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Community Seasonal . Spring 2015

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THE GEEK ISSUE

NERD TAKES FLIGHT

IN THIS ISSUE WE
TAKE A LOOK AT
GEEK FASHION,
SEX AND REVENGE

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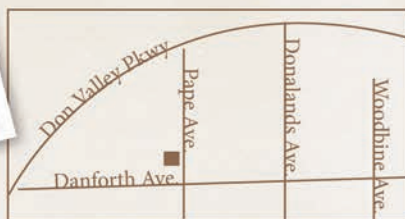
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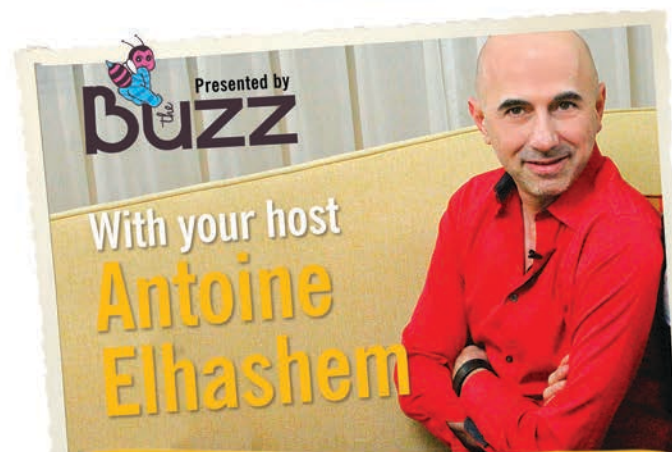


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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear Reader: Happy Spring!

At least I hope by the time you are reading this issue it's a little warmer, because heaven knows there were some pretty painfully cold winter days this year.

Last issue I said goodbye to a colleague and a friend Jeff Harrison, who was with us from the first days of PinkPlayMags as our Editor-in-Chief, and has penned many great features and fictions for us over the years. In this issue I welcome an equally wonderful colleague Bryen Dunn to take over where Jeff left off. You may know Bryen from his very informative and exciting travel coverage that has graced the pages of our magazine over the last few years. Bryen is passionate, has a great view of our community, and I am very excited to see what great stuff we can all do together.

PinkPlayMags turns eight this year. It honestly has been one of the most pleasing and fun things I have ever personally worked on in my entire career. I love this magazine, and I love that you love reading it. I am excited to see what features and articles the team has cooked up every time we go to work on a new issue. I enjoy the crazy ideas for a cover shoot that we come up with, and that so many talented people in our community contribute to.

This year we decided that we will produce what we are calling "The Year of the Sequels". Basically we are taking four of the most popular editions we published over the seven years, and we are revisiting them. If you are an avid reader you likely know that in some issues we really dive in depth into a specific theme and we produce covers, photo shoots, and photo essays that reflect the theme. Some of those issues have characters

and storylines as part of the essays, so this year we are going back and visiting those characters to see where they are now.

One of the most popular issues we ever published was The GEEK Issue. Welcome to "The GEEK Issue - The Sequel: N.E.R.D. Takes Flight". Back in 2010 we left our N.E.R.D. dealing with being bullied in school and escaping his hell every night by travelling with his gal friend to outer space, and working as the most popular bartender in an alien cantina. Turn to "Fiction" in this issue to see what happens to him now. Here's a little hint - some bullies butts are about to get majorly kicked. Also we take another in depth look at the geek culture in our LGBTQ community with all your favourite writers and PinkPlayMags's columnists.

Before I sign off I want to remind you that PinkPlayMags online has been getting more bloggers coming on board, and covering a wide variety of topics. You can read about all they have to say on our website, and also review the spring 2010 edition of the original GEEK issue in the archive section at www.pinkplaymags.com



Have a wonderful spring!

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Gay, Lesbian, Bi, Trans, Leather, and Queer Community
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Publisher/Creative Director Antoine Elhashem
Editor-in-Chief Bryen Dunn
Art Direction and Production Jonathan Rosa

Contributors

Writers Caitlyn Holroyd, Jon Pressick, Patricia Wilson, cee sando, Kelly Wilk, Scott Dagastino, Michael Ain



COVER: The Geek Issue - The Sequel: N.E.R.D. Takes Flight

Cover Illustration T.M. Royle

Cover Photography Cat Grant

Cover Concept & Creative Direction Antoine Elhashem

Cover Models James Courtney

Based on characters concept by Jeff Harrison

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Websites

www.pinkplaymags.com

www.thepinkpagesdirectory.com

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For advertising inquiries
advertising@thepinkpagesdirectory.com

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President..... Antoine Elhashem
General Manager..... Kim Dobie
Advertising Consultant..... Carolyn Burtch
Counsels..... Lai-King Hum, Hum Law Firm

Mailing address

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To contact us

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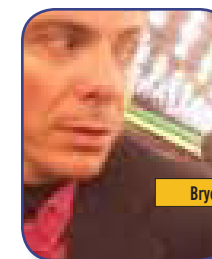
You're holding (or viewing online) our SpringPlay issue of PinkPlayMags. It's a special one for me over the eight years of publication, as it's the first one that I'm now Editor-in-Chief of. I've written many travel articles over the years as a regular contributor to the magazine, but this time I had the responsibility of helping to put together the content and layout with a wonderful team of writers, designers, illustrators, and visionaries.

Welcome to The Geek Issue: The Sequel – N.E.R.D. Takes Flight, where we get to learn more about terminology like Cosplay and Comicon. I'm excited to be working with writers from the past, regular contributors, and bright new faces here for the first time. We get to catch up on the comic saga with T.M. Royle in "N.E.R.D. Takes Flight". As well, we brought back Scott Dagastino to write "Revenge of the Nerds", a follow up piece to his article "Geek Boy" which appeared in the original Spring 2010 Geek Issue. Kelly Wilk tells us how superheroes helped her in a time of personal distress with "Laughing in the Face of Death", and our Tops and Bottoms columnist cee sando takes a fashionable look at "Geek Chic".

Our team of first-time writers with the magazine have some amazing tales to tell, and I'm so happy to have each of them as part of this special issue with me. Jon Pressick delves into the world of geek sex, Michael Ain offers a great overview on PFLAG, Lexi Sanfino spotlights Toronto avant-garde artist Bruce LaBruce, and Patricia Wilson joins us a regular columnist for "From the Heart". Finally, Caitlyn Holroyd once again highlights what's hot and happening with her "Spring in the City" listings, Julie Antoinette

looks into the future with "Spring Horoscopes", and my travel destination for this issue is Israel. If you find yourself in Brooklyn on June 13th, you might want to check out Flame Con, "a one-day comics, arts, and entertainment expo showcasing creators and celebrities from all corners of LGBTQ geek fandom, including comics, video games, film, and television." Also, be sure to surf over to Geeks OUT, which "seeks to highlight and foster the growing presence of the LGBT community within the greater comics and gaming communities." Need a little stimulation? Try The Geek Molecule, "a concentrated beauty and lifestyle supplement with Zinc and Gotu Kola to support cognitive function and mental stamina."

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I enjoyed working on it, and please visit us online to read more enlightening stories from our Blogger Family that includes exclusive online content from cee sando and Kelly Wilk, Cheryl Costello, Dallas Barnes, Damian Wyward, Lisa Feldstein, and Karl Marshall.



Bryen Dunn

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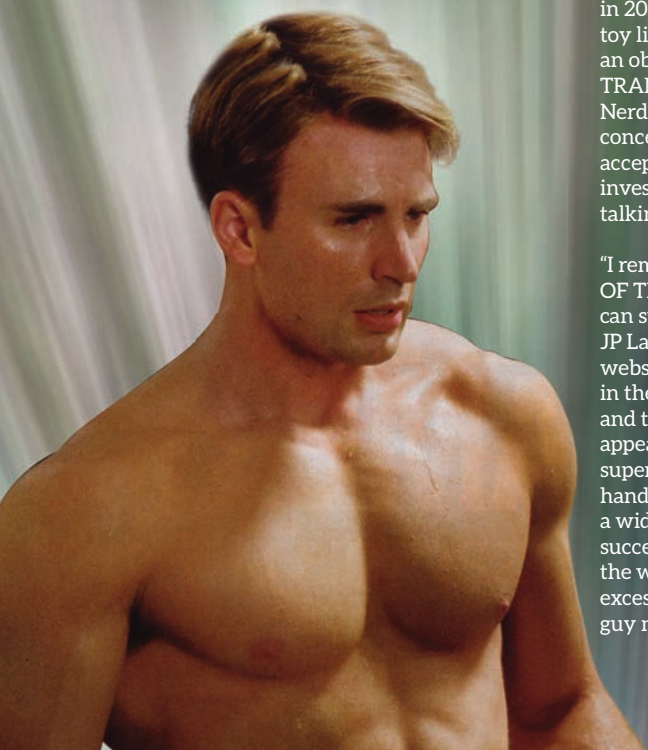
REVENGE OF THE NERDS

by Scott Dagostino

It was five years ago, in these very pages, that one could hear the heavy breathing of what would by now become a full, shuddering nerdgasm. For the Springplay! issue in 2010, I wrote about the rise of gay geek culture and how, “as geeks have ruled the internet, their culture has become the popular culture.” But we had no idea.

The three highest-grossing movies internationally in 2014 were based respectively on a 1980s toy line, a classic children's fantasy novel, and an obscure Marvel comic book. Consider this: TRANSFORMERS 4 raked in one billion dollars. Nerd fantasies are now mainstream fantasies, and concerns about what the general public might accept evaporated once we saw them emotionally invest in a gun-toting raccoon and his walking, talking tree friend.

“I remember seeing the trailer for GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY and thinking, ‘Man, if Marvel can successfully sell this, they’ll be golden!’”, laughs JP Laroque, creator of the award-winning comedy webseries GAY NERDS, “They were really smart in the way they used self-referential humour and the vintage music to make the weirdness appealing to a mass audience, and of course a super-handsome, charismatic lead actor who can pull in a wide demographic.” Yes, one major factor in the success of Marvel Studios these past few years is the way they’ve pushed the envelope on nerdy excess, while always keeping a hot straight blond guy named Chris front and centre.



The past couple of years have happily seen the geek playground grow not just in numbers, but in diversity as well with the increasing understanding from major producers, that people who aren't a hot straight blond guy named Chris want to see themselves represented. One big step comes later this summer when DC Comics will launch a slate of new comic books starring more women, more people of colour, and one book starring The Midnighter, a former supporting character that answers the question: What if Batman were both gay and viciously blood-thirsty? As DC Entertainment Co-Publisher Dan DiDio gushed in a press release, “This heralds in a new era for the DC Universe that will allow us to publish something for everyone, be more expansive and modern in our approach and tell stories that better reflect the society around us.”

It's happening on television too, as the comic book companies are slowly taking over the networks with a number of hit shows like ARROW, GOTHAM, and AGENT CARTER that include lesbian and bisexual characters. THE FLASH recently introduced a gay villain called the Pied Piper, who gets led away in handcuffs and taunts our hero, “Being scooped up by a guy in head-to-toe leather is a long time fantasy of mine, so thanks!” That's a cheeky joke for an 8 pm family show and a welcome sign of a relaxed, even playful view of sexuality.

“I enjoy Felix on ORPHAN BLACK quite a bit,” says Laroque, noting how other shows have struggled with incorporating queer sexuality. “There were all these rumours last year that the writers of THE WALKING DEAD might make Daryl Dixon gay, and the fan base got so angry! They love that character but could not see him as gay, even though it kind of makes sense. Either way, he's awesome.” Meanwhile, anime fans were puzzled and delighted last year when the finale of THE LEGEND OF KORRA hinted at a long-awaited girl/girl romance. It was ambiguous, but welcomed. The question, says Laroque, “is how much difference is an audience cool with? When do people say they're cool with the raccoon or cool with the walking tree, but if they're bisexual, that's just too weird?” he laughs.

However, within all geeky media it's video games that have made the most sudden progress. “There have been a lot of changes in the world of video games these past couple years,” says Sam Romero, one of the organizers of the Toronto Gaymers, a social group for queer fans of video and board games. “Look at the character of Ellie in THE LAST OF US,” he says, “who ends up kissing a girl in her side quest? I love her!” That

surprise kiss in the hit zombie game shocked and delighted gamers in equal measure.

“Video games have stopped ‘announcing’ gay characters,” writer Lucien Soulban explained on the blog of his employer Ubisoft, “They're introducing them without much fanfare in an effort to say yeah it's there and pretty normal. Call it: We're here, we're queer, and we're busy working.” There's a lesbian love story in GUILD WARS 2 and players can swap the gender of their SUNSET OVERDRIVE character even in mid-game, but the biggest step forward came last fall with the arrival of suave sidekick Dorian Pavus in DRAGON AGE: INQUISITION.

“Dorian is gay,” explains writer David Gaider on the game's website, “the first fully gay character I've had the opportunity to write. I suppose this aspect of Dorian will make him controversial in some corners, but I was glad to include it. It made writing Dorian a very personal experience for me, and I'm hopeful that will make him seem like a fully realized character to fans in the end.”

Despite the usual grumbling from conservatives, it seems to have worked. The game's been a hit and fans seem to love this character who's been compared to the sly but noble bisexual Oberyn Martell on GAME OF THRONES. One gamer called “shellbullets” on Reddit asked the forum, “So, how many other straight males romanced Dorian? I couldn't help it,” he wrote, “He's so witty and charming and the perfect guy for a bromance. I told him he's a badass and we swapped some spit. I have no regrets.”

So there we have it: the whole world's gone nerd, the nerd world's gone queer, and everything is now joysticks and rainbows. Well, if only.

“When we took GAY NERDS to [annual Toronto convention] FanExpo,” recalls Laroque, “there were tons of people who were very positive about seeing queers represented in that space, but



there were just as many who were really angry about it. They got mad at our logo, which is two crossed lightsabers that look like penises. 'That's overly sexual!' they'd complain, while the booth right next to us featured naked women riding on dragons!" He laughs but warns, "There's still a fear of difference and a lot of insecurity." "It's nice to think that you're sharing a commonality with people who are intelligent and who are passionate about certain subcultures, like film or comic books or video games," he continues, "but within geek culture, there are still a lot of fears around traditional masculinity. In past decades, a lot of geeks were attacked often and the insults hurled at them were typically homophobic. That creates a division where straight geeks will distance themselves from queer ones."

It's a problem Toronto Gaymer Sam Romero sees frequently, ruefully laughing as he quotes one online player who insisted, "We have no problem with this player on Xbox being gay, we just don't like him liking guys." As gaming moves away from solitary playing and towards more collaborative online sessions with headsets and microphones, trans people are increasingly facing abuse when their onscreen gender presentation may not entirely mesh with their actual voice. Such intolerance offends Romero: "If you don't want to play a gay character, then don't choose that character. It doesn't affect you. Your social awkwardness doesn't give you the right to be homophobic, transphobic or misogynistic."

"It seems in every group of nerdy guys I've known, there's one guy who's trapped in a feedback loop of anxiety and self-loathing when it comes to women, that goes around and around in circles," wrote Arthur Chu in a recent Salon.com piece entitled "The plight of the bitter nerd: Why so many awkward, shy guys end up hating feminism."

It all came to a boil last summer: a bizarre ongoing internet flame-war that came to be called GamerGate, in which Chu describes, "a bunch of anonymous guys on the Internet felt harassed and insulted by an article making general criticisms about gamer culture as a whole and deciding to react by harassing specific, individual women." Anita Sarkeesian had criticised the sexism of too many male gamers, who responded with

death threats (basically proving her point) and their own outrage over a female game designer's sexual relationship with a video-game-industry reporter. "It's about ethics in journalism" the men cried, and the summer-long saga of Twitter rage, with seemingly everyone needing to choose a side, easily topped Forbes magazine's year-end list of "The Biggest Video Game Controversies of 2014". The fact that Forbes compiled such a list is itself fascinating. Writer Erik

Kain explained how the backlash was "in part a reaction to social justice activism in game reporting. It thrust feminist video game critics to even higher levels of prominence, and divided game writers, gamers, and outsiders. Those outsiders include Hollywood celebrities, conservative activists, libertarians, and even porn stars. It's really been quite a ride."

Romero watched as the queer gamer convention GaymerX made a statement in support and they got blasted, but they were a target already. "A lot of the people who went after Anita Sarkeesian come after us. It's not surprising. I don't want to generalize but yes, a lot of the hate comes from straight, white guys. They hate that gays and women have invaded their boys' club." He laughs, "It's impossible to argue that video games aren't sexist--just look at the costumes. How the hell is she supposed to fight a dragon when she has a bare midriff?"

"I don't think it's as simple as saying that these are just guys who can't get laid," says Laroque, "I think it has a lot to do with prescribed gender roles and things that are ingrained in the DNA of our culture and still not being addressed. It is men getting their backs up when their views or their privilege is challenged. They get defensive and attack, but that misogyny also ignites so much of the homophobia and transphobia we see. On the internet, we're so much more aware of very vocal small minorities, and when even a couple people are sending death threats, they have a bigger platform now."

Romero says, "What the whole GamerGate fight comes down to is the question of who is a gamer? Is it a person who just plays Candy Crush on their phone, or is it the hard core Call of Duty people? It's both!" We talk about gamers as some fringe group, but Romero is quick to point out that mass



appeal games like Candy Crush or Farmville rake in billions of dollars a year. The sales of some "triple A" games like Destiny or Assassin's Creed have outstripped many Hollywood movies, and people's expectations of the gaming experience grow ever higher.

"I'll probably get shit for saying this," says Romero, "but I find board games more social than video games. Sure, there are MMOs [massively multiplayer online game] like World of Warcraft or League of Legends, but when you're around a table with people face-to-face playing Dungeons and Dragons or Monopoly



or Settlers of Catan, it's just more personable." He's proud of how he and fellow Toronto Gaymers organizers Jean-Guy Spencer, James Phillips and Hardy Boyd reorganized the group a few years ago. "We made it more consistent going monthly, and expanded into board games which are now one of our more popular events."

While comic-book movies and major console video games rake in all the money, it's the Gaymers' kind of enthusiasm and imagination that really defines queer nerd culture. QU33R, for instance, is a remarkable anthology of LGBTQ comics from creators old and new which was published by indie Seattle company Northwest Press, a publisher that makes Marvel and DC look dull. The book also features Toronto's own HUNGRY BOTTOM COMICS creator Eric Kostiuik Williams, who's earned as many raves as Mariko Tamaki and her cousin Jillian for their brilliant graphic novels SKIM and ONE FINE SUMMER. As well, there are so many queer artists turn up for the fantastic TCAF, the Toronto Comics Art Festival each May.

While the GamerGate nastiness shook up the gamer community, indie designers were carrying on with creating new queer games, like the cartoonish gay dating simulator COMING OUT ON TOP, which set a Kickstarter goal of \$5,000 but raised \$38,601. In her "Top 10 Games of 2014"

column for GiantBomb.com, writer Cara Ellison hilariously called it "the Citizen Kane of ripped, naked big-dicked dudes in love". For those with more advanced sim needs, HURT ME PLENTY is a BDSM simulator that lets you punish your onscreen sub whichever way the onscreen negotiations land. Other game projects are more urgent, like a month-long "Jam for Leelah" this past January that celebrated the life and interests of the late transgendered girl Leelah Alcorn, who'd hoped to become a game designer. Participants crafted games that were, as the rules requested "primarily centered a trans issues, or other issues related to gender identity. This can be anything from having a trans protagonist, to a game about growing up trans or navigating gender identity issues."

In the ongoing fight for queer visibility, however, there's nothing simpler, more immediate or possibly just more fun than putting on a costume, preferably one that upsets homophobes. Half the joy of attending FanExpo is seeing the "cosplay" that fans create, says Romero, "It comes from anime culture and their costumes are fucking crazy, just amazingly well-done and detailed."

Los Angeles native Chris Riley turned heads when he dressed up as a male version of the X-MEN's "White Queen" Emma Frost, wearing almost as little as she does. In an interview for FanboyComics.com, Riley explained his history of out-and-proud cosplay:

"I don't know if what I did had any effect at all, but fast forward to today and the world of LGBT inclusion and acceptance that I envisioned and craved for has become a reality. In comics, gays are getting married, have their own mainstream titles, and live three-dimensional enriched lives. Gay cosplayers all over the world are out there expressing their love for pop culture characters, and realistic strong female heroes are no longer being pushed aside or underestimated. Women and the LGBT community still have a long way to go, but I am thrilled by the direction we are headed."

Scott Dagostino is a freelance journalist, unrepentant nerd and manager of Glad Day Bookshop, the world's longest-running LGBT bookshop. He endures a Jack Russell Terrier named Tegan, named after either a DOCTOR WHO sidekick, or a lesbian pop singer, or possibly both.





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LAUGHING IN THE

FACE OF DEATH

by Kelly Wilk

I was never a comic book kid. However on Saturday mornings you could find this “lipstick lesbian in the making”, watching Jem (and the Holograms), She-ra Princess of Power or Batman, where I patiently awaited the sultry arrival of Cat Woman. However none of these power femmes held the proverbial candle to Lynda Carter’s Wonder Woman. Season One, Bullets and Bracelets, first aired in 1975 and was seared into my cortex. I still have flash backs of episodes, particularly the parts where this Amazonian Goddess spun herself into her magical costume brandishing fabulous accessories that were also weapons. I was a total “glamour geek.”

While I was busy running around the house in my Wonder Woman underwear, jumping off of stools, I was also trying on something else. Power - and not just the best way to brush off a bullet or throw my tiara at someone, as awesome as that may be. Wonder Woman was one of the characters who demonstrated the Divine Feminine with strength, self-sufficiency, confidence, and perseverance. The idea of power, and what it is, has spun its way into my imagination since I was little. However, little girls grow up. Joining the world of holistic healing I have witnessed many woman, including myself, lose that spark. How they actually find it very difficult to stand in their power, understanding that it is in fact who they are.

Of all the things Wonder Woman taught me, the most important is that power is choice. As long as you realize that you always have an option to make a decision for yourself, it automatically improves your prospects. I have fallen back on this lesson time and time again in my life. Even so, I never had the ultimate opportunity to see just how hard I could lean into that lesson. The opportunity came in the fall of 2012 when I suddenly became at widow at the age of thirty-five.

When my wife died my world was thrown into chaos. Having lost a parent at 19, I had a fairly clear vision of how I might grieve. However being a single mother, as well as widow, was new and frightening territory. Yuck. Being a writer I knew I would write. However, what I did not anticipate was the laughter.

After Kara died there were a lot of things that helped me. My mother made lists, organized paperwork, and did laundry. My friends volunteered to help with the funeral arrangements, brought groceries, made phone calls, and babysat. My belly dancing teacher offered me free classes and my writing coach, Chris Kay Fraser (fireflycreativewriting.com), organized her cohorts to deliver home cooked meals. I was uplifted by the massive show of love, although the unexpected support actually came from my own self.

When Fraser offered me a space in her blogging workshop, I thought it might not be a fit for the therapeutic writing projects I had in mind. I had a fledgling poetry blog, so I thought my urgency to express myself might help motivate me to become much more visible as a writer. At first I was overwhelmed by the information, but in the onslaught of useful ideas there was one tantalizing tip that dangled in front of my eyes long enough to hook me. It was to create a fictional character to blog with.

Memories stirred. Hadn't I spent hours in the library in high school "geeking out" with creative writing, and creating spoofs to share with a cartoonist pal? Hadn't I created a fictional character to embody my struggles with chronic pain? I can see her in my mind, teeth glinting white, purple cape flying, hands anchored on hips in the quintessential superhero posture. It then occurred to me; I didn't need a poetry blog, I needed a superhero!

That day at the workshop I wrote a list; 12 things that would normally be frowned upon or misunderstood, but you can get away with when your spouse dies. Then I laughed...out loud...at something I had written. Something I had not done since my wife died. Then the people in the workshop laughed, and friends and family on Facebook laughed, in an exuberant, emotional, relieved kind of a way. I was enlivened. I...made...people...laugh. I had given myself permission to be as bitter, or saucy, or tortured, or dramatic, or messy, or bitchy, or funny as I wanted to be. I felt...free!

It is not a surprise I thought of my cartoonist friend Stephanie Fahey, who was doing graphic design and animation for children's shows, when I wanted to put a face to my caped crusader. When she sent me the first sketch it was perfect; the tall boots, long cape, stereotypically small mask that would only fool innocent bystanders in a comic book world. It was wonderful, except for the expression. It looked like my super hero was a little down after riding the bus to the library, and then realizing she forgot her card.



"I need more," I told her "I need her to be screaming or bawling her face off." When Stephanie came back and told me that she was giggling as she drew the new wailing face, it was then that my alter ego, Captain Grief, was born.

I had high aspirations for The High Flying Adventures of Captain Grief (www.captaingrief.com), and my tag line was "Grief is messy...own it!" I needed a space to be all the things I felt without the piddly human limitations. She was a superhero and I wanted to feel super too.

The Captain and I took flight together February 14th 2013. I knew I was entering into the year of firsts, and the first sucky hurtle was Valentine's Day. It fell on a Thursday so I figured why not, every Thursday for a year, the Captain and I? Together we wrote Valentine's Day Sucks, and found it also didn't suck in some major ways. Sure I grieved the tidal wave of a widow on Valentines Day, but I also focused on the blog, and actually had fun.

Chugging along, I sometimes thought I could not bear to turn the horror of some particular weeks to hilarity. Often it would be Wednesday night, and I would have nothing but a blank screen and a sweaty brow. In spite of that I just made my fingers move and wrote until I found "it", that thing that happened during the week that made it possible to move from painful to playful.

It was like training wheels to get my giddy back. I walked down a road of suffering and intentionally hitched a ride in a clown car. Sure, I got seltzer in the face, but when I arrived soaking in a borrowed pair of massive clown shoes, it was also funny.

For a while I didn't think I could maintain it, but soon I trusted the fact that something would present itself to laugh at. I got fantastic feedback, and humour was slowly transforming my life. Suddenly there was joy. Don't mistake me, as there was still a deep crevasse of bereavement running through my life, but now I had more superpower to balance it.

It was an effective way of countering social awkwardness, and the pain, loneliness, and isolation that grief drops on your doorstep. I also think this is the way my wife would have wanted me to deal with her death. She was always the first person to remind me that I had the choice to laugh.



Captain Grief gave me a vehicle to provide reassurance, catharsis, and healing for family and friends who missed Kara as well, and were terribly concerned about how my 19-month-

old son and I were doing. Soon every week they could read about me, Captain Grief, and my son who was rechristened as The Ginger Menace. I battled sugary super villains, rip-your-gut-out anniversaries, smarmy mall music, ginger temper tantrums, and my panache for accidentally lighting things on fire.

We always talked about my father to honour his memory and keep him close. With Captain Grief at my side it felt so good to talk about my wife every week. I loved making people laugh, helping them remember her, and to laugh at her if the occasion arose, like the time when I cleaned out her car and found an axe and twenty year old bottle of port. She was nothing if not my uber prepared butch wife.

Through my writings I encountered other queer widows who asked me how I knew so much about their lives. It is my need to express myself, coupled with my impulse to be visible and unapologetic, that has set the two of us on a new course for life. In the process we have actually provided the space for other people to do what we are doing, thriving in spite of grief. I feel grateful and proud, expansive and successful and powerful.

Writing as, and with, a grieving queer superhero has also taught me a lot about grief. I talked a lot about going in and out of the seven stages ad nauseam. However, as a few months turned into half-a-year, and then about twelve months, I noticed a shift. Captain Grief was making a less often appearance on the blog, and when she did she would mercilessly call me out for my neglect. I guess you could say it was an exercise in self-punishment, or just a really cool way to have an argument with myself. Although she had a point, and in true, unapologetic, mildly brutal Captain Grief flare, she once again wrote me a greeting card. It said, "You created an online superhero alter ego version of yourself, and you are using her as a crutch. Just give it up and go eat some cake!"

She was always so thoughtful, but she was right. In talking to a friend and fellow writer I told her how guilty I was feeling about leaving

her behind (survival guilt much). Even though it made me want to be sick to admit it, I worried about if I could really do it without her. Now that everyone knew and loved The Captain, would they still find me funny or interesting if I was just writing as me.

"Kelly" she took a moment for this to sink in. "You are Captain Grief." Talk about putting on the power. For months the people around me encouraged me to be like Captain Grief by saying, "Put on the cape!"

I would be brave, deck myself out in my fabulous glamour gear and charge ahead. She was my running start, my placeholder for the “me” that one day I would remember I was. I didn’t have to put on a cape, as I was born with it! A slinky, yellow flying cape, bitch in boots, and one hell of an attitude. It also gave way for a new blog, “Brave.Creative.Me.”

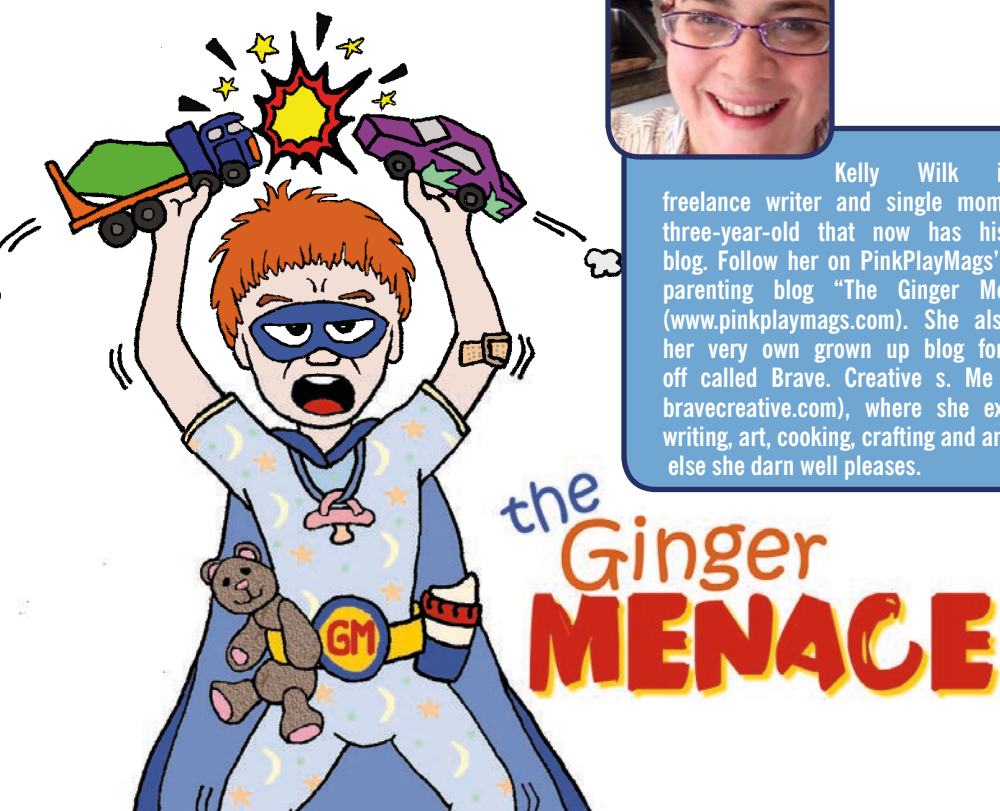
It was no surprise that at the same time I was considering cutting *The High Flying Adventures of Captain Grief* loose, another opportunity

came along for reincarnation. When my then editor Jeffery Harrison asked me to write the queer parenting blog, I first resisted until I realized I was already writing a queer parenting blog. I was just going to continue, but step to the side a bit and let The Ginger Menace have his time in the spotlight, and I could just be his mom. His mom when he teaches me that if my eating habits suck his will too, his mom when he reminds me that being in a queer family will actually give him one hell of a sure footing in this world, and his mom when he throws potatoes in line at the grocery store, has a great check-up, or starts to talk about death.

Either way if it is The Captain writing or I, there will always be laughter. There will be cherishing and gratitude. There will be remembrance, and celebration, and tears. There will be toasts with port, and to my wife who is chortling from heaven I say, "Ha! This laugh's on me."



Kelly Wilk is a freelance writer and single mom to a three-year-old that now has his own blog. Follow her on PinkPlayMags' queer parenting blog "The Ginger Menace" (www.pinkplaymags.com). She also has her very own grown up blog for days off called Brave. Creative s. Me (www.bravecreative.com), where she explores writing, art, cooking, crafting and anything else she darn well pleases.



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By Jon Pressick

"Geeks come out of the closet and the basement"

Picture a dark club, 8-bit remixes, and lots of bodies. The unmistakable texture of corduroy rubs your hand as a mysterious figure passes. You catch a glimpse of a Mario Kart t-shirt under the glow of the black lights. Good thing you're flagging argyle tonight, because you know what you want. You need someone to talk nerdy to you.

The popular image of geeks and nerds is one of loneliness, desperation, and a distinct lack of social skills. They are the guardians of basements and keyboards, the masters of comic book shops, and the mistresses of glasses. Nerds are neither desired for sex, nor are they expected to be desiring sex either. This assumption is so, so wrong.

Take a look around geek culture and what do you see? Comic books full of characters with bulging muscles and skimpy costumes. Speaking of costumes, cosplay and its frequent display of skin just screams sexy. Fantasy books and films regularly feature gorgeous supernatural figures erotically entangled with common folk, and so many of these hallmarks of nerd-dom are so very queer. So much so, that argyle has indeed been added to the Hanky Code as the symbol for those looking to get naked with nerds.

Much of gay geekiness has to be the result of the many fabulous nerdy queer superstars entrenched in, and appealing across sexualities and genders. Zachary Quinto has taken over one of the most enduring characters in science fiction history as Spock in the Star Trek reboot. Icon Ian McKellen went double-fisting deep, by becoming both

X-Men super-villain Magneto, and Middle Earth's favourite wizard Gandalf. Jodie Foster's storied career saw her play a scientist in search of alien-life in Contact, and who can forget Neil Patrick Harris as Dr. Horrible.

The fact that so many queer performers are taking on decidedly nerdy roles, speaks to the significant connection between two groups often deemed outcasts by the mainstream. "Social outliers often include a lot of sexual outliers as well", suggests sexologist Claire Litton, herself a past member of Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA). "Flexibility and adventurousness in one area often translates to having those things in other areas".

Fittingly, each universe offers the other a safe space to grow and explore. As queer performers can so deftly take on nerdy roles, geeky stories can certainly expand with more queer characters. Many different comics, films and television shows of the nerdy vein have been based on LGBT+ storylines and characters, including Lost Girl, Northstar, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Scott Pilgrim, True Blood, Archer, and many others.

This comfort zone has led to a virtual explosion of sexy queer heartthrobs across our media. John Barrowman burst onto the scene as Captain Jack Harkness in the enduring Doctor Who franchise, before moving that omnisexual role to Torchwood, and how can we ever forget the long-lingering sexual tension between Lucy Lawless and Renée O'Connor in Xena: Warrior Princess?

Of course, sexy geekiness is not even restricted to being human. Some of the hottest characters have been from beyond the human realm, with queerness running through supernatural mythologies for years. As Christian Baines, author of the hot vampire and werewolf thriller *The Beast Without Notes*, Victorian Gothic fiction was imbued with this narrative. "So many of those stories are about a protagonist, or someone they love being drawn towards some kind of seductive evil, or subverting nature to satisfy their own desires," Baines explains. "Both could be seen as referencing queer or even broader sexuality, through a Victorian sensibility." At the same time, he notes these stories were also "very sympathetic to the monster, or to the temptation, treating it as its own entity with its own journey and needs."

This connection to the "monsters"—something many queer folks are told to consider themselves as—can have a significant psychological effect on geeks as they head out on the prowl. That impact though, as Baines explains, could have a positive relation as well.

"You can draw literal metaphors from the two sides of a werewolf's nature, or the subversive lust of a vampire, or what have you. On a sexual level though, I think there's a connection to the freedom only a supernatural character can provide. Once you break down the traditional gender roles and acts of sexual expression, there's considerable freedom. Supernatural creatures take that to another level", he notes.

If the nerdy-inclined want to live up to stereotype, there are many online options for connecting with other geeks or geek-admirers. Numerous dating sites, catering to the specific requests and needs of the geek universe have emerged, offering to find that perfect math-lovin', Klingon talkin' hottie you've been looking for. For those who think they've been lookin' for love in Alderaan places, sites such as Geek2Geek, Sweet on Geeks and OtakuBooty offer a more direct link to those in the geek realms than the traditional dating sites.

Of course, dating sites usually require some level of payment. However, the time-honoured tradition of personal ads lives on, with nerdy hook-ups frequently requested. Searches for "geek" and "nerd" can sometimes result in numerous ads on Craigslist—particularly in the men-seeking-men section. During the famed San Diego Comic-Con each summer, Craigslist practically explodes with queers looking to set their phasers on stunning, and some who maybe couldn't hear the other person's name from

under their mask. Perhaps the most famous of all is this infamous Missed Connection:

SDCC men's room - m4m - 22

Me, horse costume, you, chicken mask. We made out in the second stall in the men's room outside hall D. Same place same time next year. I'll be in a llama costume.

Another superhero of the online world for geeks and nerds looking to digitally cruise is Fetlife. Given that 'Fet' is right in the name of the site, it would be understandable if you thought the Facebook-like online community was just for kinksters. The thing is, kinksters and geeks share a definite intersection.

Site member LadyPy has tried geek dating sites, but didn't like them. On the other hand, she enjoys online communities, like Fetlife. A self-described 'geeky chick', she has observed a definite melding of nerdy and kinky people.

"Since all of the social outcasts tend to migrate towards the same direction, many geeks, nerds, and others who were not previously sexually adventurous, can become so. Usually you will have at least one (if not half) friend who is a letter represented within the LGBT acronym. You will also have one friend (again, if not half), who will either be poly, swinger, or some degree of kink. The whole group usually experiences (if not drawn in) alternative lifestyle options through each other", cites LadyPy.

Of course, with any great movement, sexy geek culture has joined the ranks of parody-porn to up the hotness. If you're looking for a solo night in to lust after some gorgeous geeks, such titles as *Captain AmeriCock: The Twink Avenger*, *BatDude and Throbbin': The Sexx Capaders*, *Alice in Wonderland: Lesbian Porn Parody*, and *Whorrry Potter and the Sorcerer's Balls* can satisfy the horny nerd's geek-out and freak-out needs.

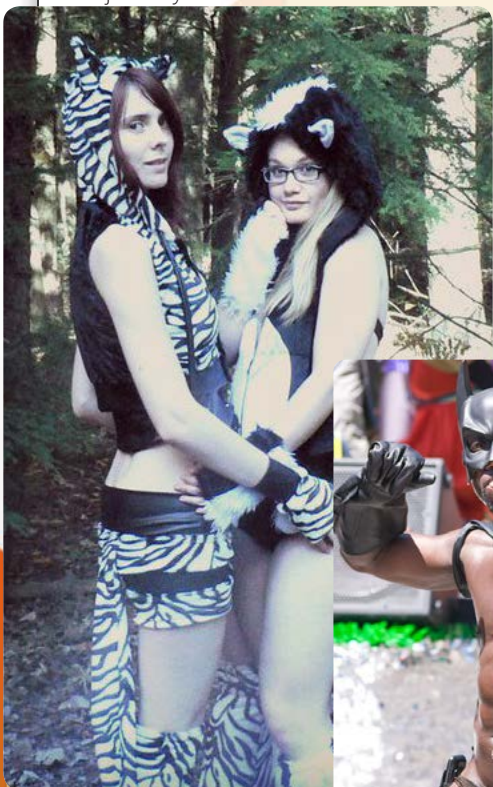
However, if you're not a geeky-stay-at-home type, where can a needy nerd go to find the right (or right now) person? For some folks—queer, straight, geeky, normal—connecting online is a Jenga tower waiting to topple. They'd much rather meet in person, but where's a nerd to go? There aren't any geek bars or clubs out there...unless you count the Apple store.

Toronto Gaymers is a volunteer-run group that organizes many different types of events for a wide variety of geeky members. They put together board game and trivia nights, video game socials, and recently held their first women-focused event. Samson Romero, one of the coordinators of the group, describes the Gaymers as "definitely a hook-up group", but much more as well.

"In any group, you're meeting new people and relationships are bound to happen," Romero reveals. "Some are more, some are less, but after you're done getting down and dirty, you can talk about Star Trek or Pokemon or Monster Hunter."

Samson notes that the group was very cis, male-oriented in its early days. However, over the five years of meetings, there is now greater diversity among the people who attend, with many geeky women and trans folk regularly attending events. "It can be tough to ensure, but we're happy with our growing diversity", she says.

Another great place to reach out and get nerdy with someone is a comic or other similarly-themed convention. Whether it is at the all-out nerdgasm that is the mega convention San Diego Comic-Con, or any of the more local versions, be prepared to find wall-to-wall geekiness of every shape, size, fur colour, and weapon array. Into Magic: The Gathering? There will be Magic nerds there, and maybe Strip Magic exists as well. Looking to score with the sexiest Harley Quinn of the ball? Good luck! Just looking to get your voyeuristic thrills? You'll be well satisfied.



Despite creative Craigslist ads, some queer folk might be too intimidated by the general heteronormativity of the big Cons to seek out same-sex shenanigans. Fortunately, the first ever Flame Con (June 13, 2015 in New York City) will offer the queer nerd crowd the space to fall into geek culture—and, just maybe, each other's pants. Costumed queer bodies will surely be strutting the floor amongst the comic books, memorabilia, and games.

With all of these options, all of the ways for a traditionally marginalized group to connect, it would be fair to think that nerds are getting their freak on all over the place. Sure, there probably are plenty of people among all of the geeky subcultures who do enjoy fantastic relationships, some that last years, and others hours, but it can't be forgotten that every hook-up and every romance has the potential to go wrong. Feelings can be hurt and social groups splintered.

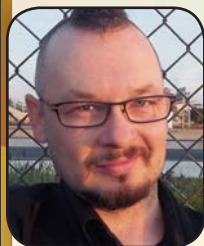
Samson recalls some instances within the Toronto Gaymers group of broken hearts and relationships that caused some division with some people refusing to attend meet-ups altogether. Within SCA, Claire saw some cheating, some underage sex, and fights over flirting. Now, none of this is unusual or indicative of a problem with queer geeks, but rather it is an indication that regardless your interests in wookies, tribbles, mogwai, or your sexual orientation, people are people and some people are going to do things that suck. Some aspects of queer life and some aspects of nerd life are very different than the mainstream, and some aspects are exactly the same.

Are you considering exploring the galaxy for the perfect nerdy companion? Get back online and you'll read countless articles and posts about why geeks make great lovers. They're noted as compassionate because they have been outcasts, and will do what they can to understand you and your needs. They've been noted as eager, because nerds traditionally

have been shunned so positive attention will leave them wanting to please you. They've been noted as great with their hands, because of gaming and other dexterity fun. So next time you're considering a potential geeky grope-fest, maybe you should offer up a little test. Make it like that classic three questions scene from Monty Python and the Holy Grail, but instead of crossing a Bridge of Death, challenge the nerd to a Rubik's Cube showdown. Most likely you'll be able to suss out all you need to know. If you fall behind you'll get to see their compassion if they help you out, and if they go at the riddle with gusto you'll know they want to please you. All the while you can watch their sexy, nerdy hands work, and fantasize how those hands will work on you.

Sidebar

The Beast Without - www.amazon.ca/The-Beast-Without-Christian-Baines/dp/192212043X
Geek2Geek - www.gk2gk.com
Sweet on Geeks - www.sweetongeeks.com
Otakubooty - www.otakubooty.com
Fetlife - www.fetlife.com
San Diego Comic-Con - www.comic-con.org
Toronto Gaymers - www.torontogaymers.ca
Flame Con - www.flamecon.org
Society for Creative Anachronism - www.sca.org/



Jon Pressick is the editor of Best Sex Writing of the Year (Cleis Press), co-host and producer of Sex City heard on CIUT-FM, and blogger at SexinWords.ca.

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Discover & Diversity

*image and words
by Bryer Dunn*

Israel is a country steeped in history, politics, and conflict, much like its other surrounding Middle Eastern countries. However, in recent years it's also emerged as the leading travel destination in this region, offering centuries-old culture in Jerusalem, therapeutic resorts along the Dead Sea, and an international party scene in Tel Aviv.

Tel Aviv - A Century of Progress

Arriving into Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv for the first time excludes a level of excitement. What lies ahead is unknown, as with the first time visiting any new destination. Condé Nast Traveler magazine's Readers' Choice Awards 2014 listed the airport as one of the "Top 10 World's Best Airports", based on its top level security, navigability, and varied shopping options including some amazing duty-free deals.

It's a short 30-minute commute to the centre of the city, and the horizon looks much like any other European or North American city, with skyscrapers, crowded roadways, and bustling crowds. It is remarkable how much has transpired in just over a century since Tel Aviv became its own entity in 1909, an expansion from Jaffa, now referred to as "old-town". Both were merged into a single municipality in 1950, two years after the establishment of the State of Israel, and today the city is comprised of nice distinct districts. The combined population of all is still relatively small at less than half-a-million, yet

account for the second largest economy in the Middle East, after Dubai. With 2.5 million international visitors annually, Tel Aviv is also the fifth-most-visited city in the Middle East and Africa.

Despite continuous conflict in other parts of the country, Tel Aviv seems to stand on its own, with daily life very similar to any other western metropolis. Designer name boutiques, celebrity owned restaurants, multi-level nightclubs, and grand promenades can be found throughout the city. It also has the added bonus of being located along the Mediterranean coastline, with kilometres of white sandy beaches and wide expansive boardwalks that are used for cycling, blading, jogging, or just strolling and gawking at the beach babes sunning below.

The city has been given various monikers, including "White City" for having the world's highest number of Bauhaus designed buildings, and "The City That Never Sleeps" for its all night club and party scene that goes non-stop around the clock most nights of the week. Florentin is one of the trendier areas of

the city filled with tiny cafes, bars, artist and designer studios, and a bohemian flare. Many of the Bauhaus building have been restored and are now used as boutique hotels, restaurants, and galleries, which makes for a great way to spend an afternoon admiring this world famous architecture.

LGBT culture in Tel Aviv is quite predominant throughout the city, and there is no real section that is deemed "the village" or "gaybourhood". From gay-owned shops and restaurants, to large scale multi-level nightclubs, it seems gay is the way. Much of the progress can be attributed to 1998 Eurovision winner Dana International, a transgender performer who after returning back home stirred up both the religious community and the LGBT movement. It was a time of conflict with many residents forced to limit their movements outside their homes, until the gay community rallied together and created what was initially called Tel Aviv Love Parade, which Dana International performed at. While obviously very politically focused at the time, today the event is as much about partying as it is political.

The 2015 Tel Aviv Summer Pride Festival takes place from June 4th to 14th, and is expected to attract 30,000 international visitors, joining the hundreds of thousands of locals. This year's festival kicks off on June 4th and focuses on the transgender community to raise awareness of its challenges, accomplishments and culture. The festival also features a wide variety of LGBT events, including an LGBT Film Festival, a Gay Expo at the Dizengoff Center, and beach parties at Hilton Beach.





In addition, the Tel Aviv Gay Center will be organizing cultural, nightlife and artistic events in bars, clubs, restaurants, and other venue locations throughout the city. The highlight of the festival will be the Pride Parade, which happens on June 12th starting at GanMeir Park and ends on the beach with a giant party featuring live performances and DJ's. On June 14th, tourists can join an organized bike tour that starts in Jaffa, rides through the central part of the city, and ends up back at the beach in time for sunset cocktails.

Jerusalem - Centuries of History

Although steeped in religious history and political woes, Jerusalem played host to one of the first WorldPride events, and there's even a gay bar, albeit a small one. While much more sedate than Tel Aviv, the short distance (60 km) between the two cities makes it a must stop for most visitors to the country. Whether one is religious or not, the history surrounding what is known as one of the oldest places on earth is quite astonishing. It's also well-known as a divided city, where Palestinians and Israelis live side-by-side with completely differing viewpoints on government control and land ownership.

Beyond the historical tourism that is predominant, this city of nearly 800,000 inhabitants also has a more modern aspect to it as well. There are plenty of museums and

galleries reflective of the past, as well as the present. People dine in local restaurants, such as Olive and Fush or Eucalyptus, and shop in luxury shopping centres like Ben Yehuda Pedestrian Mall, and the newly constructed Mamilla Mall. There's also more of an outdoor street café type of nightlife, with a more local flavour than international. There are also several annual festivals, many featuring electronic dance music, and the Festival of Lights is simply astounding seeing the old city come of life through the power of illumination.

General city tours are offered by bus, foot, and even Segway, but old city tours are primarily done on foot due to the restricted size of the tiny cobblestone passageways. Sites to visit within the walled city are the Western Wall (Kotel), Judaism's most sacred site, Via Dolorosa (Stations of the Cross), Christian Quarter with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the reconstructed Jewish Quarter and Cardo showing ruins of a main street from Roman times, Temple Mount Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosques, and the Arab Market (Shuk).

Before leaving, a visit to Mount Scopus is a must for the far-stretching views over the city, and beyond into Palestine. While a day maybe enough to visit the most important sites, an overnight stay at one of the local hotel chains such as the Leonardo, is definitely worth it.

Dead Sea - Magical and Mystical

Just 35 kilometres away is yet another marvel that must be experienced at least once in a lifetime. The Dead Sea is below sea level, and known as the lowest body of water on earth. Its banks are shared between Israel and Jordan, and the water is sought after for its therapeutic nature, and skin cleansing and detoxifying mud. Wading into the water then laying on your back and floating is the most magical and mystical experience to be had.

While a day visit could suffice the curious, many choose to stay a few days or even a week, just to relax and take in the healthy and relaxed atmosphere. Other than lounging at the many hotels and resorts, there's also jeep tours offered into the desert, that travel through crevices and canyons giving a glimpse into the more remote side of Israel. From modern to medieval, a visit here is most definitely eye-opening and educational to those with perceived ideas seen and heard through world news. For those with open minds and a quest for knowledge, perhaps Israel should be on your bucket list of destinations to visit.

Sidebar

Israel Tourism
www.goisrael.com

Tel Aviv Tourism
www.visit-tel-aviv.com

Jerusalem Tourism
www.itraveljerusalem.com

Gay Tel Aviv Resources
www.gaytlvguide.com
www.diytelavivguide.com
www.kikiscenes.com/he/tlv

OUTstanding Travel
gay owned travel agency
www.outstandingtravel.com

Tel Aviv Pride 2015
www.facebook.com/events/438958409593693

Gordon Hotel - gay owned hotel in Tel Aviv -
www.gordontlv.com



Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues. He has written several travel articles and has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities.

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Hot Artist

by Lexi Sanfino

BRUCE LABRUCE

Bruce LaBruce has been inspired by the great gay avant-garde film-makers Kenneth Anger, Jack Smith, Andy Warhol, Paul Morrissey, John Waters, and the 1970's generation of pornographers with an artistic sensibility. He is a writer filmmaker, and photographer whose films explore themes of sexual and interpersonal transgression against cultural norms, blending artistic guerrilla-style production techniques with independent film, and a splice of gay pornography. MoMA (Museum of Modern Art) are recognizing and hosting a retrospect of his work in New York City from April 23rd to May 2nd, 2015

As a post grad student, LaBruce started making short experimental super-8 films in the punk and alternative scenes in Toronto, which eventually led to making feature length films. In his words, "I attended school of hard knocks". His work is also often about misfits and outcasts, people on

the margins of society. LaBruce says, "For me that also has an element of romance and even empowerment. So I guess I'm a glass half-full type of person, especially if it's half-full of champagne."

LaBruce always expressed solidarity with pornographers and porno stars, "who may be the last gay radicals." He says "There's often a very strong romantic tendency in my movies, and I'm always interested in redemption of some sort. I think the key to my work is that I often deal with extremely harsh and sometimes extreme realities – whether it be stories about male prostitutes, or neo-Nazi skinheads, or would-be terrorists – but I try to find the humanity or the emotional vulnerability of the characters. Although my films often deal with what most people would consider extreme fetishes or sexual taboos, there is usually some kind of romance attached to those desires."

For example, his recent film, *Gerontophilia*, is about a young man who discovers he has a strong sexual attraction for the elderly, but it's inextricably linked with his feelings of empathy and respect for them. There's a tendency to think all fetishes are nasty or perverse, but LaBruce has found that they can also be an expression of real tenderness or appreciation or even worship of the object of desire.

"It doesn't have to be degrading or exploitative. Although a little degradation never hurt anybody! Freud talked about the tendency toward the debasement of the love object as something built into the human sex drive. Then again, I also discovered that porn was like cheap special effects, and a good way for a no-budget filmmaker to get lots of attention. I'm not a saint", he laughs.

LaBruce recently strayed from filmmaking and launched a perfume and jewellery line and claims, "We live in an age of branding and self-promotion, but I created a persona as a spectacle, lived the fiction, propped up ostensibly full-blown movements that didn't really exist, and regarded promotion and distribution as part of the creative process", he explains. "Bruce LaBruce is my Frankenstein's monster, which is the coolest style of brand I can think of. Obscenity, Saint, and Revolutionary rings, and the Obscenity perfume, which contains actual holy water from Lourdes."

Bruce LaBruce questions authority and kingpins when it comes to controversy. Winnipeg Sun's front page screamed the headline, "Filthy Flesh Film Fest", during the screening of *Skin Flick/Skin Gang*, his porn film about neo-Nazis. Some of his films and artworks have sparked public outcry from conservative crybabies and Bible thumper titans. In one such case during his showing at La Fresh Gallery in Madrid, the Mayor of the city called for it to be shut down.

"There were protestors every week outside the gallery, and the day after the opening someone threw two explosive devices through the front window, which didn't explode, thank goddess", he recalls. His glorious response for naysayers is, "Somebody's got to do it! When I first started out making fanzines and experimental films in the eighties, the gay movement was still very militant and leftist. Its engine was the extremes of sexuality and sexual experimentation that challenged the status quo. I was also in the hardcore punk scene, which had developed some unfortunate



homophobic elements. So I started creating very explicit homosexual imagery, including found pornography, and later porn that I made myself, in order to make an unvarnished, unapologetic, and fearless statement about homosexuality. It was all about owning it and making it something powerful."

"Since then I've challenged many orthodoxies, everything from the gay assimilationists, to organized religion, to the mainstream film world", he states. "I think good art disturbs, challenges, and even provokes. I've always been most interested in the idea of taboo, and figuring out how to represent that which is not supposed to be represented." His comments on being selected by MoMA are, "I think it's cool to be recognized as an artist by such a high-profile institution, and it's great that they are showcasing queer and sexually frank work."

The MoMA retrospective kicks off with a screening of *Gerontophilia* on Thursday, April 23rd at 7pm, followed by a party with location TBA. MoMA is showing his nine feature-length films and one program of his short films. The retrospective runs until May 2nd, with two screenings per day. There will be other parties and related events announced soon via the website.



Lexi Sanfino Toronto based transgendered artist, writer, performer, and activist.



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N.E.R.D. Takes Flight

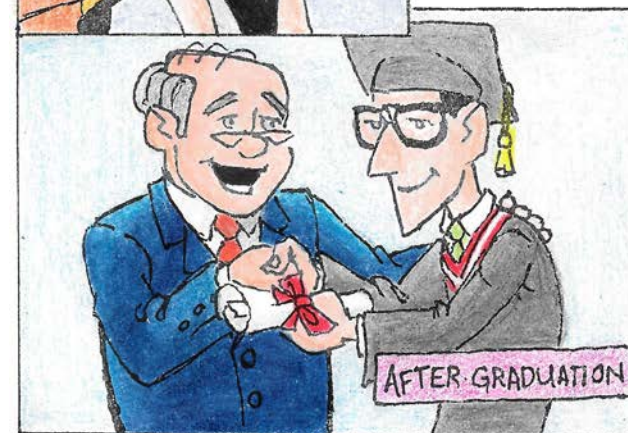
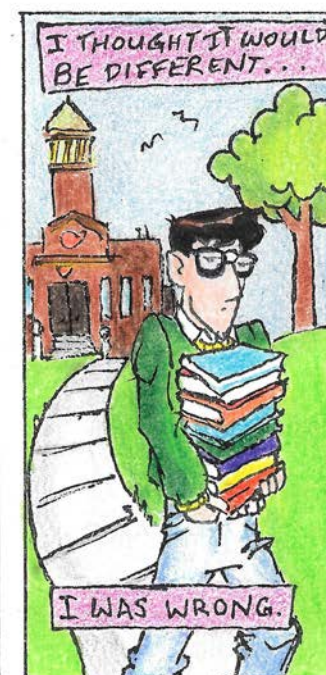
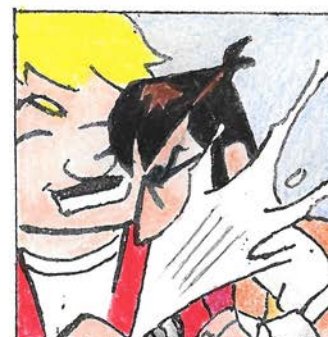
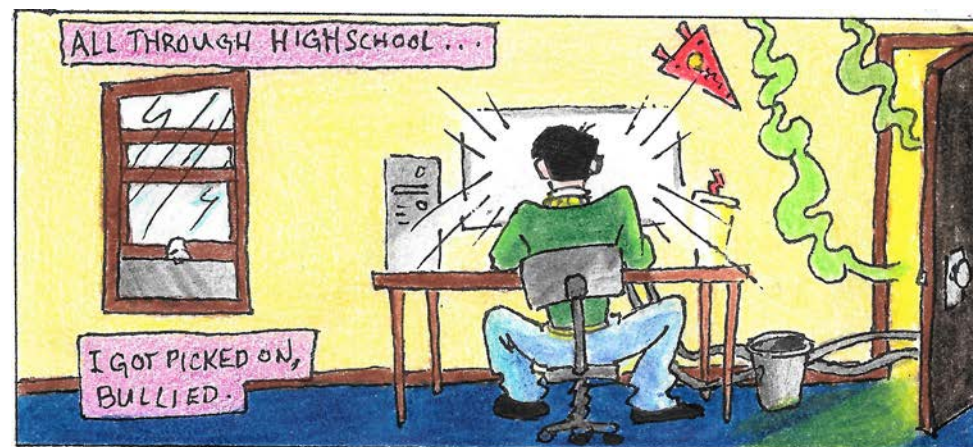
Illustrations & Story by
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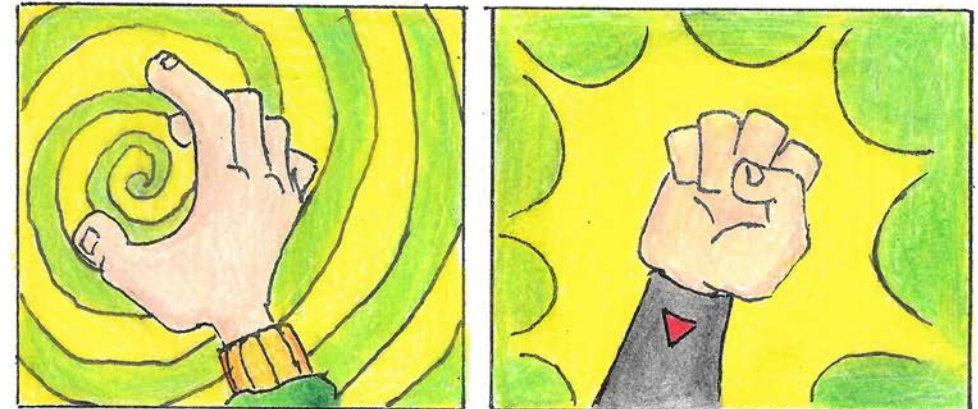
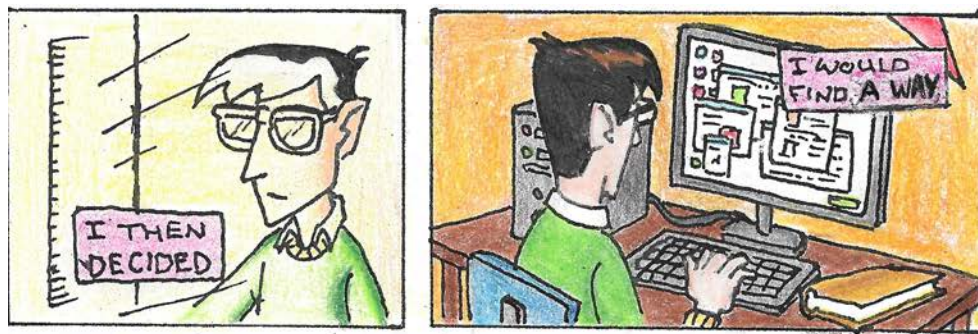
Creative Direction
Antoine Elhashem

Based on characters
concept by Jeff Harrison



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TOPS & BOTTOMS

GEEK+CHIC

Written by cee sAando

Once upon a time terms like "nerd" and "geek" were considered dirty words... not so anymore. It seems the world has finally recognized the power and draw of the geek. We now know that the kid with the super thick lenses face buried in a book, or that socially awkward cutie with their face way too close to the computer screen, could be the next Wall Street genius, billion dollar app creator, or entrepreneur with the next big thing. Call it the Bill Gates or the Mark Zuckerberg effect, but for whatever the reason, the nerd is on the rise! The very fact that there is such a thing as an "It Nerd" speaks to pop culture's current obsession with all things geek chic. I'm talking about the man charged with being vanquisher of Pluto, the brilliant Astrophysicist Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson.

Of course, as in all things fashion/pop culture related, there must be an element of sex included. Simply being intelligent, does not make a cool kid. The rise of geek culture is not at all about the size or mass of one's frontal cortex, but instead it is very much a meditation on the perceived image of how an individual too smart or busy to truly care about fashion dresses. The irony of this notion of course is that putting together the geek-chic look flawlessly takes much effort. What key elements make up the

geek chic style includes, a great pair of frames, vintage clothing, an all-around 'unique' look, and simplicity.

First - the frames. These really are the key to grounding the entire geek chick phenomenon. The most important thing to know is that to rock a great pair you need not have faulty eyesight, as the frames need not have lenses. Seriously! If you look closely enough you will see members of the stylati sporting empty frames along with their uber fashionable ensembles. Of course if you actually need corrective lenses to improve your vision, all the better. Throw away those uncomfortable contact lenses and opt instead to sport the chunkiest, most unique oversized lenses you can find. If your neighbourhood optician does not carry the trendiest looks in stock, why not thrift at your favourite second hand store for great vintage frames and simply have the lenses replaced.

Speaking of thrift stores, this is where you are going to do the majority of your shopping if you want to perfect the look. You can be as unique as you want here, because the whole point is to wear items that no one else would ever be able to find at a store. The difficulty of thrifting is the amount of energy it takes to find that diamond in the rough. If the

quick purchase is more your style, you might want to cheat by purchasing your signature pieces at a specialty vintage shop, or a new-is-old retailer like Urban Outfitters or Anthropologie.

Another way of achieving that necessary element of exclusivity is by wearing unexpected pieces. Pairing a nerdy fan-tee with a great pair of slacks, or a great leather skirt is a great start. Once you're feeling more adventurous you might even want to try adding a school-style backpack to the mix.

Yes, all of this may sound very complicated, but we cannot forget the final key element of simplicity. All of your effort will go completely out the window if you look like you are trying too hard. The concept of this look is that the clothing and accessory choices are simple after thoughts, because if pieces are too fussy, precious or too high fashion, they just will not work. Everything should reflect simplicity - hair, makeup (or lack thereof), jewellery.

Of course the real kicker here is confidence. Confidence is what truly dresses a person, whatever the style. If one does not possess the confidence to pull off a look, it will never work, so pick your style and wear it with pride!



VINTAGE GLASSES



NERDY FAN-TEE



Written by cee sando

Arts & lifestyle writer, wardrobe stylist and unicorn v (@theheartofwor) is inspired by international travel, the ocean, runner's high, sashimi and that perfectly put together outfit.

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WWW.THENERDYGIRLIE.COM

WWW.THESTYLISHGEEK.COM

WWW.NERDYFASHIONBLOG.COM



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PFLAG: OVER FOUR DECADES OF KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Since the late 1970s, groups of Parents, Families, and Friends of LGBTQ communities around the globe have organized under a banner called PFLAG throughout North America and FFLAG in the United Kingdom. Their mission is to provide support, outreach, and education while working toward making society a better place for their loved ones.

At one time P.F.L.A.G.'s letters formed the acronym for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. However, now, PFLAG is recognized less as an acronym, and more of a brand representing all sexual orientations, gender expressions and identities; offering welcoming, friendly environments for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transexual, two-spirit, intersex, queer and questioning persons, and their families and friends.



For someone coming out, finding support and a sense of self-acceptance is a crucial part of one's personal process. Needing to live "out", genuinely and honestly, is imperative but not easy when someone's family is not open and welcoming, if one's workplace is intimidating, or if for religious or cultural reasons (which there are many), someone is left feeling alone with few peers to share their confidence.

Local chapters of volunteers for PFLAG provide peer-support at monthly meetings or through telephone lines, sharing similar stories and offering comfort, understanding and support to LGBTQ individuals and their families, many who say "My daughter is a lesbian" or "My son is transgender" out loud for the first time. PFLAG meetings are often run by those who have found help through PFLAG at one point for themselves, finding support through PFLAG for their own families.

PFLAG: A HISTORY / HERSTORY / EVERYONE IN BETWEEN-STORY

The concept of PFLAG dates back to 1972, when a young man was attacked at a gay rights protest demonstration in New York. His parents saw the attack on television and witnessed the failure of the police to intervene. The man's mother, Jeanne Manford (1920 - 2013) marched with her son at New York's Pride Day that year, and was persuaded to begin a support group, which held its first formal meeting in March 1973.

Following the 1979 U.S. National March for Gay and Lesbian Rights, representatives from various support groups for parents with gay and lesbian children met for the first time in Washington, D.C. In 1981, they launched a national Parents FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) organization, and established the first office in Los Angeles.

The origins of Toronto's PFLAG group date back to the late 1970s as well, known as Parents

of Gays (POG). Betty Fairchild, co-author of the book "Now That You Know: A Parent's Guide to Understanding Their Gay and Lesbian Children", travelled from Denver to help the Toronto group in its initial stages. Local community activist Reverend Brent Hawkes and the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto (MCCT) paid for the first telephone line, and a North Toronto Chapter of PFLAG began meeting in 1991.

In 2003, a national voice, PFLAG Canada, was created to working to facilitate information sharing, peer counselling, and public education. PFLAG Canada dropped the name "Parents,

Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays", and no longer identify as an acronym. The increasing number of parents with transgender children and gender-fluid individuals coming to PFLAG meetings pointed out the necessity for inclusion of trans* and gender-varient individuals from the original acronym. Local PFLAG chapters and other LGBTQ organizations have made similar grounds to become fully inclusive. Today PFLAG or similar organizations operate in at least 17 countries around the world,

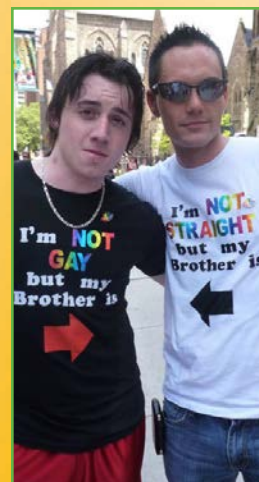
To find out more about PFLAG, local chapters or events near you, visit www.pflagcanada.ca or call (English: 1-888-530-6777 / French: 1-888-530-6384)

PFLAG: STRONGER THAN EVER

In 2014, Toronto PFLAG announced a donation of \$20,000 from Bank of Montreal (BMO) to support a poster campaign aimed at building inclusive school climates and challenging harmful behaviour through strong anti-bullying messages. Posters requests came from across all Canadian provinces, from USA and as far as Germany. "We are thrilled with the popularity of our posters and their positive messages", said Toronto PFLAG President Anne Creighton. "We are especially pleased that elementary schools are now requesting them as even younger kids are using homophobic language without realizing how hurtful it is."

PFLAG Durham provides a Youth Leadership Camp offering peer-mentoring for youth 14 through 17 years of age. Now entering its 5th year, this adult-facilitated camp builds and nurtures leadership potential and personal resiliency of youth; and is free of charge.

Beyond Ontario, PFLAG Canada recently announced that Brian Burke, President of Hockey Operations for the Calgary Flames, has joined as a PFLAG Canada Ambassador, speaking out candidly against homophobia and bullying. "PFLAG is a great way to support the LGBTQ community in a very direct way", said Burke. "This community needs mainstream support, and PFLAG is a great vehicle to express that support". Mr. Burke is a PFLAG parent and Advisory Board member of "You Can Play", an organization dedicated to the eradication of homophobia in sport. He was also the parent of a gay son, Brendan, who was a coach of a junior hockey team prior to his death in a car accident.



2015 is off to a great start for PFLAG Canada, who announced a generous \$30,000 contribution from Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), helping to move their national vision forward. "PFLAG Canada recognized that we needed a new plan", stated PFLAG Canada President Stephen Hartley, "In Spring 2015 we will release PFLAG Canada's strategic plan "Together", which is the result of shared hard work, shared values, and shared acceptance. We urge you to see yourself in the Plan, as we have been able to, and to join us in the journey".



Today, PFLAG in Ontario remains a powerful force of allies offering services in: Brockville, Cornwall, Durham, Hawkesbury, Kingston, London, Niagara, Ottawa, Orangeville, Owen Sound, Peel, Peterborough, Rockland, Sarnia Bluewater, Sault-Ste Marie, Stittsville, Toronto, Waterloo/Wellington/Perth, Windsor/Essex, and York. As well, new groups in Brantford and Muskoka show growth in new regions, while disbanded groups in St. Catharines and Hamilton show a continued need for new volunteers from different areas to step forward.

PFLAG: FACTOIDS - DID YOU KNOW?

2014 - Queen Elizabeth II honours Jenny Broughton, founder of Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (FFLAG; UK)

2013 - PFLAG Moms in Vancouver and Toronto recognized as Grand Marshals at municipal Pride Parades

2012 - President Obama recognizes Jeanne Manford, founder of Parents and Friends of Gay and Lesbians (PFLAG; USA); who was posthumously awarded the 2012 Presidential Citizens Medal

2010 - PFLAG Canada, National organization, selected as Honoured Group at Toronto's 30th Annual Pride Parade.

Michael Ain has played a role within the Church and Wellesley Community for nearly two decades, producing events and adding volume to LGBTQ initiatives through print, radio and social media, all while partnering with key organizations to spread the news on important LGBTQ issues. photo credit: Sergio Alvarado





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SPRING IN THE CITY

Event Listings compiled by Caitlyn Holyord

Spring is a season of rebirth and renewal, which makes it the perfect time to get out there and try something new. Toronto can be a dull place during the winter, but once the snow melts away and the temperatures start to rise, I'm reminded of what a vibrant, fun city we live in. In keeping with the theme of the Spring issue, I've included several events and happenings that should appeal to gamers, comic lovers, and science buffs, as well as some that give attendees an opportunity to explore the city – perfect for those, like me, coming out of hibernation. Happy Spring, everyone!

COMICS

Toronto Comic Arts Festival

May 9-10

Toronto Reference Library,
789 Yonge St.

<http://torontocomics.com>

FREE

Toronto Comic Arts Festival is a week-long celebration of comics and graphic novels, culminating with a two-day exhibition that brings together hundreds of creators and vendors from across the globe. Unlike bigger conventions like Comicon or Fan Expo, TCAF focuses on smaller publishers and self-publishers. The festival also includes interviews, panel discussions, workshops, and art installations, making for one jam-packed weekend.

TIP: Don't limit yourself to familiar cartoonists. One of the most exciting parts of TCAF is getting to check out comics that aren't readily available, so don't be afraid to venture into the unknown. The lines will probably be a lot shorter, too.



SCIENCE

Solar Observing

April 11, May 2, June 6
Ontario Science Centre, 770 Don Mills Rd.
(416) 696-1000
www.ontariosciencecentre.ca
TICKETS: Solar Observing is free; \$13-22 for entrance to the Science Centre

You don't have to leave the planet to get up close and personal with the Sun. Every month at the Ontario Science Centre, the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada offers solar observing from the TelusScape observing pad, located at the entrance of the building. With the help of specially-filtered telescopes, visitors will learn about our nearest star and try to spot exotic surface features like sunspots, spicules, and prominences. It's the perfect way to start off a visit to the Ontario Science Centre.

TIP: Celebrate International Astronomy Day (April 25) at the Ontario Science Centre! Last year's event featured solar observing, planetarium shows, space-themed demos, and more.



ARTS & CULTURE

Hot Docs Documentary Festival

April 23 to May 3
Bloor Hot Docs Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W.
(416) 637-5150
www.hotdocs.ca
TICKETS: \$19-22 for single tickets, passes and packages also available

Hot Docs is North America's largest documentary festival, featuring approximately 200 cutting-edge films from Canada and around the world. From the educational to the boundary-pushing, there's a doc for everyone at the festival. Last year's event experienced record-breaking audience numbers during its 11-day run, with an estimated 192,000 attending the screenings.

TIP: If you're an up-and-coming filmmaker or a lover of films, consider becoming a Hot Docs volunteer. You'll have an opportunity to network with filmmakers and attend Hot Docs screenings while giving back to the community. Volunteer forms can be found online.

Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival

May 1-31
Various locations
(416) 539-9595
<http://scotiabankcontactphoto.com>
FREE

Scotiabank CONTACT is an annual month-long photography festival showcasing the work of emerging and established artists at more than 175 venues throughout Toronto and the GTA. Founded in 1997, CONTACT has grown into the largest photography event in the world, attracting an audience of over one million.

TIP: CONTACT is divided into three categories – public installations, featured exhibitions, and open exhibitions – and while they're all worth checking out, it's the open exhibitions that feature the most diverse range of talent and location.

Titanic: The Musical

May 20 to June 21
Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King St. W.
(416) 872-1212
www.mirvish.com
TICKETS: \$45-130

Before the blockbuster film, there was Titanic: The Musical. Beginning May 20 at the Princess of Wales Theatre, Toronto audiences will enjoy an exclusive pre-Broadway run of Maury Yeston and Peter Stone's Tony Award-winning



musical. Unlike James Cameron's Titanic, this story focuses on the real-life characters of the "unsinkable" ship, including White Star Lines director Joseph Bruce Ismay, Captain Edward J. Smith, and architect Thomas Andrews. Joining the cast is retired opera tenor Ben Heppner, who will play the role of Isidor Straus, a prominent American businessman and politician.

TIP: Princess of Wales Theatre is located in the heart of the entertainment district, so you'll have plenty of dining options should you decide to stay in the area. Hey Lucy (295 King St. W.), Home of the Brave (589 King St. W.) and WVRST (609 King St. W.) are all worth checking out.

Inside Out LGBT Film Festival

May 21-31
TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King St. W.
(416) 977-6847
www.insideout.ca
TICKETS: \$13

Now in its 14th year, Inside Out Film Festival showcases more than 180 of the best and most diverse works of interest to LGBT communities across 11 days. It's not as high-profile as some of Toronto's other annual film festivals, but it's definitely one of the most fun. In addition to film screenings, Inside Out features artist talks, panel discussions, installations, and parties.

TIP: Luma, located on the second floor of TIFF Bell Lightbox, is the perfect place to stop for a drink before or after your screening. Their signature Pear's Prince cocktail is a must-try.

Doors Open Toronto

May 23-24
Various locations
www.doorsopentoronto.on.ca
FREE

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TIP: Sign up for one of the free walking tours, which delve deeper into the stories, histories, and architecture of a number of Toronto neighbourhoods.

FOOD & DRINK

Nintendo Knights

April 2, May 7, June 4
Handlebar, 158 Augusta Ave.
(647) 748-7433
<http://thehandlebar.ca>
\$3 a bracket

Nintendo Knights is a night built on nostalgia. On the first Thursday of every month, Nintendo lovers flock to Kensington Market's Handlebar, where they compete in a head-to-head battle for glory and prizes. Each Nintendo Knights party features two classic games, so make sure you brush up on your skills before entering the ring.

TIP: The nearby Iceman Video Games (206 Augusta Ave.) has a great selection of retro and new video games and systems, all of which are competitively priced.

The Bar With No Name is a neighbourhood pub in Bloor West Village that doubles as a haven for Magic players, comic book aficionados, and board game enthusiasts. There, you can chow down on standard pub fare, enjoy one of the dozen or so beers on tap, and challenge your friends to one of the many board games available to play. Wednesday nights alternate between Magic tournaments and Xbox competitions, and have a "hanging out in your friend's basement" kind of vibe to them.

TIP: Game nights not your thing? The Bar With No Name also hosts Karaoke and live music. Check out their website for weekly listings and drink specials.

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FROM THE HEART



by Patricia Wilson

I remember as a kid being surrounded by all the dressings of a working class family and life, feeling the duality of it all. First, I was fiercely proud of my father and what he did as a tradesman in that huge plant called Ford. It would ultimately possess me for a short while at a young age, and intoxicate me with the benefits of union factory cash. Secondly I was terrified by the fear of is this all there is. I had yearnings to move beyond the brown bag lunches and move towards my true self and work.

Even as a child my dreams were an answer to the bubbling fear of my true life deserting me. I would dream of magic, of angels swooping down from above and clearing the debris of the broken dreams to help me soar to the light of what I felt my life should be. I remember awaking from these dreams somewhat shaken and fearful, because the intensity of the nocturnal experiences always seemed too much to bear when faced with the daylight of what slowly became my growing despair of hopelessness, of place, heart and soul. I longed to be where my true self and my work could exist simultaneously, although I had no idea where that was or how to achieve it, or even what my true work was. I remember I would wander down to the train tracks at the end of our street, and stare at the slow moving trains as they

built up speed to leave the city, and move towards parts unknown. As a form of escape, after the train had passed I would crawl through the hole in the fence protecting us from the tracks, and put my ear to the rail to listen and mumble a small prayer to the angels of my nightly visits, for real time adventures of truth. Even as a youngster the word pilgrimage seemed exotic and true. A word derived from my knowledge of the stories of our saints and martyrs that filled our heads, as we were taught what magic our devotion to our church and its God could create. I should have of course seen it then, the sometimes harsh reality that life is hard. Maybe not martyr hard like being burned at the stake like Joan of Arc, the true symbol of freedom and rebellion within a cause, but hard. Still back then, my religion only had the magic for me, the magic of goodness and devotion which resulted in the fulfillment of my deepest secret desires.

How was I to undertake my pilgrimage from a spot where it was still insisted that I had to be home when the streetlights came on? It was a near impossible task, which resulted in many sleepless nights of a pillow crying reality. Still the solution was in front of me, the Pilgrimage was to begin from within. It began with the written word, the discovery of truth life, and hope on the page.

Now a million years later I am leading my perfect life. Really I am. Oh life is hard, and the bruises hurt, and I limp through my days both physically and emotionally, but I chose my day-to-day. As Hegel says, I chose my

“
Stop for a second, put the cell phone down, turn off the lap top...
”

immediacy of the substance of life. I would not give it up for anything. Live a true life focused on what and who you are at any given moment. Stop for a second, put the cell phone down, turn off the lap top, breathe, breathe deep, and think for a second

where you are right at that moment of the deep breath. If that was your last breath would you be content with what you are doing with your life? Or are you reaching for that something, the unattainable in the future, and you have lost yourself to that and the moment that you have.

Be strong go for your moments, life is hard, life is fast, life is short. Life is yours to create, life is yours to share, time is the most precious commodity, and you

can never make more time for yourself, unlike money. Do your real work, and struggle for it. I do all the time, and I am far closer to the end of my life chapter than the beginning. Yes I would love to have more money to make things easier, not just for me but those I love and care about as well. However, as the queer person I am things are lined up perfectly, because I choose my moments along this rough ride of a journey. Don't let others try and shape your lives, just love all that you are.

Revolution in the ink, change in the words. The journey was soon to begin....

Patricia Wilson is a musician and writer and whatever. She lives in the bunker in Toronto with her partner of 22 years Helene, and their three four-footers. She is one of the founding members of the rock band Crackpuppy, and is proud to have been associated with Buddies in Bad Times Theatre for over 20 years, currently working as bartender/bar manager. She's also working on a book of poetry/prose.



Horoscope (March 2015 – May 2015)

Aries (March 21st – April 20th)

You've found your calling and now it's time to start your brand new journey. Focus on your goals to gain success. Financial success and security are yours but keep a cool head. Focus and concentrate rather than multitasking; this will avoid exhaustion and depression from scattering your energy. This is how you will achieve what you're meant to accomplish.

Taurus (April 21st – May 21st)

The spring season asks you to ready yourself for changes. For maximum excitement, reduce rigidity and increase acceptance as the changes flow with ease into your life. Work brings pressure. Calm your mind with alternative healing therapy. Keep your finances in check by being mindful of your spending habits.

Gemini (May 22nd – June 21st)

It's time to emerge from your comfort zone. Mundane activities bore you, but avoid haste and you will save yourself much trouble later. Letting go of your inhibitions and moving forward will assist with a difficult time of emotional insecurity. Communication with family and colleagues is messy. Aim for clarity to be understood.

Cancer (June 22nd – July 22nd)

It's time to make up your mind about achieving your goals. Make your decisions based on reality rather than emotions. Letting your feelings get the better of you will make you anxious and may affect your mental health. Read up on how to avoid panic attacks. Turbulence knocks on your door this season. Greet it with patience and hard work knowing that every situation presented to you will teach you something new.

Leo (July 23rd – August 22nd)

It's time for enjoyment, fun and frolicking Leo! Pull out your calendar and make travel plans. You are blessed in your career and financial security for the future is assured. You can rest in the confidence that your abilities of focus and hard work will remove all obstacles from your path. Ganesha, the Hindu god known as "Remover of Obstacles" is with you.

Virgo (August 23rd – September 23rd)

Thinking of starting a new business venture? Consider taking on a partner to assist you. Take care of your personal problems before they escalate. You may be very touchy and sensitive, reacting to the smallest issues. Going through this time of questioning in your life will be a temporary but pivotal phase. Remember to listen to your intuition. If you're looking for the answers, then you've got to ask the questions. When the question is asked, the answer will appear. Trust what comes to you viscerally.

Written by Julie Antoinette. Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. In writing this horoscope, she seeks to offer intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes. As above, so below.

Libra (September 24th – October 23rd)

You could make an important life-changing decision this season as your focus at this time seems to be planning for a safe future. Your emotions and intuition are strong but your mind may not agree. It will be beneficial to "have a word with yourself" to feel sorted. Re-evaluate intuitively and realistically. Your need to make radical changes in your career and personal life may not be necessary to achieve the changes you desire. Change comes from within, so go within.

Scorpio (October 24th – November 22nd)

Spring signals a lucky time to start a new project or adventure. You may be thinking of changing your job or relocating to a new home or city. Your work is to come to terms with your deep brooding emotions. Identify your bad habits and leave them behind if you wish to move your life forward. Take care not to be extreme in your reactions as this may alienate you in your personal relationships and in your professional life.

Sagittarius (November 23rd – December 21st)

Take a rest Sagittarius. A little "me" time will do you wonders considering the recent taxing months you've just endured. It's time to understand the difference between fantasy and reality relative to your dreams. You plan to achieve so much, but is that realistic? Your exhaustion could cause you to become cranky and very irritable. Analyze your actions before losing your temper. A moment of patience saves you a lifetime of regret.

Capricorn (December 22nd – January 19th)

Rev your engines Capricorn. This season is a good time to start a new job or project. Exiting your comfort zone is necessary for your success. You will surely reap the benefits of your hard work over the past few months. The end of spring brings you lethargy. Your exhaustion is best remedied by deep therapeutic relaxation.

Aquarius (January 20th – February 19th)

New ideas and innovations flood your mind. Take realistic inventory before being carried away on some unattainable goal. Have patience with family and friends who might not understand your "out of the box" thinking. Pick up a new hobby or revisit an old one. This will help your mind relax and improve your concentration.

Pisces (February 20th – March 20th)

You are calm and stable and at peace with the world. You are keen at keeping your emotions in check. Your happy-go-lucky attitude attracts many social invitations. Encounters with people from your past are presented to you as a benefit; you will discover that you have the ability to see life from another's perspective.

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LOOKING BACK

BY ANTOINE ELHASHEM

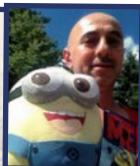


I have always wondered if I am a geek. I know I have elements of geeky-ness, but I don't know if I fit the profile of a geek. In past days geek stood for a fashionably or socially inept person, but now it is more of a slang term used to describe "eccentric or non-mainstream people. In current use, the word typically connotes an expert, enthusiast, or a person obsessed with a hobby or intellectual pursuit", as Wikipedia states.

So when I was asked to pen the "Looking Back" column for this issue of PinkPlayMags by our new Editor-in-Chief, I thought I would use this space to assess the level I measure on the geek scale.

As legend has it, my love of TV and pop culture started as a toddler with my mother putting me in front of our black and white tube in order to quiet me down while she finished her house chores (soon we graduated to colour TV). I recall totally geeking out over the Batman series, The Flintstones, Scooby-Doo, and Tom & Jerry. To this day if I see any of those shows or any related memorabilia I go totally giddy, so I guess that's points for my geekness.

Soon as I learned to read I fell for comic books and mystery novels. I loved all the usual heroes, like Batman, Spiderman, Superman, Wonder Woman, and Aquaman. Then my love turned a little naughty as I entered my teens and Batman became my imagined lover. I mean come on how can one resist that dark tortured soul, or that cod piece? I soon ditched Batman for Superman, after my uncle took my cousins and myself to see the first Reeves' staring movie. I went to the theatre three times in one week to see it again. I was in love, and when VCRs were just coming out I cried for a week until dad got us one. I just wanted to be able to push pause and ogle my hero boyfriend.

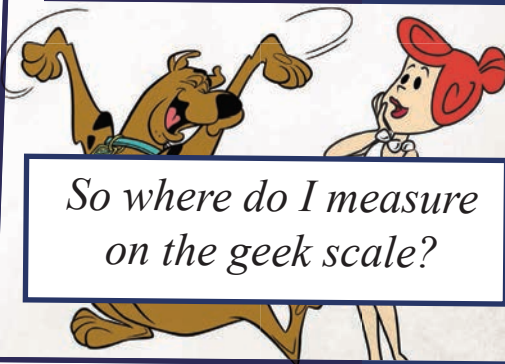


Antoine Elhashem is President of INspired Media Inc. publishers of The Pink Pages Directory, PtheBUZZ, and PinkPlayMags. Apparently he is also a geek.

In my mid-teens my literary obsession took a different tone and I spent hours, and even days reading any novel or book I could find on the French Revolution. If geekness is about obsession, then I sure was one.

I'm also a huge movie buff. I will watch anything and everything. Television to a lesser degree these days, because I think the quality of programming when I was growing up kicks the ass of the offerings on the tube these days. I know many will disagree with me, but I know some will agree as well. I totally geek-out over anything Star Wars related, and almost equally over The Big Bang Theory. I love my Bart, Cartman, and Stewie.

In conclusion, I admit to having seen almost every super hero movie out there, and I'm really enjoying the wave of them in the last few years. I've been to Toronto's ComiCon and left there holding more merchandise than I can afford, and one day I hope to have my own pop-culture room at home with posters, action figures, and puzzles that I have stashed away over the years.



So where do I measure on the geek scale?

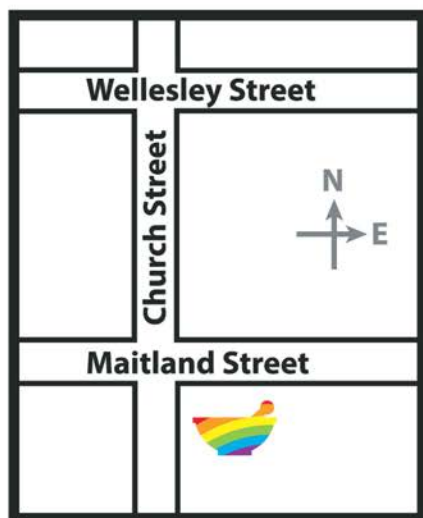


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