts
 JohnRudy2@cs.com

Recording Secretary

Ollie Lee Taylor, Florida
 infantmystics@yahoo.com

Corresponding Secretary

Mario Allen, Ohio
 marioallen_nabwmt@yahoo.com

Directors

Mark P. Behar, Wisconsin
 mpbehar@wisc.edu

Ralph Ewers, Kentucky
 owen228445@aol.com

Darryl Fore, Ohio
 darrylfore@gmail.com

Darryl Gurley, Alabama
 DGurleyPhD@aol.com

Lloyd Kelly Illinois
 blaacone@yahoo.com

D.A. Leonard, Wisconsin
 da.leonard@att.net

Cornelius Mabin, Arkansas
 nealix101@comcast.net

Bruce Menapace, Ohio
 bmenapace@aol.com

Brian Powell, Ohio
 brianpowell@tmo.blackberry.net

■ From the Co-Chairs

Welcome to Convention 2009!

Has the past year flown by or is it just me????? It seems like just last week we were at the Holiday Inn Select in St. Louis, MO dressed in costumes for the Saturday night banquet. I vividly remember Bruce and Mark in togas, Jerry as a gladiator, Kirk as a pirate and Robert as a pimp. Good-times.

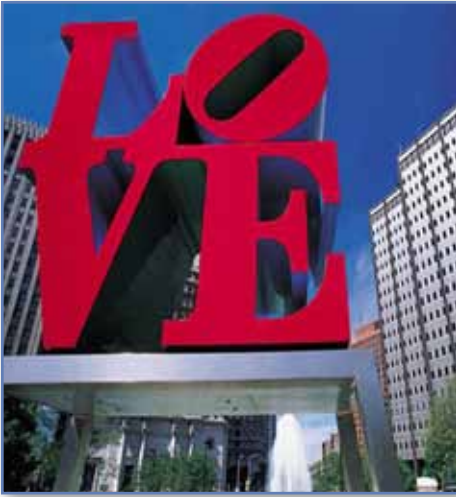
I am very much looking forward to this year's convention at the Crowne Plaza Center City. I have been to the host hotel and I think it will be a great venue for our 29th convention. The CPC have been working diligently in creating an inspired agenda. I am sure there will be something for everyone.

The conference has me excited for many reasons. Reconnecting with old friends and meeting many new ones. We wish you safe travels to Philadelphia!

Yours in Brotherhood,
 Scott Duty
 Co-Chair



■ From the Co-Chairs



Sending Out Some Brotherly Love

I can't believe a whole year has passed since our last convention and my election to co-chair of our esteemed organization. In some regards, it seems as if we were just saying our goodbyes from last year's gala in St. Louis, but in other ways, that time seems like eons ago. I hope to see many of you at the convention in the "City of Brotherly Love" in a few days, but if not, I hope that we can connect in the coming year and celebrate our 30th anniversary in 2010.

We have made great strides toward securing our future this year and in trying to revitalize NABWMT so that it can remain a vibrant force in the LGBT community for another thirty years or more. Many of these exciting changes will be revealed at the upcoming convention, but we're far from through, yet.

Much work remains to be done to ensure that our organization will always be there to fulfill our mission and perhaps to even undertake new missions. It cannot, however, be done on the backs of a few. We must unite now more than ever to accomplish our goals in these difficult times. Our fight toward achieving equality for all is not over, but I know that I can count on you to stand up with me and to continue to "fight the good fight."

Yours in Brotherhood,
Norbert Young
Co-Chair

■ 2009 Convention Schedule

Legend:

- Red** – NABWMT Business
- Black** – Workshops, Plenaries & Caucuses, and information
- Green** – Food functions (registration needed – Some are combined with other functions)
- Yellow** – Fun functions
- Blue** – Hospitality
- Purple** – Hotel Event Rooms

Monday, 7/27

■ 11 am – 4 pm

- **Board Meeting** (Senate, 8th floor)
- **Registration** (Freedom) /Hospitality

6 pm – 9 pm

BOD/Chapter Picnic @ Ken & Steve's home

Tuesday, 7/28

■ 9 am – 5 pm

- **Board Meeting** (Senate, 8th floor)
- **Registration** (Freedom) /Hospitality
- Note: BMI not scheduled due to reorganization.

10 pm – until ? **Games Night**

Wednesday, 7/29

■ 9 am – 5 pm

- **Registration** (Freedom)
- **Hospitality** (Delaware)

■ 9 am – 11:45 am (Liberty A)

- **General Membership Meeting**

■ 12 pm – 2 pm (Liberty B)

- **Opening Plenary Luncheon**
Entertainment by Jacqueline Dupree
Welcoming Speaker - Gloria Casarez
Panel - The Future of LGBT Leadership
 - Chris Bartlett
 - Soda Nobuhle
 - Sam Vann
 - David Acosta
 - Pauline Park

■ 2:15 pm – 4:30 pm (Liberty A)

- **General Membership Meeting**

■ 5 pm – 6:30 pm

Workshop Sessions 1

Session A (Liberty A)

Generational Apartheid

- Mark Behar
- Byron Lee
- Elliot Endre-Ftacy

Session B (Constitution)

Community Organizing through Modern Technology

■ 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Co-Chair's Roundtable LIVE Teleconference from Philadelphia (Liberty A)

■ 7:30 pm – 10:30 pm

Singles Mingle Pool Party

Dinner Poolside

- Jeremy Heffner
- Chris Bartlett
- Steve McCann

Thursday, 7/30/09

■ 9 am – 5 pm

- **Registration** (Freedom)
- **Hospitality** (Delaware)

■ 9 -10:30 am

Workshop Sessions 2

Session A (Liberty A)

Where Are the Communities?

- Bryian Green
- Quincy Greene

Session B (Constitution)

Recession Proof Your Life

- Howard Childs, CPA

■ 10:30-12 pm

Workshop Sessions 3

Session A (Liberty A)

Pink Dollars for LGBT Groups

- Perry Monastero

Session B (Constitution)

Inclusion – the Sequel

- Corbett Klein
- Michael Melvin
- Louis Bonilla
- Sharon Paige
- Brenda Corres

■ 12pm- 2 pm (Liberty B)

Co-Chairs' Luncheon

Presentation of the New NA

Continued on Page 5

Plenary – The Dallas Principles Authors:

- Mandy Carter
- Pam Spaulding

Remembrance of Leroy

■ 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Workshop Sessions 4

Session A (Liberty A)

Taking a Temperature

- Mytili Jaganathan
- Guy Weston

Session B (Constitution)

Health Issues in LGBT Communities

- Charlene Arcilla

■ 4 pm – 5:30 pm (Liberty A)

Candidates Forum

■ 5:30 pm – 7 pm • Dinner on your own

■ 8 pm – 10 pm

Madame X – No Talent/Talent Show (Independence Ballroom)

■ 10 pm – until ? • Movie Screening

Friday, 7/31

■ 9 am – 5 pm

- Registration (Freedom)
- Hospitality (Delaware)

■ 9 am – 10:30 am

Workshops Session 5

Session A (Liberty A)

Empowering Racial Justice

- Paul Hawkins

Session B (Declaration)

Setting the Research Agenda for Our Communities

- Lee Carson

■ 10:30 am-12 noon (Liberty A)

Caucus Sessions 1

Race/Ethnicity

Session A

Session B

Session C

■ 12 noon – 1:30 pm (Independence B)

Boxed Lunch

Caucus Sessions 2

Gender

Session A

Session B

Session C

■ 1:30 pm – 3 pm (Liberty A)

Caucus Sessions 3

Age/Generational

Session A

Session B

Session C

■ 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm (Liberty A)

Combined Caucus

Caucuses Report Back

■ 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm • Dinner on your own

■ 6 pm – 7 pm • Transport to 12th Air Command

■ 7 pm - 9 pm • Midland Regional Reception

■ 9 pm – 10 pm

Jaded Lounge @ 12th Air Command –

Summer Daze: Underwear fashion show

Entertainment - Giveaways

■ 10 pm – until ? • Disco/Bar Crawl/Movie Screening

Saturday, 8/1/09

■ 9 am – 5 pm

- Registration (Freedom)
- Hospitality (Delaware)

■ 9– 10:45 am (Liberty A) • Memorial Service

■ 11-1 pm (Liberty A)

- General Membership meeting (if needed)

■ 1– 2 pm • Lunch on your own

■ 2 pm – 4 pm (Liberty A)

- New Board meeting Chapter Sales

■ 6:30 pm – 7 pm (Liberty C Foyer)

Banquet Reception

■ 2 pm – 6 pm • Free time to explore the city

■ 7 pm – 10 pm (Liberty C)

Banquet/Awards Dinner

Entertainment by Independence Squares and Smoke Lily & Jade

Michael Hinson – Keynote

Convention 2010 presentation

■ 10 pm – until ? • Movie Screening

■ National News and Comments

NABWMT Announces A New Student Academic Scholarship/Grant Program

The National Association has initiated a grant program to assist in the academic advancement of gay, lesbian and transgendered college students enrolled in an accredited college or university. Co-Chair Norbert Young stated, "We believe that our organization has an obligation to assist in the development of future gay leaders." Board member Professor Darryl Gurley pointed out that; "While these initial grants are a modest \$250, we have the expectation that they will increase in future years."

Applications are being encouraged in the states and communities surrounding the association's convention sites, and a complementary registration will be given to that meeting where the recipients will receive their awards. Announcement relative to this will be made at the 2009 convention in Philadelphia.



Convention 2010

The board has accepted a bid to host the 30th anniversary convention in Ft. Lauderdale Florida. Details will be available in Philadelphia, on the web page and here in the quarterly publication.

Q-Networking

As the nation continues to embrace the 24/7 broadband "Blink" attitude, social networking has become the static electricity fueling instant messaging, blogging live, and going beyond the realm of the days when people just wanted to "reach out an touch." NABWMT fully understands that we must seize all these outreach opportunities to connect to our current membership and prospects within the virtual world. In order to achieve this stream we are fast tracking our online presence across these networks, ultimately pursuing the goal of communicating with each of you in real time. It's an exciting time at the NA, so don't wait or hesitate. Join us in cyberspace today too stay linked to our latest news, updates, tweets, and so much more as we grow in the 21st century. Click it NOW!

Instructions for navigating the web pages:

Every Q – From the homepage select groups, select Cultures & Nations;

select Black and White Men Together.

Facebook – From the homepage select find friends, and then search N.A.B.W.M.T.

Myspace – Url is www.myspace.com/nabwmt

Twitter – Url is www.twitter.com/NABWMT

A Taste of Philadelphia

I would hate to say whether Philadelphia is more known for The Liberty Bell or cheesesteaks. I just know I love them! Use this guide to help you find a cheesesteak and how to order.

Where to search for the best cheesesteaks in Philadelphia:
www.bestcheesesteaks.com/cheesesteaks/pa.htm

How to order a Philly Cheesesteak

When ordering a cheesesteak, the idea is to let the cashier know:

- that you would like a cheesesteak
- what type of cheese you want, and
- whether or not you want fried onions.

And you have to be as concise as possible while doing so!

Locals have become so adept at this practice that they basically have it down to three words: saying "one wiz with" to the person behind the counter means that you would like one cheesesteak [denoted by the "one"] with Cheeze Wiz as your choice of cheese [denoted by the "wiz"] and with fried onions [denoted by the "with"].

Similarly, saying "one provolone without" would secure you a single cheesesteak [one] made with provolone cheese [provolone] and without fried onions [without].

Ok. Got it? Now go ahead and test out your ordering prowess for real.



■ Q-Food

Philly Eats

Courtesy of Jim, Co-Chair of BWMT Atlanta

Not sure how many of you are planning on attending the National Convention, but I've whipped up some places gay & straight within relatively close proximity to the hotel you may (or may not) be interested in. Check 'em out!

Devils Alley Bar & Grill, 1907 Chestnut, 215/751-0707
<http://www.devilsalleybarandgrill.com/>

Liberty Bell Center, off of 5th & Market
<http://www.nps.gov/inde/liberty-bell-center.htm>

Gay Philadelphia Bars, Clubs, Restaurants, Shopping, Hotels, Gyms, etc.

http://www.gayphiladelphia.com/gay_bars_clubs.html
http://www.gayphiladelphia.com/gay_restaurants.html

Real Cheesesteaks

Geno's Steaks, 1219 S. 9th St.
<http://www.genosteaks.com/>

Pat's King of Steaks, 9th St. at Wharton & Passyunk Av. (open 24/7)
<http://www.patskingofsteaks.com/>

This was listed on TravelAdvisor.com as the number 1 attraction in Philly
<http://cityfoodtours.com/philadelphia-food-tours.cfm>
http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurants-g60795-Philadelphia_Pennsylvania.html

Looking for a quick snack? Café Express located in the Crown Plaza Hotel offers baked goods, sandwiches, cappuccino and espresso. Maybe you're exhausted after a long day of meetings, order in-room dining and we will bring your order to you. If you feel like going out for a night on the town, sample from a mouthwatering array of downtown restaurants. From delectable seafood to traditional Italian cuisine, the dining choices at our elegant hotel include:

Elephant & Castle Pub & Restaurant
<<http://www.elephantcastle.com/>>, providing casual, pub-style dining, located on the lobby level
Cafe Express, located in the lobby
In-Room Dining, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.
Continental Mid-Town Restaurant (1 block)
Rouge Restaurant (2 blocks)
Devon Seafood Restaurant (2 blocks)
Striped Bass Restaurant (4 blocks)

The Elephant and Castle Pub has some decent reviews on Zagat's!



Gay Health and HIV Update: Summer '09

Compiled by Mark Behar

This edition's Update is abstracted from the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's LGBT Health Digest, a weekly electronic newsletter with information and resources for health professionals concerned about the health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations. To sign up for your own newsletter, address your request to <mailto:digest@glma.org>

New Study Links Gay Marriage Bans to Rise in HIV Rate

A new study by economists at Atlanta's Emory University indicates that same-sex marriage bans may be tied to a rise in HIV infections. The study used data from the General Social Survey (GSS), which has tracked the attitudes of Americans during the past four decades. The economists, Hugo Mialon and Andrew Francis, calculated that a rise in tolerance from the 1970s to the 1990s reduced HIV cases by one per 100,000 people, and that laws against same-sex marriage boosted cases by 4 per 100,000.

More information about the study is available at <http://www.emory.edu/home/news/releases/2009/06/study-links-gay-marriage-bans-to-rise-in-hiv-rate.html>



New Legal Guide for Over Age 55 Crowd

A new manual on legal issues relevant to gay men and lesbian women over the age of 55, called Planning with a Purpose: Legal Basics for LGBT Elders from the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) is now available. The guide covers a range of topics, including recognition of relationships, elder abuse, inheritance, long-term care, and other topics. NCLR's Elder Law Project collaborated with Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE, formerly Seniors Active in a Gay Environment). Please contact for more information: <http://glmaimpak.networkats.com>.

Hospital Health Care Facilities Sought to Fill Out GLBT Based Survey
The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA) and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation's Family Project are jointly supporting the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI), which identifies the best medical practices and policies associated with hospital-based healthcare. Last year, over 160 facilities participated in the HEI survey, but there are literally thousands of such facilities that have not yet responded. If you work at a hospital and are authorized to participate on your facility's behalf, please follow the link below to find out how to participate in the survey. Contact: <http://glmaimpak.networkats.com>.

Legislation Introduced in U.S. House to Address Q-Health Disparities
Openly lesbian Wisconsin Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin introduced legislation to address Ending Health Disparities for LGBT Americans (ELHDA). The Act proposes the first comprehensive approach to improving healthcare where LGBT Americans face inequality and discrimination. Co-sponsored by Representatives Barney Frank, Jared Polis, and Henry Waxman, ELHDA would provide funding for community health centers who serve the LGBT community, create a new office of LGBT Health within the Department of Health and Human Services, extend Medicare benefits to same-sex domestic partners, provide funding for cultural competence training for healthcare providers, and establish non-discrimination policies for all federal health programs. For more information: <http://glmaimpak.networkats.com>.



Gay Health and HIV Update: Summer '09

“Test and Treat” Approach Questioned

Almost 30 years after recognition of HIV and AIDS as sexually transmitted infectious progressive diseases, chief scientists from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are finally suggesting the need to test the public health assumptions about the validity of the “test and treat” approach.

In a commentary in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Anthony Fauci and Carl Dieffenbach of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) discuss how universal, voluntary, annual HIV testing combined with immediate treatment for those who test positive for HIV could reduce HIV incidence and end the HIV pandemic within 50 years. This strategy is described as the “test and treat” approach. It is based on numerous assumptions that need to be tested and also raises concerns about individual rights, cost effectiveness and other critical issues that require broad public debate.

HIV Community Health Care Reform Conference Call

Project Inform and the HIV Health Care Access Working Group are convening conference calls, open to all community members, to provide updates on Congressional health care reform activities and the impact on HIV/AIDS-related services. The calls are also designed to provide answers to questions, share information, and strategize and coordinate efforts. The calls will take place on the first and third Thursday of each month at 2:00 pm Eastern Time. The next call, at 2:00 pm Eastern Time on June 18, will focus on grassroots strategies. To participate, call (218) 339-2699 and use access code 968918.

More information will be posted on the HIV Health Care Access Working Group listserv. To join the listserv, email pdunn.projectinform@gmail.com. You can also find summaries of the first community call, held on June 4, and future calls at www.projectinform.org.

Researchers Explore Altruistic Behaviors Among Homo and Hetero Adults

An article in the June 2009 edition of *AIDS Care* explores differences in altruistic and reciprocal behaviors among homosexual and heterosexual adults. Using data from the General Social Survey, a nationally representative biennial survey that in 2002 and 2004 interviewed 2031 sexually experienced adults, the authors examined levels of empathic concern, altruistic values, and the past year occurrence of altruistic and reciprocal behaviors among homosexual and exclusively heterosexual adults. Homosexual men reported stronger altruistic values than did exclusively heterosexual men, but levels of

empathic concern and the range of altruistic and reciprocal behaviors engaged in did not vary appreciably. Overall, women reported higher levels of empathic concern and stronger altruistic values relative to men while men reported engaging in a wider variety of altruistic behaviors than did women. One surprising finding in this study was that approximately 17 percent of homosexual men had donated blood in the year prior to interview despite the prohibition against doing so.

More information at <http://www.informaworld.com>.



Meeting to Examine Mental Health Issues and the LGBT Community

The National Coalition for LGBT Health is sponsoring a meeting on mental health and the LGBT community in Washington, DC on July 15, 2009. The meeting will be held at the Embassy Suite, 1250 22nd St NW in Washington, DC. This is a free and open meeting for organizations, practitioners, researchers

and others experienced in working on the mental health needs of the LGBT community to share best practices and begin creating the infrastructure to support each other and others engaged in this work. A detailed agenda will be released shortly and will include skills trainings, updates on research and from the field, and discussions of how to best create supportive infrastructure nationwide.

To RSVP or for further information, please contact Rebecca Fox at rebecca@lgbthealth.net or (202) 558-6828.

Gay Health and HIV Update: Summer '09

California a Bell-Weather Regarding Cuts in HIV/AIDS Services?

The San Francisco Bay Area Reporter reports that HIV/AIDS services may be targets of cuts by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in order to help address the state's \$24 billion budget deficit. Initially proposed cuts eliminated the entire \$160 million budget from the state's Office of AIDS, but this would jeopardize more than \$150 million of matching federal funds. The budget plan has since been revised to call for \$80 million in cuts, but this too will be opposed by advocacy groups.

Researchers Seek Gay Dads to Participate in Study

A study that seeks to examine the many ways families headed by gay fathers have been created, explore how families function, and learn about the relationship between partners is seeking participants. The study consists of an online survey that will take approximately 25-35 minutes, and participants must be willing to answer confidential questions about their personal lives and family. To qualify for the study, participants must identify as male, a father, and gay or bisexual and have at least one child of any age. Children can be biological, adopted, foster, step, or other child. This study has been approved by the University of Virginia Institutional Review Board.

If you and/or your partner are interested in participating or want further information, please contact Samantha L. Tornello, the study's Principal Investigator, by email at GayDadsStudy@gmail.com.

Upcoming Scientific Meetings on HIV/AIDS

For the news hounds looking to learn about (or report to your local communities about) HIV/AIDS, here are some upcoming meetings to be aware of. Media reports usually follow these conferences also. Important news may occur at any time, but here are two meetings that will excite our HIV provider colleagues. The 47th Annual Meeting of the Infectious Disease Society of America is scheduled for October 29-November 1, in Philadelphia. The Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections is planned for February 17-20, 2010, in San Francisco.

Is Your HIV Provider Good Enough??

The HIV Medical Association (HIVMA.org) believes that HIV-qualified physicians (sorry nurse practitioners and physician assistants!) should manage the care of patients with HIV disease. Care by experienced and well trained HIV providers translates into improved clinical outcomes.

In defining HIV-qualified physicians, one must take into account both the training and expertise of infectious disease specialists, as well as the expertise and experience of physicians from a variety of medical disciplines who have made a significant professional commitment to HIV/AIDS care and who care for tens of thousands of patients with HIV disease.

A proposed credentialing process to identify HIV-qualified physicians will be based on a combination of patient experience and the demonstration of ongoing education and training in HIV care, especially in the area of antiretroviral therapy. To be an HIV-qualified physician, an individual should be able to show continuous professional development by meeting the following qualifications:

- In the immediately preceding 24 months has provided continuous and direct medical care to a minimum of 20 patients who are infected with HIV; and
- In the immediately preceding 24 months has successfully completed a minimum of 30 hours of Category 1 continuing medical education in the diagnosis and treatment of HIV-infected patients; or
- Recertification in the subspecialty of infectious diseases or initial board certification in infectious diseases in the preceding 12 months.

Does your provider "have what it takes"?

Confused About Social Networking, Blogs, Twittering, etc.?

Here's a quick guide to help steer you through the maze!

Social Networking Sites

Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites, originally created as an online yearbook. It lets you set up a personal profile and connect with friends using comments, messaging, groups, fan pages, sharing photos/videos/links and applications (apps). Popular Social Networking Sites:

Facebook.com	Manhunt.com	Gay.com
LinkedIn.com	Adam4adam.com	
Myspace.com	Daddyhunt.com	

(there are probably hundreds of these gay sites; search creatively!)

Blogs

Short for Weblog, a blog is a website that is usually maintained by an individual or group of people and provides commentary, news, insight, descriptions or other material such as graphics or videos. Blogs are unique in that entries are usually listed in a reverse chronological order (most recent first), and that readers can comment on each entry, often engaging in ongoing dialog, sharing common themes as "threads." One great example of a blog that we've spoken of before is: lifelube.blogspot.com. Some free blogging platforms to try:

Wordpress.com	Typepad.com
Blogger.com	Livejournal.com

Twitter

Defined as a "micro-blogging service," Twitter allow you to type up to 140 characters to answer such questions as, "What are you doing?" Since you are limited by the number of characters typed, many users think of interesting abbreviations (such as omitting vowels and using abbreviations). Why anyone would want to know exactly "wht u r dng?" is beyond the scope of this brief article! Think of Twitter as a broadcast instant message to those who follow you. It is a great news source, place to exchange resources, connect with colleagues and friends, as well as document your experiences. Here are some places to "tweet":

Twitter.com	Tweepsearch.com
Twellow.com	Wefollow.com

You Tube

You Tube is a leader in free video-hosting sites. It allows users to upload (your computer to their server) recorded videos, rate & comment on videos as well as embed them into webpages or blogs. Some of the biggest spread of unwanted viruses may happen through YouTube, so be careful not to get "rickroll'd"! Check out these sites:

Youtube.com	Vimeo.com	Xtube.com
Viddler.com	Video.google.com	



Flickr

Flickr brings elements of social networking to photo sharing. Not only can you host photos and embed them into other web pages, but it also allows you to tag (by location or keyword), comments, write descriptions and join photo groups. Some photo sharing sites:

Flickr.com
Photobucket.com
Picasa.google.com
Facebook.com

Ustream

"Livestreaming" is watching an event online as it happens. Ustream allows you to do the same. Lots of people broadcast their lives or events over the internet, some for fame, some for transparency, some for opening up conversations about a certain event. Here are some Live-streaming sites:

Ustream.com
Justin.tv
Mogulus.com
Qik.com (for mobile phones)

We are a culturally diverse sexual minority research team conducting an empirical study examining attitudes, feelings, and experiences associated with being an Asian American who experiences attraction to members of the same sex. Historically, researchers have neglected the lives of Asian American gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons, and very little research has looked specifically at attitudes, feelings, and experiences that sexual minority persons have based on their race and sexual orientation. We sincerely invite you to participate in this survey to help us learn more about the Asian American sexual minority persons in our communities!

To be eligible for this study, you must be an Asian/Asian American who is at least 18 years old, has experienced same-sex attraction, and currently resides in the United States. The survey is anonymous, and takes about 30 minutes to complete. As an incentive to participate, all participants will be given the chance to enter a raffle awarding \$100 Amazon.com gift certificate to one randomly selected person. For those interested in participating in this study, click on the following hypertext link (or cut and paste it into your browser): <http://d1599.psychsurvey.com> <<http://d1599.psychsurvey.com>>

This will take you to the consent form and questionnaire. Please feel free to forward this e-mail announcement to eligible friends/colleagues and other gay/lesbian/bisexual or Asian American related listserves. Thanks in advance for your help with this project!

Sincerely,
Dawn and Mi Ra
Dawn M. Szymanski, Ph.D., University of Tennessee

■ Ask Q-Doc Anything

Erections and C-Rings?

Dear Q-Doc:

Many gay men in their 30s, 40s, 50s, and older seem to have trouble getting and maintaining stiff erections, even with the use of cock rings. Is this problem more common among gay men due to past or current use of drugs like cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine, ecstasy, or other drugs? Or is it because of “too frequent” sex? Or, too much anal sex? Or injury that may have occurred in the past? Or what about large endowments—are large dicks just more apt “to fail” with aging than average sized packages? Are c-rings helpful, harmful, or neutral?

--Anonymous



Dear Anonymous,

Great questions! All men, regardless of their sexual orientation, tend to “suffer” the same consequences of getting older: less “frisky” during sex, lower sex drive, not as hard, less “staying power.” These are a function of aging, lower testosterone levels, and chronic medical problems that may have caused damage to the nerves and blood vessels associated with the neurophysiologic mechanism that controls erection and ejaculation.

Genetic background which we have little or no control of, as well as poorly controlled high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, depression, as well as use of tobacco and alcohol, frequently cause chronic and irreversible changes that can speed this aging process. Illicit drugs, such as cocaine and marijuana can also have unpredictable effects—cocaine, for example, is a stimulant and can cause blood vessel damage, stroke, and high blood pressure, as well as numbness in the sensation of touch (a numb “woody”), which is not conducive to good sex! Prescribed medications, especially some antidepressant medications, also may frequently interfere with a person’s desire to have sex and perform reliably.

Unfortunately, performance anxiety may feed a viscous circle—the more you worry about having sex and pleasing/impressing your partner, the more apt you are at not performing up to your expectations. And some anxiety medications will make you more sleepy than more horny!

Cock rings do help to decrease the amount of blood exiting an erect penis (“venous outflow”), and sometimes are used with such prescription erection medications as Viagra, Levitra, or Cialis (all collectively known as PDE-5 inhibitors), which help to dilate arterial blood flow into the penis—and other organs, including the brain. That is why headaches sometimes accompany the use of these drugs. “Poppers” also tend to increase arterial blood flow into the penis, but do not control the outflow from the veins, unlike the Viagra-like drugs. Poppers are potentially very dangerous when used with some blood pressure medications and sometimes these PDE-5 inhibitors. The feeling of lightheadedness and warmth is really from blood vessels dilating and blood pressure dropping. That can precipitate a heart attack in some people.

Ironically, the desire for a hard dick may inadvertently drive the desire for older men to seek out the services of younger men—for the desire to have a reliable “penetrator” during sex! It will be interesting to learn if this class of pharmaceutical medications (PDE-5 inhibitors) will actually change our youth-oriented gay culture!

The frequency of sex is only a problem if you obsess about having sex or it interferes with your ability to do normal activities of daily living. Ejaculation at least 3 times a week has been associated with better prostate health.

Anal sex with sufficient lubrication and protection against passing infectious germs (i.e., wearing condoms) is perfectly fine, especially if there is no significant pain. Start slowly and gently, and remember that prolonged pain is your body’s sensation that an injury may be occurring. Don’t use drugs that numb your sense of feeling—no anesthetic anal gels, for example! And remember, that really large penises, either as length or girth, may cause injury during receptive anal sex without special care and adequate lubrication.

Severe injuries to the penis can cause scar tissue formation, abnormal and painful curvatures of the penis when erect. Zipper injuries, although painful, usually heal without incident. Large penises or testicles, in and of themselves, are essentially the same as average sized penises regarding sexual performances.

Perhaps some of these issues will make you think of additional questions! Bring them on, and address to Q-Visions, or mpbehar@wisc.edu. All questions will be treated confidentially, and real names will never be used. Please ask if you’d like a private reply.

■ Membership Application



Complete this application form for Individual Membership for the NABWMT: A Gay Multiracial Organization for All People and return with a check to NABWMT: P.O. Box 90239, Atlanta, GA 30364. You may also pay on-line: www.nabwmt.org.

Membership:

National Individual Member — \$30/year.

Individual Life Member — \$1000 in any one year, one time.

Couples Membership, if individuals reside at the same address – \$48/year.

Tax Exempt Donations: \$

\$ Michael John Smith Scholarship for HIV Positive Persons needing financial assistance to attend National Convention

\$ Wendell Roberson Fund for persons unaffected by HIV, needing financial assistance to attend National Convention

\$ Student Scholarship Grant for those enrolled in approved academic programs

Individual #1 Name:

Individual #2 Name:

Mailing Address:

City: State: Zip: Country:

Phone: Fax:

Email: Local Chapter Affiliation:

None, But Am Interested in Joining/Forming One In My Area

I have interest and experience that may help the NA or my local chapter in these areas:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web or Newsletter Design, Blogging | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program & Event Planning, Decorations | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching, Education | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Issues | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting, Fundraising, Grant Writing | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising, Budgeting, CPA | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter Development | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program & Event Planning | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography, Videography | Comments: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify: | Comments: <input type="text"/> |

What specific things would you like the NA do? How can we improve our relationship with your chapter, or provide you with unique services? Write on Back or Attach Additional Pages.

By submission of this form, I am/we are certifying my/our support of the NA's Statement of Purpose: "The NABWMT is a gay, multiracial, multicultural organization committed to fostering supportive environments wherein racial and cultural barriers can be overcome and the goal of human equality realized. To these ends the NA and its local chapters engage in educational, political, cultural, and social activities as a means of dealing with the racism, sexism, homophobia, HIV/AIDS discrimination and other inequities in our communities and in our lives."

Signed #1

Signed #2

Date