

ALUM PROFILE

Vowing Equality

From a concept born at BU, Jonathan Feit prepares to launch a new kind of wedding magazine

IN SPRING 2006, Jonathan Feit — then just twenty-four — already had one magazine launch under his belt when he was handed a proposal for an “alternative weddings” magazine. Armed with a growing list of media contacts and his own belief in the concept’s potential, he began to shop around the idea of a publication for gay, interracial, interfaith, and pregnant couples.

The timing couldn’t have been worse.

“We were prototyping at the same time the country was moving for a ban on gay marriage,” Feit (UNI’04) recalls. “We realized it couldn’t work when I went to a company that was one of the most gay-friendly advertisers in the business, and one of their account managers came back and said, ‘We really love the gay community, but we’re not ready to touch the politics around gay marriage right now.’” Straight and single, Feit, whose license plate reads “EQWLITY,” temporarily shelved the idea.

Two years later, with the recent lifting of a gay marriage

ban in California and expanded marriage rights for gay out-of-staters in Massachusetts, the currents have shifted, and Feit thinks the time is right to launch the magazine, called *With This Ring*. He’s amassing capital and advertisers through Feit Family Ventures, the company he created to fund his first magazine, *Citizen Culture*, a smart monthly for young urbanites. And he’s building the magazine’s Web site, www.withthisring-magazine.com, into a content repository and a community-building hub. Over the past two years, what first appealed to him as a fresh take on a stale genre — the fantasy-driven, pastel-colored wedding magazine — has become something of a personal mission.

“I can’t give up on this,” Feit says. “How am I going to turn around and say, ‘It’s too expensive to launch’? My fight is not for gay marriage, or weddings. My fight is for equality.”

With This Ring dates back to Feit’s semester as a lecturer at BU’s College of Communication, where he created the course Magazine Business Development (for the 21st Century). Inspired by the quality of his students’ work, he launched a national contest, offering to develop a prototype issue of the best magazine pitch he received. In the end, BU students Rowena Yow (CAS’05), Tia Albright (COM’07), and Stacy Chamberlain (COM’07) impressed a panel of industry judges with their idea for *I Do*, the magazine’s original title. *With This Ring* debuted as an insert in a 2006 issue of *Citizen Culture*, featuring a mix of articles both practical (where to find wedding dresses for expectant brides) and political (a lengthy interview with San Francisco mayor and gay rights advocate Gavin Newsom).

In the booming wedding business, Feit has found only one other publication — the tiny *Rainbow Weddings Network Magazine*, circulation 5,000 — that tackles gay unions. Meanwhile, the number of traditional bridal magazines has skyrocketed, from 40 in 2000 to 130 last year, according to the American Society of Magazine Editors.

“We’re developing a social venture,” Feit says of his new magazine. “It shouldn’t be one man’s vision; it should be a community vision. That big-picture view, that’s something that BU has that other schools don’t.” ❧❧



MATT BULVONY/GETTY IMAGES

recently appointed to a two-year assistant professorship with the Navy ROTC program at BU, and Dana is an accountant. Contact Michael at mkskiser@bu.edu.

DANIELLE CATERA MUECKE (CAS’03) of Atlanta, Ga., and her husband, Patrick, welcomed a son, Benjamin Levi, on September 22, 2007. E-mail them at dcaterra@alum.bu.edu.

JENNIFER OZOG (ENG’03) of Le Locle, Switzerland, is on a six-month assignment in Switzerland with her employer, Johnson and Johnson.

2004

ALLISON BELL (ENG’04) and **SCOTT DIANIS** (ENG’04) of Durham, N.C., were married on

May 27, 2007, in Nyack, N.Y. **INGE TAMM-DANIELS** (ENG’04) and **RACHEL SERASPE** (ENG’04) were in the wedding party.

DON DESFOSSE (GSM’04) of Chelmsford, Mass., and his wife, Betsy, announce the birth of a girl, Lindsey Morgan Desfosse, on June 4, 2008. “Lindsey and her older sister, Alyssa, two and a half, are becoming best