

To Whom It May Concern,

May 19,1993

As an open minded and straight woman of twenty five, it makes me blush now to even sit down to write the start of this story.

As a typical fourteen year old teenager, fascinated with anything out of the ordinary, I was the gaylines worst nightmare. The crank; well, curious caller really. My girlfriend and I would be together on the weekends babysitting, and after putting the kids to bed would find ourselves sufficiently bored. So we found a favorite pastime, we'd call the gayline just to hear a voice answer and then we would hang up. We just wanted to hear what "they" were supposed to sound like.

Then one night I was intensely curious and decided to simply call and ask about the gaylife, the big mystery! What a pleasant surprise I got when a really nice guy named Brian answered. He was not weird or strange or even a sick person as I had been led to believe. I also found out he was not a man lacking his manhood nor was he a sicko waiting to be "converted" by the right woman. You would be amazed at the number of straight people who believe that!

It was my opinion that he was in fact a happy, healthy, and very normal man who simply chose to love men instead of women. Brian patiently explained that people just did not wake up one day and decide to "become" gay -they were born that way.

So for a very long time after our first chat, I called him whenever he was working on the line and we shared a lot of laughs and a friendship. He taught me so much that a year ago I began my search to find him so that we could meet face to face and I could thank him. For it is because of him that I believe in our human right to love who we choose and I can stand up for gays with no shame or fear.

Thanks to Brian I see neither gay or straight people -only people. I now believe that no one has the right to tell anyone else who they should or should not love. That is a freedom we all have.

I am sickened at times to live in a society where narrow minded people think they should make all the rules and everyone else should live by them. Like it or not. That is not showing respect for the differences between us all that make us all human. Gay people are exactly that -Human. And they are humans with rights, just like the rest of us. Why then must they always have to fight for their rights. It simply is not fair.

We just cannot go around putting labels on people and prejudging them by those labels. We are all free to live our lives any way we choose. As long as we are not hurting anyone. And is the gay community really hurting anyone? You would think so by the sound of the gay bashers hollers whenever the gay rights issue is raised!

But go ahead and try telling them who they should and should not make love with. They will, I assure you, tell you to go mind your own business. And that is exactly what the gay community should be telling them -To Go Mind Their Own Business.

Ms. Shonna Lee Leonard

*Shonna Lee*