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COORDINATOR'S NEWSLETTER



Bicentennial
1776-1976



JANUARY, 1976

A BICENTENNIAL YEAR FOR ALL AMERICANS

RENAISSANCE
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Happy Holidays! This edition of the newsletter will be the longest ever and sort of forms a holiday present to all of you. The new format and colored paper, I hope, will make for colorful seeing as well as reading. The interim style of last month has been revised to this one and will be subject to further improvement. I had hoped to be able to have a colored cover but the cost would have been at the expense of the expanded size -- no way. If we can revise some more substantial subscription system, that may happen. Meanwhile, keep those letters and comments coming in.

Some have questioned the expansion of the mailing list. My own justification is that this forum should/must be seen by many different sorts of people who can decide for themselves whether gay people, who come in many different colors, sizes, temperments and abilities, can be given full and equal rights in this society we call the USA. In general, the tone is decidedly positive but indignation exists for my gay sisters and brother who are denied those rights.

My commitment to remaining in Madison as coordinator runs till the expiration of my present contract (June 30, 1976). What I will be doing after that I do not know -- but I do know that I will be doing my damndest to do a good job here until then. If you want to get involved with Renaissance and work with me, now is the time to do so. If you want to wait and watch, fine. The decision and the responsibility are entirely yours.

With this newsletter, my contribution will be principally to share with you an "editorial" on origins which I wrote while visiting my parents in Bloomington, Illinois over the Thanksgiving holidays. Secondly, I will share some comments I was unable to make, but keenly felt, at a homosexuality workshop held here in Madison early in November. My participation was primarily arranged by Benjamin Glover, MD, a psychiatrist, with the continuing Medical Education Department. I have grown to know and trust over the last year and one half. He has seen the comments and understands their motives.

Finally, I am the editor of this newsletter, and presently have sole responsibility for the selection of all its contents. That says a lot about me and "where I'm coming from." Comments or criticism may appropriately be directed to me or to the Board of Renaissance to whom I must answer.

There are many, many people whom I would like to thank for making 1975 a great year. But my space and time are limited. Most will receive this communication and I trust that this will do. To all a big hug and best wishes for a great New Year.

ORIGINS AND ETIOLOGY: A REFLECTION

Frequently I get questions about my origins (where were you born, how did you grow up, what institutions influenced you, where have you worked, how did you come to Madison) when I do panels on homosexuality at University classes. Also, one of the most frequently asked questions on these panels has to



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Plan to have your party at the Cardinal this New Year's Eve
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MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS... NOW!!

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Friday: *Cocktail Party 4-7pm. Grand reopening of Disco at 9:30*

Saturday: *"Formal Night" Free Formal Buffet 5-7pm.*

BACK DOOR 46 North Park Street



P.S.: Please Pardon us while we remodel... Bar will be closed Tues. Dec 16)

* Christmas Party Tues. Dec. 23. - Open Dec 24 & 25 at 8 PM!

do with "When did you first discover you were gay or homosexual?" Finally, many professionals want to know "How did you come to be a homosexual?" 2

The first two I have learned to handle easily and with dispatch the third one has me stuck. I do not know how or why I came to be a homosexual anymore than non-gay people know the origins of their sexuality. I believe that when, and if, the origins of sexuality are more adequately understood it will be clear where my sexuality is coming from.

This raises the question of how to phrase a good non-prejudicial, non pre-judgemental question about homosexuality. I would like to suggest a general norm: If a question about your sexuality would sound ridiculous or absurd if asked about non-gays then it says more about the asked than the askee.

Whether the questioner is a professional or a peer, questions are two way communications. That is not to say that prejudicial questions ought not to be answered but merely that people in general and gay people, in particular, should be able and willing to point out prejudice in the question and still answer it.

OK, I started off this reflection hoping to write about origins. I got off slightly but I'm back on now. I feel that it is very important to try to get back into contact with our own personal families, religions, schools, institutions, etc., as a source of strength and witness to being gay in our society. When we can "come out" there we have a load of gold to mine. Frustration and rejection there? Yes, but is it worse than that of working with strangers in strange lands?

If we can get back to our families to begin with and let them know "where we are at" we have a tremendous potential for support. If they say they cannot or will not handle it, so be it. That is their choice. Someone, perhaps your father, grandparents, uncles or aunts knows of gays on your family tree. It has probably never been talked about or openly acknowledged but they have been there, and deep in their hearts they have known it for a long time. Give them a chance to share that knowledge with you.

Then go to old friends, schoolmates and business acquaintances. Some will be able to handle it, some not. We have to start somewhere to break the chains of oppression that bind us. What could be easier than starting "in our own back yards?" What have we got to loose? Only the chains and ^{locks} and security systems that keep us bolted in our closets.

Why not try to do it at this holiday season. Try to come out and be able and willing to sit patiently and explain "where you are at" to your parents. What a holiday present! You will have given them the opportunity to really get to know who you are and where you stand. It will have cost you nothing but your time and patience and they will have gained a deeper insight into the courage and conviction of their child, a responsible adult.

But what if they won't accept me as I am? So be it. Try your friends and relatives. Will they be able to accept me as I am? Some will, some won't. But they can hardly omit seeing

3 what a courageous act you have performed in trying to share such an important part of yourself with them. They will admit, if only later, what a hard thing it must be to be gay in this anti-gay society. And perhaps they will thank you for that sharing of yourself.

You will have planted a seed of understanding and appreciation in their minds and it will grow, if they let it. And some day they will thank you for it.

And what about those who will listen and will try to understand? Be gentle and careful but let them know what you have been through, what pain and suffering you have endured to "keep your act together." Let them see if they can help, where they are at, to do something about not letting it happen to yet another generation. Go with them to religious leaders who will listen, to librarians who can get materials into public school and institutional libraries (get Gay Bibliography and read as much as you are able). Seek out lawyers and doctors who will try to understand and be able and willing to do something about the oppression gay people feel from our society. Go to publishers and editors and educators and politicians and ask them what they can/will do, practically. Write the Bicentennial Commission in Washington, D.C. and ask them to research the contributions of gay people to the American Revolution, and our subsequent history. We have been here all along but everyone, especially ourselves, have been afraid to admit it. Have been afraid to deal with it. But we can stop that, NOW. We can and we must, I believe.

"Gay Liberation is the cutting edge of sexual liberation," says Richard Ginder, (Binding With Briars: Sex and Sin in the Catholic Church.) I see our world as creeping quite close to the edge of destruction, yet possessing the greatest potential on the sweep of history. Let's not sit in our corners and lick our emotional wounds which "lead us to perceive differences that make us uptight instead of similarities that enable us to understand and love." (Ken Keyes' Handbook to Higher Consciousness). Let's get on with it! Let's let 1976 be a banner year for everyone who is in touch with their sexuality and wants to make the world a safer, more comfortable and peaceful and loving place in which to do it.

TO A GROUP OF HEALTH AND HELPING PROFESSIONALS AT A HUMAN SEXUALITY WORKSHOP

I would like to request your indulgence, which I have thoughtfully cleared with the faculty of this workshop, to engage in about five minutes of controlled rage.

In the light of the stated objectives of this workshop, I would like to suggest that you examine (at your leisure and in your own way) more carefully #1, #3, and #4 of the stated objectives of this workshop.

First, I am not speaking for all gay people in Wisconsin or the world. I am speaking from my own personal and sometimes painful experiences. Some of them are "hang-ups" and some of them are legitimate expressions of anger and rage at things that have gone on and will continue to persist in our society. No



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Feb. 2 - Mar. 22

1976

Exploring, Experimenting,
Experiencing

awareness is ...

beginning "where you are at" and starting your journey to self-discovery there.

Most people are much more capable, more intelligent, stronger than either they or I believe. A great deal of weakness, stupidity and craziness in this world is not real; it is playing weak, stupid and crazy.

The late Fritz Perls used to begin his seminars with: "If you want to go crazy, commit suicide, improve, get turned on, or get an experience that will change your life, that's up to you. I do my thing and you do your thing. Anybody who does not want to take the responsibility for this, please do not attend this seminar." Amen.

George M. Wethel

P.S. ALSO, GET A COPY OF
HOW TO MAKE YOUR LIFE WORK

BY KEN KEYES, JR., LIVING LOVE
CENTER, 1730 LA LOMA AVE,
BERKELEY, CA 94709 #2.25,
AND YOU MAY NOT NEED THIS
COURSE!! W

one speaks for all gay people just as no one speaks for all non-⁴ gay people; blacks, women, any repressed minority in our sometimes sick society. By very careful, sophisticated and controlled means I have managed to obtain this forum for my means of expression.

On a personal level, I believe that all people (even those not attending this workshop) have a basic human right to "personal comfort, free of fear and anxieties concerning their own sexuality." Existing laws, religious and moral principles, poor educational practices and a great many economic, political and social pressures work in sometimes overt but more generally covert ways to deny that right to all persons. Those conditions must change and, if our society is to survive, they must change quickly. Some of these conditions seem to be pushing us to the brink of total world destruction at the present time.

"To develop an attitude of tolerance and consideration for opinions different from our own." This is the key to the present population of the only world I really know anything about, surviving into the 21st century. I clearly see the seeds of our own destruction planted in this world I have recently grown to know and love. If we persist in our present patterns, I do not believe this world will be a fit place to live in by 2000. If we cannot and will not be tolerant of other people's sexuality how in the name of God will we ever be able to tolerate them on more complicated levels. The one area of sharing and caring that all persons have in common is that of human sexuality. It seems to be there for purposes other than just personal pleasure and reproduction. What other purposes we have barely begun to examine.

"To relate sexual knowledge and concepts to community problems and responsibilities." Gad, what a challenge to everyone. Sexual knowledge may be a key to understanding many of the problems which seem to be facing us today in our communities and likewise a key to accepting the awful responsibilities for those problems and being able to likewise accept the responsibility for solving them in new, imaginative and unprecedented ways. After all, we have always had problems, but the circuit overload pace of today's world has brought them into sharper and more pressing awareness.

What does this have to do with homosexuality? I believe that a frank, open and aware acceptance of homosexuality by this group could be a beginning. Please, please, get in touch with your gut feelings and examine them for appropriateness and the professional responsibility which I feel sure you all possess. Don't wallow in them, you have personal responsibility for those gut feelings and you can do your damndest to change them if they need changing or tolerate them if they resist all your efforts to change. But continue to hold those gut feelings up for personal, professional and public examination. Only in this way will we be able to mature, grow and be happy into the 21st century.

What the hell can I do? Well, as usual do your homework at home. After you've sorted out where you are at personally, and if you are willing and able to go beyond self-interest, look around your community in any area or sphere you are capable and comfortable with and find out how homosexuals exist. Is there any repression in your community? Is "coming

pathways



a group in Madison offering a gentle setting for discovering your deeper thoughts and feelings. Using awareness techniques you can come to an understanding of your unique potential and accept personal responsibility for the paths you choose in life.

awareness is ...

going to be approached through the use of John O'Stevens' book "Awareness: exploring, experiencing, expanding", published in 1971 by Real People Press for \$3.50 in paperback. George Weber, a Pathways member, will read parts of the book in order to embark on a journey of discovery, inviting the participants to join him in expanding and deepening awareness of the life that exists within and around all of us. The eight sessions will cover the chapters of the book:

- I Awareness
- II Communication within
- III Communication with others
- IV Fantasy Journeys
- V Pairs
- VI Couples
- VII Group Activities
- VIII Art, Movement & Sound

pathways is ...

sponsoring this awareness course as part of its educational program for the year. Other items are developed in response to expressions of interest from the group or the public.

The group will meet at St. Francis House (basement lounge) 1001 University Ave. (Tel. 257-0688 or 255-5766) in Madison, Wis. on Mondays from 7:30-9:30 p.m. There will be a 15 minute introduction or recap to start out each evening, then 45 minutes of experiments, followed by 10 minutes of processing and feedback.

Registration is \$18.00 which includes a \$10.00 contribution to Pathways. Pathways members may register for \$13.00.

The objective of the course is to help introduce the participants and the leader to the general awareness of the book's contents and experience. Experiments will be used to demonstrate that awareness.

Registration Form

Awareness Course
Feb. 2 - Mar. 22, 1976

Name: _____

Mailing Address _____
(include zip code) _____

Home Phone _____
Phone at work _____

- ☐ Enclosed is the \$18.00 registration fee (\$13 for Pathways members)
- ☐ I want to join Pathways. Enclosed is a check for \$23.00. This includes \$13.00 registration fee and \$10.00 dues for one year.

make check payable to: pathways

mail to: Ric Biek
9717 Indian Trace
Madison, Wis.
53716

5 out" an easy process? Is there a gay center? How do professional counselors (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, doctors, clergypersons, lawyers, politicians, employers, parents, etc.) react to the fact of homosexuality?

But how can I do all that? You cannot do all that! Get other like-minded persons like yourself together and take whatever steps you feel you can handle. Don't try to solve all the problems yourself, you can't and you can only burn yourself out by trying.

If there is a local gay center or groups that are interested in a positive attitude toward homosexuals, ring them up and ask what's going on. Find out what they are doing, what they want to do, what they would like to do if they had more financial and personnel resources. See if you could plug in your experience, professional abilities, contacts, money, etc. to help gay people. Perhaps you are a good facilitator, it may be that gay women and gay men are divided in your community (as they are in this one). Offer to assist in setting up some sort of joint facility to handle gay-related problems, issues, etc. But, also, try to understand why you may experience inconvenience, lack of coordination, "unprofessional" practices, etc. These people, gay women as well as gay men, are at the cutting edge of a lot of homophobia that exists in our society. They are prey to all the pressures, subtle and not so subtle, which this society had put down on its minorities. They lack money, professional assistance, experience, dedication, etc. At this point let me point out just possibly which some of you expressed an awareness of anger, possibly rage on the part of the gay women (lesbians) who appeared here before you yesterday. Keep in mind that gay women are doubly oppressed in our society. They share the general homophobia which all gay persons feel in their guts from this society -- but they also share a second or double oppression -- they are women! And in our male dominated society that makes them doubly threatening. "Why won't those radical feminist lesbians just shut up?" They will not shut up because they are keenly aware of what society would like to do to them -- shut them up! That would be the ultimate cop-out to their movement. They will not be quiet until this society learns to treat them as fellow human persons.

But how do you treat all homosexuals as fellow human beings? On a personal level, get to know some! Look around you in your own professional settings and ask yourself if you have been oblivious to "the invisible minority" that has been there all along. Check out your fellow gay professionals at the next professional conference you attend. Talk to them, find out that they are very much like you with one minor exception -- they prefer to relate emotionally and sexually with members of their same sex. Is that any excuse for the incredible amount of homophobia that exists in our society?

Then examine how you relate to gay people in your professional capacity. The gay people who come to you for services or/and goods. As psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, doctors, clergypersons, lawyers, politicians, employers, parents how much do you know about gay people. They are as varied as the colors on a color wheel. We come in all shapes, colors, and styles. Get to know us and try to emphasize the similarities you see and not the differences. We have pain, get sick, hurt,

WHAT?

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@ The Gay Info Data - Bank's %
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@ " RESOURCE - PACKET " %
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%

is a set of over twenty highly-selected short readings and reprints for "educational outreach" on homosexuality as a social issue--"homophobia" as a social problem. From philosophical to practical and back again. (Women's, and men's, liberations are touched on here and there as well--attention to "psychosexual androgyny").

RANGE OF TOPICS Includes the 17 sub-categories of: "BASICS" / BIBLIOGRAPHICAL / DISCIPLINES or academic fields / EDUCATION / GAY LIBERATION / HOMOPHOBIA / LEGAL-POLITICAL / of LESBIAN focus / "LIAISON" with other groups, movements / LITERATURE and art / MEDIA / MEDICINE & health care / MILITARY / PSYCHOLOGY and PSYCHIATRY / RELIGION / SOCIAL WORK / "I" the Gen. Misc. category

STANCES OR SLANTS refracted include not only (1) gay liberation, but also a mix of (2) social science, (3) literary-autobiographical, and (4) "folk-wisdom": myths &c.

FOR WHOM? whoever, especially including non-gay and "newly-gay" people. Hence for gay people and groups (their counselors/speakers/centers/Gay Studies), all hotline and counselling services, all educators and journalists, social-service people, the medical-religious-legal areas or arenas, and all libraries' pamphlet files

"OUTREACH": much of the material was designed to aid social-change agents in their contacts with non-gay individuals and groups--to serve these latter as calling cards, mini-reference guides to basic facts (and issues), awareness-provokers, ideological time-bombs, anti-panic palliatives, or whatever

WHY? The following official statement on the issue sums it up:

"Information about homosexuality should be included in the schools as well as for the general public because homosexuality remains a taboo topic and an area in which much misinformation abounds. As such, it can create pervasive anxieties as well as condemnatory and punitive attitudes which could be prevented or alleviated if valid information about homosexuality were disseminated. Target groups for such training should include teachers, ministers, lawyers, health educators, and youth group counselors. Homosexuality is often viewed with either disgust or anxiety, emotions which interfere with an objective understanding of the problem. Educational programs should both give information, and replace judgmental and condemnatory attitudes with more objective attitudes. . . ." ("Training and Education," p. 4 from National Institute of Mental Health Task Force on Homosexuality, Final Report and Background Papers, Rockville, Maryland, 1972)

HOW TO OBTAIN Simply fill out and mail off this regular standard official usual order blank. Donation of \$3.00 (three dollars) is requested to cover the costs of printing and postage. (We are a non-profit endeavor; we intended it that way.)

TO: INFO DATA-BANK, c/o G.P.U., Inc., P. O. Box 92203, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
Enclosed find \$3.00 prepayment for "Resource Packet" sent third-class postpaid:

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(Please print/type above clearly. Also, state any area or sub-topic of particular concern or interest:)

Renaissance of Madison, Inc.
Financial Statement

Balance on July 31, 1975 \$ 417.52

August 1 through November 30, 1975

Receipts

Pledges and Donations	\$2337.34
Stipends	50.00
Blue Bus Contributions	15.00
Misc.	42.60
Total	\$2444.94

Disbursements

Salary	\$1117.30
Employer's Soc. Sec. Tax	65.36
Fed. Unemployment Tax	35.76
Telephone	159.72
Printing	314.91
Postage	164.98
Fund Raising	98.38
Blue Bus	45.00
Loan Repayment	350.00
Misc. (Books and Office supplies)	110.49
Total	\$2461.90

Balance on November 30, 1975 \$ 400.56

Note: Not reflected in the above is a balance of \$1770 due on the loan from St. Francis House.

Chuck LePard
Treasurer

Dear friend,

As part of our ministry, we are pleased to send you this issue of The GAY LUTHERAN.

However, our funds are limited. If you want to be sure of receiving all future issues, we invite you to enter your subscription, using the blank at the right.

If you want us to stop sending our newsletter, please tell us at once.

Sincerely,

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is my donation of \$10

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cry. Have troubles in our relationships, etc., just like every-
one else you know, as well as you yourself. **6**

Finally, I would like to close by making several specific suggestions for your reading materials list. I wholeheartedly recommend and endorse all the books on the GAY BIBLIOGRAPHY but I doubt if you have the time, energy or patience to read them all. You might be able to influence getting them into professional libraries as well as public libraries so that people with time and patience and energy who are struggling to understand their own sexuality can have access to books and can read good positive things about homosexuals. But for yourself, I'd suggest you being with:

-- Society and the Healthy Homosexual, Anchor, Doubleday, George Weinberg. \$1.95/pb.

-- Consenting Adult, novel (13 year odyssey of a mother's acceptance of her gay son). Doubleday, Laura Z. Hobson. \$7.95/hb.

-- Homosexual Liberation and Oppression, Dennis Altman, Avon. v. \$2.00.

-- For People Who Make Love. A Doctor's guide to sexual health. John Secondi, M.D. Taplinger Press, NYC. \$7.95/hb. \$1.50 Bantam, Pa.

-- The Handbook. \$.35 from Operation Socrates, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1

NATIONAL GAY PRISONERS COALITION

This organization would love to hear from any gay sister or brother who is interested in helping liberate the rights of gay prisoners in all Federal Prisons. Contact:

Johnny Gibbs #86976-132

U.S. Prison

Lewisburg, PA 17837

Check it out!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the December newsletter, I omitted acknowledging the sources for two articles. "I Am A Part Of My People -- I Am A Gay Jew" was reprinted from DATA-BOY issue 130, October 22, 1975, Box 3851, Hollywood, CA 90028. "Gay Ageism" appeared in Pacific Coast Times, October 24, 1975, Box 7173, San Diego, CA 92107. Thanks to both publications and to JON for sending them to me.

ASSOCIATION OF GAY PSYCHOLOGISTS

If you might be interested in knowing more about this group Check It Out: Association of Gay Psychologists

Box 214103

Sacramento, CA 95821

(From Gay Community News (GCN), September 20, 1975, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, MA 02108. By Sher).

ATTENTION gay sisters and brothers, isn't it about time we stopped the corporate presses? How many more times are we going to line up like lambs only to be slaughtered once more when we get to the printers? How much of the positive material that some of those TIME reporters must have written (I can dream can't I?) about us lies on the editing room floor along with the wool that still hangs over our eyes? How many more betrayals by the straigh media can the gay movement take before we stand up and say, "No more interviews until we have control over what is going to be printed about us."?

Let them write their news stories but no more "cover stories" until they can write an article that will cover all of us. I resent reading an article that is supposed to be about my way of life; what we are all about and find out that although it may cover some facets of gay life, it is written to appeal to the prurient interests of a homophobic society.

One expects biased, one-sided, superficial reporting from the pulp-pushers but not from a weekly such as TIME. Success stories about real people do not sell magazines so once again the corporate giants put money before humanism and OUR feelings.

The superficial handling with which a handful of up-front gay activists/celebrities was misleading, distorted, negative and disappointing indeed; leaving the rest of us either toweling off at the baths, bandaging our beaten bodies or choking on the fumes of moth balls!! Because we are who no what we are we have very little history. When someone like Dr. Howard J. Brown "Comes out" or Sarah Montgomery tells the world she's proud of her gay son, they become very important to us. Dr. Brown got nine short lines but the world was not spared the fact that Sarah's beloved son committed suicide along with his lover. Hopefully some readers will grasp the true meaning of their deaths.

HUMAN SEXUALITY -- A FRIENDLY TEXTBOOK

From GCN, same issue). Human Sexuality: An Age of Ambiguity. (MagaBack: Social Issues Series). Ed. by John Gagnon. Text by Bruce Henderson. Boston: Little, Brown. \$1.95. 64 pp. Paperback. Book \$30170-1.

(The Magaback series books are promoted only to schools and you will not find them in bookstores. Copies may be obtained by sending \$1.95 to Little, Brown at 200 West St., Waltham, Mass. 02154.)

A Review by Dennise Brown

"Honk If You're Horny."

"Do you honk because you're horny? Indeed, how do you known you're horny? Above all, why do you feel horny?"

STRESS: May be seen as intense exertion, strain or effort--the wear and tear of life.

Responding to stress in a healthy way:

LIKE YOURSELF: You are a unique individual. Respect your abilities. Recognize your needs, forgive your errors.

DEFINE TASKS AT HAND: By determining what you want to accomplish and how you will proceed realistically. Work on one task at a time. Where anxiety creeps in, think about what else you may be trying to do and recheck your expectations--are they too high?

LEARN TO ACCEPT WHAT YOU CANNOT CHANGE: Some circumstances are beyond our control. Accept realistic expectations and go about achieving them, with assistance if needed. Recognize your own limitations and the limitations of others.

TALK ABOUT TROUBLES: At times, confiding worries to a SPECIAL friend or trained professional may relieve your stress. Often another person can help you to see your problem in a new light or find a possible solution. Worry constructively.

RELAX CREATIVELY: Take time to do something you really enjoy, or learn the art of loafing. If you set aside time to relax, don't let ANYTHING interfere; even worrying about what you're not doing.

WORK OFF TENSIONS: Try a physical activity like walking, playing a game of tennis, gardening, chopping wood, or playing the piano.

TREAT YOURSELF TO SUFFICIENT SLEEP: Know how many hours you need. Is it 6, 8, or even 10? Having enough sleep regularly will help give you a refreshed energetic outlook on life.

TAKE MEDICATION CAUTIOUSLY: A physician may prescribe medications which help relieve tension. Use only under his or her direction. Do not take sedatives or tranquilizers prescribed for others.

Prepared in cooperation with the psychiatric clinical area of St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center, Madison, Wisconsin. 53715

IMS:le:5/3



FRIENDS OF THE CARDINAL

IN
COOPERATION
WITH THE STAFF
OF THE CARDINAL
BAR WE ANNOUNCE THE
ISSUANCE OF A PASS
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CARD WILL ALLOW
THE BEARER FREE
ENTRY INTO THE
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FOR ONE YEAR
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1001 university avenue
madison, wisconsin
53715

257-7575



"According to most sexual theories and sexual folklore, this common experience of many men and women -- feeling horny -- must be because of pent-up sexual drives or energies. Nevertheless, if there has been any major change in explanations of human sexuality, it has been a movement away from those points of view that exclusively emphasize biology in determining sexual orientation and gender roles. Today, more and more emphasis is being given to the social and psychological factors involved in the creation of each person's sexuality."

You can tell already that Human Sexuality: An Age of Ambiguity is going to be a lot friendlier to gay people than most sociology texts. (I recall my friend who tried three times to get through Abnormal Psychology, each time realizing that she was listed under "perversions" in need of "cure".) I hope that this book, planned for use in courses like Intro to Soc., Social Problems, Marriage and the Family, and Human Sexuality (does almost everyone still take Intro. to Soc.?) gets to a lot of people -- especially those who are, or may be, or know gay people (and isn't that everybody?).

The book is based on the "social learning" theory -- that we "assemble our sexuality beginning with gender identity, and we build upon that the activities that we come to think of as fitting to ourselves." There is a chapter on heterosexuality and one on homosexuality, with an emphasis on Gay Liberation, notes on legal reform, Lesbian invisibility and bisexuality. The portion on Lesbianism has a fair and encouraging outline of the similarities between gay and straight women in a sexist society, and outlines some usual differences between Lesbians and male homosexuals!

"The tendency for Lesbians to establish long-term relationships in part accounts for society's ignorance about them. Until recently, most lesbians have been relatively invisible. Thus homosexuality continues to show the influence of conventional gender roles on sexual development...With changing cultural attitudes about gender and sex, it should become easier for homosexual men to establish more enduring emotional relationships and for lesbian women to increase their degree of sexual activity -- just as a similar kind of liberation is reducing the differences between male and female heterosexuals."

Even the format of the book reflects the ambiguity mentioned in the subtitle -- it is called a "MagaBack" -- a book in magazine format. The writer used the extensive files of Time magazine, and the large format (8 1/2 x 11") and many photographs add to the reader's pleasure. It is a short (64 page) summary of current information about sexuality, but includes a brief overview history through Greek and Roman of the history of sexuality, from pre-civilization to the eighteenth century, Puritanism and Victorianism, with special focus on Sigmund Freud, Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey and Masters and Johnson. James/Jan Morris and transsexualism is used to highlight the current interest in gender changes and ambiguities. Sex therapy and the acquisition of sexual skills are the subject of another chapter.

I enjoyed reading the book; I think students will not only enjoy it but, for once, not feel their own sexuality, whatever

9 it is, condemned in class. The language is as non-sexist as possible and men and women alike are treated as humans, not objects (even of a study). It is encouraging to read such a level-headed view of sexuality, and even more encouraging that it was published in the "straight" world, with resources and salespeople to promote its use. I am encouraged, and I hope that the students who use the book are, too.

A DICTIONARY OF GENDER IDENTITY

(From GCN, same issue.) By Charles Bonnell.

There are several words used in the scientific literature to describe people who dress in clothes that society would say are inappropriate for them given their anatomic sex. Since gay people sometimes are uncertain as to which word to use in a given situation, here is a list with definitions and a few comments.

Cross dresser -- This term is often used, but rarely defined, in the scientific literature. Its meaning is thus a little imprecise. It usually means anyone who dresses in clothes considered appropriate for the opposite sex. Thus, transvestites and drag queens (see below) are cross dressers. Most authors would also apply the term to a pre-operative transsexual (see below) dressed as a member of their preferred sex. Most would probably not apply it to a post-operative transsexual, since anatomic sex and sex of dressing are then congruent. Usually, the term does not carry any implication that the cross dressing is done well enough to "pass," although it usually is.

Drag queen -- Less often used by scientists, a drag queen generally means a homosexual man who dresses as a woman. Sometimes a distinction is made depending on whether the cross dressing is done regularly or occasionally. I have not heard the term applied to women, nor extended to them as in "drag king." ("Drag king" is listed in The Queen's Vernacular, but I have never seen it in the scientific literature. This is not to say scientific papers are the only source of authority -- just the only source I'm using for this article.) To the best of my knowledge, there are no scientific articles about drag queens -- just articles that mention them briefly, comparing them to other sorts of people.

Transsexual -- A person whose innermost sense of femaleness or maleness is in conflict with their genetic sex (XY for males, XX for females). Most transsexuals have had this conflict for as long as they can remember. Transsexuals can be pre-operative (before undergoing a sex-change operation) or post-operative. A transsexual can begin as a female or as a male; there is controversy as to which is more common. Transsexuals can be heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual with regard to their preferred sex; as with non-transsexuals, the heterosexual condition is most common. The term "transsexual" has degenerated in some circles to mean anyone who applies for a sex change operation. Those who do not fit the "classic" transsexual description range from gay people who want to regain a bisexual lover to out-and-out schizophrenics who feel the sex change is inevitable and they might as well get it over with. Most scientists agree an

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29 The success of the support groups on their members can be summed up in one heart felt comment from one: "I feel I have managed to end three years of isolation from all but a small in-group of friends here in Madison." I'll print more comments in the next newsletter if people feel free sharing them with me.

After a successful experience with two support groups a third small group is being formed to begin in January. Gays facilitator will be Ray Berger. An organizational meeting will be held soon to determine group goals. If there is sufficient interest, an assertive training or interpersonal skill training format will be followed. This involves keeping a log of difficult or troublesome social situations (e.g., your roommate makes an unreasonable request; a "friend" puts the make on you and you want to say no; you'd like to ask that tall dark stranger at the bar for the next dance). The group focuses on discussion of effective ways to handle the situation, and observing and roleplaying ("acting out") different ways of responding. Other types of group goals include Consciousness Raising and T-Groups. If you have some ideas or would just like to find out more, call the Center and leave your name and number. Or just call and find out what's happening! (257-7575; Days and hours: 1-5, 7-10 weekdays).

--Bob Andrews

THE LAST LAUGH

Several people have given me feedback on the LAUGH ALONG WITH GEORGE tape cassette. Sorry, but it's in mono only due to our duplication equipment. The major complaint is that the tape is too long (30 minutes of George laughing/30 minutes of electronically reprocessed laughs). The solution is simple; don't listen to the whole thing! Most cassette players I've seen have a button labeled "STOP" and even one labeled "EJECT" so you can listen to something else. If you think 30 minutes is long, George laughed for over 45 minutes solid at the recording session.

Some people have asked me what I used to derange George's laugh on Side Two. I used 2 tape loops (1 and .5 second delays), a ring modulator, and occasional manual tape speed modification.

I would like to thank Mark Lutz for duplicating the tapes for us. Please, do not hold this against Mark. All crank calls should be directed to George or me. Ha ha ha ho ho he he he ... NUM-NUMS!

--Bob Andrews

10 effort should be made to restrict the definition of transsexual to those who fit the "classic" pattern. There is a minor controversy as to whether the word "transsexual" should be spelled with one or two s's.

Transvestite -- This word is often used as a synonym for cross dresser. However, most scientists now give it a much more specific definition -- a person who achieves an erotic thrill of arousal by putting on some clothes of the opposite sex. By this definition, most transsexuals have never been transvestites, since cross dressing for them seems natural and not erotic. A prominent sex researcher has also stated that including the requirement of erotic arousal apparently means there are no female transvestites. (In fact, he stated that if anyone knows of a woman who gets an erotic arousal from wearing men's clothing, she should get in touch with someone who could interview her and write it up for a scientific journal, since literally no such cases have ever been reported.) Defined in this way, it seems from the literature that most transvestites are heterosexual -- Mr. Respectable Businessman, for example, who wears lace panties under his 3-piece suit because it gives him such a charge. Homosexual transvestites have scarcely been investigated in the scientific literature.

THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIC/GAYS ON CAMPUS

(This review was published in It's Time, November, 1975 by the National Gay Task Force, Room 506, 80 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY, 10011. It was written by Bruce Voeller, the Executive Director of NGTF.)

The Homosexual Matrix, by C. A. Tripp, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1975.

From time to time a book is published which will alter our understanding of the nature of things in profoundly important ways. Tripp's remarkable book is just such a volume. Indeed, the range of his scholarship and reflections upon the nature and expression of human sexuality is extensive and deep. In fact, it defies attempts to condense its observations into a summary. In each chapter provocative originality pours forth in an overwhelming stream of novel and striking concepts.

Freudians, politicians and homophobes will not like this book. At the very outset, for example, Tripp, a long time sex researcher, coworker of Alfred Kinsey, and psychologist on the faculty of New York's Downstate Medical Center, succinctly disposes of any malingering vestige of acceptability of the psychiatric sickness model of homosexuality. Next he then does one of the most concise, devastating dismemberments of Freud's fantasies about the nature of sexual developmental patterns which I've seen anywhere. In short, Freud's observations are limited. The behavioral peculiarities of a small number of emotionally disturbed Viennese has no bearing on the "normal" development and behavior than does the behavior of homosexual psychiatric clients on the behavior of homosexual women and men in general. Freud's theorization lacked the benefit of our current knowledge of ethology (animal behavior) among mammals -- especially higher primate -- and of comparative anthropology.

Tripp has obviously burrowed deeply into these two major areas of comparative behavior and provided major new insight into the remarkable balancing between the need to "love" and be closer to other human beings (of either gender) and the need to preserve one's integrity through "distance." Tripp explores these balanced forces within each of us with masterful skill and the wisdom obviously borne of long reflection. Based on this analysis and upon his perceptions of our focusing of eroticism, he explores such diverse topics as sex techniques, the duration of sexual and affectional encounters and relationships, the psychology of effeminacy (a brilliant chapter), the question of psychotherapy (it's pointless, hopeless and misguided), and a marvelously fine chapter on the politics of homosexuality.

This is a book which I, for one, will need to read again and again. I've been through it twice from cover to cover and learned more on my second reading than on my first. I've already started my third round.

It will be a highly controversial book because it challenges much traditional "knowledge" about sexuality. It also proposes a very strong counterstructure within which we can re-examine sexuality and incorporate most of what we currently see and know about the topic. All this is not to say that Tripp answers all our questions. Any great new hypothesis answers some of major puzzlers while raising a range of new ones. Tripp's work is unexceptional in this one particular. In every other way, this is a work to read, discuss, think about, and then repeat the entire process again.

One proper criticism of the book is its obvious and familiar male orientation. Rather than belabor the point, let's hope that Prof. Tripp will turn his remarkable talents to dealing in full with female eroticism and sexuality. His hints prove how fine such a work would be as he shows in his distinction between the whole-body eroticism of women versus the highly-focused form in men.

GAYS ON CAMPUS

By Lee J. Lehman, Ed., United States National Student Center, 1975, \$3.00.

Lee Lehman, a gifted lesbian activist and Director of the National Gay Student Center at the National Student Association, has put together a fascinating book of essays, gay studies syllabi and gay student information. There are perceptive accounts of coming out on campus, assessments of the joys and problems of developing campus gay groups, and reflections on the nature and value of gay studies courses on campus.

The final essay, by Sally Gearhart and Del Martin, is entitled, "Afterthoughts: Lesbians as Gays and as Women." What a considerably excellent brief it makes along with several others in this fine collection!

For anyone wishing to see the gay movement from the vantage point of the university and to see how centrally important these campus gay groups have been in our movement, Ms. Lehman's book is a must. --Bruce Voeller

good service to the community, gay and non-gay. That it was an important means for letting people who should know that we are here not just what we are doing and what the spirit of the times is.

Dilemma, how to continue the growth and expansion of the newsletter and its mailing list and still finance it. I would like to suggest to you, the reader, the following:

1) If you rarely read Check It Out and are generally not interested in its contents, then drop me a line and I'll remove your name from the mailing list. You could borrow it from friends or drop in the Center to read it.

2) If you do enjoy reading it and wish it to continue then consider the possibility of supporting it: by direct financial contribution; by labor or work in kind; by restricted donations specifically earmarked for Check It Out expenses rather than the overall functions of Renaissance; by talking to friends who might be interested in receiving it and who could be asked to make a donation; by specific donations toward printing or postage charges; by donation promotions from your business through the newsletter, etc. But do check it out. The next few editions are going to be contingent on a more broad-based financial and talent support from you the reader. If the interest is not there, the newsletter as you have come to know it, will cease to be published. The decision and the responsibility are in your hands. Please talk to John Lindert, the President of the Renaissance Board, or Chuck LePard, the Treasurer or Bob Andrews, the Chairperson of the committee which will be developing policies and guidelines for future newsletters.

COUNSELING STAFF DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Not all of the statistics from November have been gathered yet, but a few of the totals will tell the story. Last month, we had 305 contacts. The majority (241) were by phone, but drop-ins were also up (44). At least 77 of our new contacts discovered the Gay Center through the classified ad in the Madison newspapers paid for by the Back Door.

The most important contact we had in December has been with Ralph Hansen, director of UW Protection and Security, and Paul Ginsberg, dean of students. They have met with members of the counseling staff, the Renaissance board of directors, and the Lesbian Switchboard. The initial purpose of the contact was to let P&S know what it's like to be gay on campus, but quickly expanded to a consciousness raising experience for both the gay community and the university administration. In the planning are exchange presentations (panel & discussion) for P&S by the Lesbian Switchboard and the Gay Center, and for the gay community by P&S staff members. Further contact is also being made with the university administration and counseling services working on, among other things, a joint publication about being gay on campus. This contact has been long overdue and should relieve a lot of tension and hostility caused by ignorance and isolation.

year? Why not corral your energies and resources to making 1976 a banner year in your life?

You are worth a present and you deserve it! The happier and more satisfied you are, the better able you will be to be with others and the more open you will be to their interest and attention. An old saying goes, "Love your neighbor as yourself," but if you don't love yourself, and take care of your own needs and wants, how will you ever be able to adequately help and even love others? Check It Out. You deserve it. Take care of yourself.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE MARIANISTS -- DAYTON, OHIO

Let me share this Christmas message from Rev. Norb Brockman, S.M.:

"Christ climbed down from his bare tree this year and softly stole away into some anonymous Mary's womb again. Where in the darkest night of everyman's anonymous soul he awaits again an unimaginable and impossibly immaculate reconception the very craziest of second comings."

-- I. Ferlinghetti

UNHAPPY, LONELY PEOPLE AT HOLIDAY TIME

Many studies show this holiday season to be one of the most depressing times in the year. It seems that everyone in the whole world is having a good time, enjoying prosperity, getting together with family and friends but me. I'm not sure whether that impression is real or not. But I have personally found that if I enjoy my work and friends and am really doing what I want and it feels good to me, I can get beyond my own attempts to depress myself. Suggestion: if you feel depressed this holiday season, look into yourself. See if you are really in touch with what you want out of life and are happy with your work and friends. If not, decided to change that behavior pattern in 1976. You owe it to yourself and you owe it to those around you. Further, I'd suggest that if you expect to be happy by doing what others want you to do or be or appear to be, you are setting yourself up for disappointment and depression. You have responsibility in this life to take care of yourself. I believe that is what life is all about. I'm fully aware that most people do not agree with that, but all I can say is that insofar as I have been able to follow that it has been a source of energy for me. It is the greatest anti-depressant in the world. Check It Out.

FINANCING -- CHECK IT OUT

At the most recent Renaissance Board meeting, there was a great deal of time spent on the financing and expansion of Check It Out as a publication. The idea of a subscription rate was generally tabled because the feeling of those present was that there would be very little interest in paying for the publication. Yet, simultaneously, it was felt that it is a

GAY PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS

(A statement from the Caucus of the American Public Health Association, meeting in November 1975).

We are your co-workers -- ten percent of all those working in public health.

We are your co-workers -- nurses, sanitarians, researchers, auto drivers, health planners, case finders, physicians, dental hygienists, administrators, lab technicians, psychologists, etc.

We are your co-workers -- women and men, black and white, young and old, rich and poor, Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and non-religious, good looking and not so good looking, shy and pushy, talented and not so talented, liberal and conservative, sexually active and sexually not to active, small townish and cosmopolitan, and all the inbetweens.

We are your co-workers -- indistinguishable from you in our diversity but unlike you in our affectional and sexual orientation. We are men who love men, women who love women.

This one difference has pervasive consequences: our civil and human rights are systematically abridged or denied.

The Tragic Cost of Homophobia

If our homosexual orientation is noticeable or becomes known, most of us face a wide range of hostile and discriminatory practices:

- we are fanatically slandered,
- we are fired from civilian and military jobs,
- we are denied professional licensure,
- we are rejected by training programs,
- we are obstructed in securing housing, credit and insurance,
- we are pushed into painful, expensive and useless therapy,
- we are beaten up by strangers,
- we are entrapped by police,
- we are thrown out of churches and synagogues,
- we are separated from our children,
- we are ostracized by family and friends.

Understandably, most of us hide our minority status. But hiding such a significant part of ourselves is also costly. There is the constant fear of being discovered. There is the constant need to maintain the disguise. Personal energy is drained. Productivity is lessened. Relationships with co-workers, friends and family are deceitful and incomplete.

Gay People/Straight Health Care

In addition, there are the special burdens imposed on sexual minorities when they seek and receive health care. If they hide their homosexuality, the diagnostic work-up, the diagnosis and the prescribed therapy are often inadequate or wrong. If they reveal their homosexuality, the response is often unprofessional: loathing, moralizing, neglect or ignorance.

In either type of encounter, the quality of care is lowered and the health system becomes another mechanism for human oppression. Thus the sexual minorities have an extra highly charged basis for distrusting physicians, nurses and other health workers and for putting off preventive and early treatment services.

As a result, gay health services, primarily for mental health and VD, have sprung up in more than a dozen cities across the country. Some have received good cooperation from local public and private agencies and a few have received grants and in-kind assistance from governments.

Coming Out Publicly

Some of us after weighing the pros and cons of hiding in the closet, have concluded that for us individually, it would be better to come out publicly. Gay nurses, gay psychologists and gay psychiatrists have already formed caucuses within their national professional organizations.

Now a group of public health workers are organizing a gay caucus in the American Public Health Association. We hope by doing this we can improve the health care received by sexual minorities, protect the rights of gay health workers, and help eradicate homophobia and sexism from our society.

This is Everyone's Struggle

As long as homosexuals are oppressed, all people are pressured to live up to sexist stereotypes and lose the opportunity for full development of their unique human potential. Fear of sexual minorities is costly to everyone.

This cost could be eliminated if all health services, all families, all communities face realistically and humanely their ten percent with same sex affectional and sexual orientation. Some specific suggestions for doing this follow:

1. Examine your own views and feelings about human sexuality, including homosexuality.
2. Promote the adoption by the personnel system of your agency or institution, of policies providing to sexual minorities equal employment and advancement opportunity.
3. Promote training sessions for the staff of your agency or institution about the adverse effects of homophobia on the quality of health care and on the health of the people.
4. Write your Senators and Congressmen urging them to co-sponsor H.R. 5452 which amends the Federal Civil Rights Act to provide to persons with homosexual orientation, the same protections against discrimination now provided to others on the basis of race, etc.
5. Support the enactment of similar amendments to civil rights laws of states and cities.

I have found a great deal of support living in this house and I know it will be even more so in the future as we come to know one another better.

I mentioned the Jesuits earlier because I was one for eight and one-half years of my life and through them I got the finest training and education I could ever want. I would like to go back now and be of some help to them, but that is in the future and I will let you know how that is developing in the next few months.

MY FATHER

Since "coming out" to my parents in mid-October of 1975, I have found myself closer to my father than at any time in my life. We have not been emotionally close, but since I have seen him begin to grapple with my sexual orientation and preference, he has grown immensely in my estimation. We have been able to talk and share ideas as never before. Though he is over 70 years old, his mind is still keen and his understanding is as keen and perceptive as I have ever known it. If my coming out has brought us closer together, it was certainly worth all the pain and effort involved. Thanks.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Again, I can report that the Support Groups are flourishing. A third will be formed this month and probably another will be formed next month. These are not for everyone but if you think you might be interested, Check It Out with members or call the Gay Center and rap about it.

VOLUNTEERS, ANYONE?

The Center is experiencing a great surge of activity and energy and a great many new contacts through the local newspaper ads being sponsored by The Back Door, LTD, and its owner Rodney Scheel. We need more people to do all kinds of odd jobs; cleaning, painting, research on discrimination cases, typing, etc. If you can spare some time and have the interest and energy to utilize your talents and abilities, ring up and let us know. If you do not have the time or energy, perhaps you have money to help support our efforts. Elsewhere in the newsletter is a financial report from our Treasurer, Chuck LePard. We are barely surviving and our books are open to public view. If you support our efforts and energies consider helping us financially (and anonymously if you wish) if you can't help us in any other way.

HOLIDAY PRESENTS

If you give presents at this holiday season, permit me to suggest something. Have you given yourself one? Was there something you really felt you wanted and needed in 1975 that you did not get? Do you still feel that need in your gut? Why not decide now to give that to yourself some time in the

inside to have it come out five or six years later when they finally face their sexuality. This is not to say that all of us who came out past our teens should have come out earlier. In fact, even with an open atmosphere to talk things out, most people would probably come out in the same way at the same time, but it might have been a little less painful.

THE new openness in sex is making it allowable for teens to move into a sexual role at an earlier age, and this ends up in direct conflict with the fact that there is no place for youth to turn for counseling, companionship, or peer support, until they are much older. It puts them in an even worse position than the average teenager who is trying to discover him/herself.

WHAT can be done? There is no easy solution. As I mentioned before, education is a basic factor. Education of foster parents, and real parents, and of peers would make acceptance easier. Education of counseling services and teachers would make them more capable of handling problems that do arise, and education of young gays, themselves, would help them to cope with societal pressures and their own self-image. Getting this kind of education started is a mixture of politics and hard work. It means getting past the basic fears of people aimed at things they do not understand.

HELPING the young people is a harder proposition, because of the legal strictures and the fear in most ungay minds that we are proselytizing youths to become gay. Those in the best position to help are actually the educated social and religious workers who see the problems and aren't any more interested in forcing young gays to become straight than we are in forcing young straights to become gay. It must be a community effort if gay youths are not to fall into the same hole adult gays have been in for ages; unwanted, misunderstood, and deprived of the basic right to pursue their own happiness, their own way, without harming those around them in the ungay world.
-- L. Taylor.

133 E. GILMAN

Since the last issue of Check It Out, I have moved to the above address and am more comfortable than I have ever been since moving to Mad City. I am living with four other gay men, Jacob, Jerry, Gary and Bruce, in a house that has had many nicknames, but the name "Fag Manor" is the one that seems to have lasted longest. I like that name. It does not threaten me any longer. In fact, I'm reminded of the origins of the term "Jesuit" which, when it was coined in the sixteenth century, was a term of opprobrium for the order in the Roman Catholic Church which fought very strongly to prevent the break-up of the Western Church. Through thick and through thin, they managed to turn that term around and have kept it as their namesake. During the Middle Ages, faggots were burned at the stake. I feel a lot more comfortable now when that term is hurled at me, probably in hatred and disgust, but I know that it does describe me (or at least one facet of my multi-faceted personality) and signifies the avenue that has been responsible for my getting more in touch with my many talents and abilities.

6. Support the repeal of laws which classify as criminal any consensual sexual activity but retaining those parts which protect children, the mentally incompetent and other helpless persons from rape and other forced sexual activity.

For more information contact:

Gay Public Health Workers
206 N. 35th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104

LAMBDA AS A SYMBOL



In the November 1975 issue of Check It Out, you received a copy of a Gay VD flyer (more are available from Renaissance, just write and enclose a contribution to cover costs of printing and mailing, if you can afford it). In that flyer I inserted a "filler" on the origins of the symbol of the LAMBDA used to signify gay liberation. I'd like to run something up the flagpole and see if anyone salutes.

Since it is a symbol, and it can carry any meaning we want it to have how about the possibility of widening the meaning to extend it to include a liberating symbol for all human sexuality (0-6 on the Kinsey scale). Let it be a symbol for all human persons who want to have sexual liberation (gay or non-gay). Let it show that you are fighting any force that wishes to oppress the complete and open acceptance of sexuality and its expression from any source. Let it be a symbol that unites gays and non-gays in a struggle that is world-wide and will require all the energy that we can collectively muster. Let it show that we are willing to "give up" our symbol (exclusively) to fight the forces that are oppressive to all human beings. Let it be a symbol that unites all human beings, rather than divides them (gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, non-gay, etc.). Or finally, let us devise a symbol that will do that if the LAMBDA is not the best one.

TO WORK AND BE GAY

(A letter to me which I believe touches most working gays from time to time.)

George:

I know you're always seeking input from the gay community and thought I'd write to you to bring a problem of gay life to your attention. I'm not really sure you can do much about it, but I thought you'd have a better perspective for solutions since you have more contact with gay people than I.

Before I get into that, I wanted to let you know that I think it's a good idea that people make a contribution to the center to receive the newsletter. After all, it does cost to print it. I feel a little guilty contributing now (you know, "if you didn't pressure me you never would get a cent"), but I'd rather contribute with prodding than not contribute.

Now that that's out of the way, I'll tell you what really is on my mind. The problem I've gotten into is that it's really hard to work and be gay. I don't mean the pressures on gays, I can handle that. What really gets to me is that working a full-time job really cuts one off from sexual contacts. During the business day, I'm confronted with fellow employees who, being the good junior executives that they are, are hardly open to propositions (or, considering the way they look, are hardly in danger of getting propositioned.) After I get home from work, there really aren't too many social/sexual opportunities until the bar gets crowded, which is of course too late for someone who gets up at 6 o'clock. That leave me with the unfortunate action of cramming my cruising into the weekends and into the bars. This situation, while depressing even on the surface, rapidly became a disaster.

In the first place, the only bars that I can cruise are the BD and Cardinal. (The Pirate Ship is no place for someone who's a young-looking 20, and I'm holding the Speak for a last hope). The Cardinal has an unmistakable aura of straight to it, and I'm afraid no sigh, no matter how appropriate, is going to change that. That leaves the BD, which is becoming increasingly unacceptable as a gay bar. First, there are so many straights that you can't even walk up to a lot of the men (I've gotten into the habit of camping it up and walking over to a guy who's standing next to his 'chick' and propositioning in the most 'Oh, Mary!' voice imaginable. You should see the looks he gets from his girl friend. (What did you do to bring that on?) In the second place, it's so crowded that you can't move freely enough to maintain minimal self-respect, because the feeding of cattle is too strong.

After the elimination of weekdays, weeknights, and weekends, I'm afraid there's not much left. As a student, I could meet people in classes and libraries, or on the street. But working eliminates many of these possibilities. I'm sure there must be lots of working gays facing the same problem. There really is no place to go where gays can freely cruise for sexual contacts. I'm lucky enough to have enough good, loving friends to enjoy a good social life, but sex is something else. I'm wondering if there aren't other gays who acknowledge their sexual drives and have a hard time finding others because there just aren't enough open channels. I would think a lot of people face the same frustration I face, and lots more who just wish there were more meeting their type of people for sex and good times. Maybe what we need is a truly gay bar, or perhaps a gay 'computer dating' system. Maybe everyone feels my frustration and just reconciles themselves to the feeling. In any case, I suspect I wrote to relieve my frustrations more than anything else, and I do feel better. There probably isn't much you can do, but at least I've let you know how one person in the gay community feels. Thanks for listening. --Evan

SUICIDE NOTE

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because their heterosexual social life had not yet had a chance to begin, it is also significant that when their sexual awareness began, their first real feelings were of a gay nature. They also felt that the heterosexual choice was very much open to them, but they had decided not to pick up on it. So they pretty well stayed in their own circle of acquaintances with the open gay dances being one of the only places where they could identify and socialize outside of their immediate friends. It is difficult for gay youths to talk out their identity problems, because the run-of-the-mill family and youth counseling centers have very little real knowledge of the topic or what the people are going through, and tend to treat any notion of homosexuality as a phase or as a serious problem to be quickly cured.

EVEN non-personal information sources are hard to come by as few school libraries have the kind of books that can help a gay person to understand themselves. For archaic reasons, this literature is looked upon as close to pornographic and not scholarly, when it is only gay people who are qualified to write comprehensively about gay people or their life-styles. Still going to gay people themselves for help or advice is usually out of the question because of the legal and social stigma attached to non-parent adults talking to minors about sex, and especially to gay adults and minors. Helping a teen figure out his/her sexuality could mean a jail term for an adult gay for corrupting the morals of a minor, not to mention the possible consequences of a liaison between a 17 and a 19 year old!!

THE peer pressure exerted on young gays doesn't usually turn them into heterosexuals. What it does is to make them secretive, distrustful and lonely. For each young gay who has felt the relief of confiding in his/her friends, there are many who tell no one or try to play the ungay game and may end up coming out years later with a wife and family to hurt.

AS for the parent-child relationship, there will always be secrets, but to keep one as important as gayness must surely be painful. How many stories have been built around a heterosexual love affair hidden from the parents, etc.? (Romeo and Julian, perhaps?) If a child is to trust their parents enough to share this secret, they must first know that the parents aren't going to treat it as a joke, and secondly that they won't use legal measures against them. A minor cannot be put into a mental institution with less than the measures necessary to commit an adult, but the parent may petition the court in respect to their child as a "wayward minor," or someone in need of supervision. This leaves the course of action to the discretion of the judge. Parents may then advise that part of a probationary sentence be psychiatric care, or a supervisory school, like South Lansing. Once such action is in the hands of the court, the child may be protected by legal counsel, or they may choose to leave a poor environment by petitioning the court themselves, but none of this can help to develop the closeness of the nuclear family.

Lonely, confused gays show up as the other end of a crisis phone-call or running away to hustle on New York City sidewalks. They are suicides and angry young people who store their hate

that homosexuals were sick, unhappy, disturbed people by all of the studies done on gays then seeking treatment, which ignored all of the healthy, happy gays who had no problems with their sexuality.

WITH this increased awareness of the health of homosexuals, it should become obvious that homosexuality is simply an alternate life-style. Not better or worse; just there.

NOW let us look specifically at gay minors. Some say that teens and pre-teens are still in the process of changing and accepting any fixed notion of their sexuality would only serve to strengthen that role in their minds and, perhaps, deny them the chance to form their sexual identity on their own. This same viewpoint is taken in regards to placing gay-identified youths in gay foster homes or allowing adoptions by gay parents. Authorities seem to be afraid that this role model will just reinforce homosexual behavior. But there are some points to be mentioned here. Number one is that this attitude immediately brands gayness as inferior and not a neutral life-style, and number two is the fact that most gay adults had heterosexual role models in their youth. The answer comes back that these were messed-up role models, but studies have shown this notion to be erroneous. It may be true that a less than perfect family atmosphere will produce a gay person, we don't know for sure that there are any casual relationships, but if it is true, then it is also true that a loving happy marriage will produce a gay and it is true that both good and bad family lives produce heterosexuals. Add to this the fact that homosexuals do raise heterosexual children and it becomes painfully obvious again that we are denying the needs of gay youths on a frightened, ill-formed conclusion that has no proven basis in fact.

YOU might say that because of the age bracket we are discussing, we can't really say that they are gay because they don't know themselves yet. It's been my experience that teens know this better than most of us. The choice is always there. From 10 to 100. You can go gay or straight at any point in your life, so it makes little sense to ever talk about sexuality as if it were an unchangeable life-long commitment. And again, to deny a teenager's professed homosexuality because she/he is still at a changeable age is to again leave the neutral position and begin talking in terms of there still being time to help them out of their predicament before it is too late.

IF we may now talk of gayness as a neutral aspect, we can start talking about what faces the gay youth. Society and their parents have a great hold over them, and peer pressure is very strong. I think we can best talk about this from the teens' own point of view. I talked with five gay teenagers (15-16), three girls and two boys in an effort to get some insight into how society's dictates affect them. Their view is not meant to be indicative of all gay youths except, perhaps in general areas.

THEY all said that they had come out between 12 and 13, but could remember before that having been attracted to members of the same sex. Where it might be said that this is true primarily

SUICIDE NOTE: 'Tonight I'm going to kill myself'

It was decided not to identify the writer of the following letter, nor to describe how he killed himself shortly after writing it. The letter was found by the writer's roommate, who gave it to NewsWest, hoping it would "do some good."

Persons experienced in suicide prevention said the writer's apparent calmness came from a fatal "inner peace" which often causes suicide victims to be "reasoning" in their final hours.

A psychologist who saw the letter commented, "The victim seems to have had a history of abandoning persons who depended on him. He placed his responsibilities on everybody else. I feel sorry for him. But I feel sorrier for the waste of talents that could have been put to use in his own behalf and in behalf of other gays." --Ed.

To whom it may concern:

Tonight I am going to kill myself.

It may sound shocking to say it so calmly, but as soon as I finish typing this letter, I am going to take my own life.

There are many reasons. All of them have led to the conclusion that life is a burden I don't want to bear any longer. I know there will be many more people who will be happy to see me dead than to see me alive.

You see, I am a "faggot"...I am one of those you call "queers" or "fruits," and laugh at even if you have never spoken with me. You don't know me as a person -- you know me as "queer." You hate me, arrest me and mock me -- and breathe a sigh of relief once I am dead.

You wouldn't know I am gay unless I cared to tell you. Three months ago, no one knew. I have a normal, heterosexual appearance. I have no effeminate qualities whatsoever. So that is the way I lived for most of my 21 years: No one knew.

But lying hurt my insides. So many of my gay brothers and sisters, I thought, might not have to suffer so badly if only more people would stand up to what they really are.

So I left my home and school in the East and moved to Los Angeles with the intention of going back to college and taking a job -- all the while making it known (but not in a boisterous way) that I am gay.

It was a hard decision -- but not as hard as telling my wife goodbye. We had been married since I graduated from high school. Our marriage was a lie. I had thought my gay desires would go away if I had heterosexual responsibilities. I thought I would no longer have those feelings I used to get in the locker room as early as eighth grade.

I miss my wife, my parents and a little son I've never seen. I miss my brother, who is also gay but keeps it hidden. And I miss my many friends, all of whom gasped in horror at my gayness -- but could be tolerant of any other "fault." They were taught

17 that it is forbidden to understand us -- only to hope that we would go away.

In Los Angeles, I was arrested. I was waiting at a corner in Hollywood for a friend. He was late. I guess my impatience showed when I told a lecherous-looking man to "shove it" when he made an indecent proposal to me as I read a magazine. Within minutes there were handcuffs on me. I had to face a judge for "soliciting." In court, I was stunned to see my brothers pleading guilty to trumped-up charges in order to save face. I was shocked to see the vice cops lie so blatantly. I was even surprised to see myself cave in under the strain of disbelieving frustration and not contest my charges.

I went to church. My friend and I spent a joyous Sunday at the MCC downtown. There were hundreds of people there. I thought, "What progress gays have made!" And I thought of Rev. Troy Perry as the Martin Luther King of gays. Then after the service, I saw police circling the block around the church, taking license numbers and yelling names at us. I was hurt. I felt God ashamed.

It was not the isolated instances that killed me, for they happened every day. It was the air of bigotry in this country. I was raised in a loving Christian home. I was taught to tell the truth. Now I see my friends having to lie in order to keep their jobs (I told the truth, and I lost mine). Or to save their family's love (I told the truth and was disowned).

I wonder if the haters know what they are doing to their hated. I wonder if they have felt that pain in the pit of their stomach, and tried to swallow shame, knowing that if things were right there would be no shame.

Love is love. How dare you despise me for it? I feel the same feelings as heterosexuals when I fall in love, and the same pain when love is lost. How can anyone justify, in this day and time, condemning love?

Some of you will laugh. My friends, I know, will cry. To all of you, I say I am not doing this because I wish to be a martyr. I write this letter at the last minute to ease some of your pain if you are gay. Maybe it will also stop someone from hating us so much.

My gay brothers, push ahead with your cause! I wonder how many people in this country would be homophobes if they knew there are 20 million of us. Education of our heterosexual brothers is so important. Those who hate ignorance will change their attitudes.

And so, goodbye.

I could see myself as happy, surrounded by friends who are not baffled by my constant depression over the state of our world -- friends who could enjoy me as a fellow gay and human being. I see myself as the lover of someone who loved me in return. I see places where I could go with him and not be harrassed.

or physical attraction to be members of their own sex. This is a very emotion ridden topic, as are all topics of sexuality pertaining to children. Here we will try to review some of the reasons for this feeling, whether they are justified, and also some of the problems faced by "gay youths" in their struggle to be accepted by or just get along with the society around them.

IT would be very easy to ignore the subject completely and just pretend that it isn't there but there are good reasons not to. First of all, I'm sure most of us have some recollection of all the years when homosexuals were a topic that just wasn't mentioned. We were swept under society's rug, and our needs and right were swept in along with us. So there exists a type of moralistic obligation to get the problems of gay youth out into the open where they can be discussed and solved. It also helps to dispell the frightening aura around sex and young people which so often blinds us, as adults, to the needs and potentiality of children. And lastly, it should be remembered that the way in which teens and pre-teens learn to handle their problems will make a decided difference in their total life adjustment as adults.

AS to the general subject of physical sex and young people, puberty and not the law sets the time that an individual will begin their physically sexual life. This is not to say that some laws are not necessary in the area of sex. Here in New York we have set the age of consent at 18 which in Hawaii the age comes four years earlier at 14. If there is this big a discrepancy between the two states, perhaps the age could be even younger. Yet, I'm sure we would all feel that six or seven is too young. Then, perhaps eight, nine, or ten? Surely education has a great deal to do with it. And puberty. It is not until the strange feelings of sexual development are present in our own bodies that the explanations for them begin to make sense of any sort. So it is agreed that some laws must exist to provide protection for those who are not old enough to be cognizant of what they are entering into. And if puberty and education are the two main factors to ready use for any chosen sexual role, then, perhaps, the laws governing age of consent should specify an individual who has biologically, and physiologically entered puberty and has passed a course in biological and sexual science such that they may be presumed to have an understanding knowledge of what sexual experienced are all about.

BUT the word "sexual" is important, not "heterosexual." It is vital that sex education include an honest preview of homosexuality, not a stilted, frightened image of men lurking in the bushes near a school exit, or of hard, hateful women who aren't even considered women. If sex education courses were to include an honest, impartial view of homosexual life that dealt with the emotions, the love, the joy and happiness, as well as the hardships and problems, it would be safe to assume that the age of consent rule, listed above could also apply to homosexual acts.

IT is becoming a documented fact that homosexuals can live a happy, well-adjusted life without the services of a psychiatrist or emotional upheaval. It is becoming obvious that we, gays and ungas, have been tricked for decades into believing

stereotypes and myths (which the article does deal with). Re-reading and pondering are recommended, since the article does "question" basic values (or assumptions) even as it offers a road to newer understanding.

The article seems to be based on three implied beliefs or premises. They are: (1) for those who elect it, homosexuality is not a "sickness," let alone socially "dangerous deviation," but merely a harmless variation, an alternative life-style healthy enough per se (this premise is both very hard for some readers to accept at one, and at the same time officially endorsed by the American Psychiatric Association as of 1973). (2) a serious "social problem" still remains, but no longer is it the gayness of the person per se, but rather the extremely adverse, homophobic reactions to this -- plus ignorance and myths -- of society at large; of family and friends and even unintentionally-inept professional workers with youth; and of course confused young persons themselves. (3) one of the best sources of reliable, not biased, information about, say, Group X, Subculture Y, or Minority Z can be -- actual members from that population!

The article is virtually complete in covering the topic. It fails to mention only one major point. That is, a possible hidden danger. If a gay person tries to "convert to heterosexuality" not because of a true personal desire or decision to do so, but because of either inner shame/guilt, or external social pressures to do so -- this may be, far from "saving" the person, ironically actually extremely harmful to him. For, time and money may be lost, and worse, guilt, fear and regret may be enlarged -- and personal growth slowed.

For the problems in relations between straight parents and gay children, the best single resource to date seems to be the entire Chapter 5 of Dr. George Weinberg's Society and the Health Homosexual (St. Martin's Press 1972, also Doubleday Anchor paperback). (reprinted from Lavender Opinion of Ithaca, N.Y.; Vol. I, No. 6, August 1974)

Growing Up Gay

THOSE of us who are out of the closet are still painfully aware of the things we can't do in our society. If we hold hands or show affection on the street, we are opening ourselves to public ridicule and ostensibly to public reprisal. Most of us who are "open" gays have accepted the problems of exposure, the fact that getting a good job may mean sticking to your convictions strongly enough to fight back. For gays who are still in the closet, life can be even rougher. It becomes a matter of living two lives, and hiding your affections for other people to the point where they won't be discovered by an astute ungay friend.

STILL, there is one group of gay people who are in worse shape socially than even the man whose only contact is in a public restroom, never seeing the face of his partner. These people are gay minors. Individuals who have not reached the Age of Majority, but find their primary social, affectional,

All of it is a dream. Without the understanding of persons like Chief Ed Davis -- without brotherly, human love -- it will always be a dream. I really wonder if gays will ever be given the right to love.

Perhaps in another life.

GAY INFO DATA BANK

(The following letter explains one man's efforts to put together a parcel of materials as a gay resource-packet. On another page, later, I include a form for obtaining same. Also, I've included several sample of the packet for your perusal.)

Dear George:

May I offer some positive feedback on your new and expanded newsletter of December. Don't let anyone tell you it's "too long!" If they don't want to read all of it, they don't have to. For the rest of us, it's there to absorb. And it's a good balance, too, of facts plus features. Another good thing is your personal voice or tone added or kept -- so rare in this age of impersonal bureaucracy, also self-expression and such-like are also rare even in liberation circles and also as part of the traditional make role not to do so, not to reveal feelings, etc.!

My only suggestion is a technical one -- for easier reading, put the headlines of the items in capitals, and perhaps also box them or something like that.

By way of contributing to your whole endeavor there at Renaissance, Inc., I'm sending you a completed (at last!) Resources Packet of the type the newsletter advertized a few months ago (and from which advertising I got one or two responses). This is not to suggest that you people don't know your business or how to go about it -- but, I just thought that the packet's material might be useful or at least interesting to your committees such as Library, Speakers, Media, and Image. Any feedback of any kind on the packet -- which I think has both strengths and weaknesses as it now stands -- would, of course, be welcome, as "we only hope to serve," etc.

Keep up the good work. -- Jim.

WHAT TO DO IF ARRESTED

(GPU News, Box 90530, Milwaukee, WI, 53202. July, 1973.)

Because of the negative attitude that most of society and therefore most policemen have toward gay people, it is extremely important that gay people become aware of their rights and know what to expect upon being arrested or questioned by the police. This article does not purport to be either exhaustive or technical, but in it, I hope to set out some practical suggestions on how to deal with investigation, arrest, and prosecution.

The most crucial thing to remember upon being arrested or questioned by the police is that the only information an individual is required to give is his name, address, date of birth, and social security number. Any other questions need not be answered without the presence of an attorney. It should be noted that the person being questioned should give his or her real name and address because if it is later discovered that the party used a fictitious name or gave false information, the police will seek a warrant for obstructing an officer.

A delicate situation arises when a gay person is approached and questioned by a policeman or vice-squad officer at a time when the gay person is not engaged in any type of "illegal" activity. The impulse of course would be to answer the questions directed to him or her and therefore avoid any further hassle with the police. It should be borne in mind, however, that the police officer more than likely is prejudiced against gay people and therefore a person who, for example, appears to be shoplifting might be better able to discharge the suspicions of a police officer by an explanation better than a gay person who might be for instance, standing "too long" at a urinal. It is important to realize that the questioning officer is probably looking for information upon which to base an arrest. Therefore, the best thing to do upon being questioned is to give your name and address and social security number and tell the officer that you will say nothing more without first talking with your lawyer.

A person who is being questioned by the police should always remember that the police must inform the person of his or her constitutional rights if the questioning goes beyond the scope of the person's name, address, date of birth, social security number and the person is either in custody or otherwise deprived of his freedom of action in any significant way. What this means is that if the person being questioned is not free to walk away, that he should be informed of his rights. If constitutional rights are not given, the information attained by the police may not be used against the defendant.

The constitutional rights are commonly referred to as the Miranda Warning. The warning consists of a clear and unequivocal explanation that the party has a right to remain silent, that anything said, can and will be used against the individual in court; that he has a right to consult with a lawyer and to have the lawyer with him during interrogation; and that if he is indigent, a lawyer will be appointed to represent him/her. If the arrestee indicates in any manner, at any time prior to or during questioning, that he wishes to remain silent, the interrogation must cease, and also if he states that he wants an attorney, the interrogation must cease until an attorney is present.

It should be remembered that a person who volunteers information can waive his right to silence, and thereby have his statement used against him.

Keep in mind that the most effective defense against the fullscale prosecution of gay people, is the presence of a lawyer at all the stages. To wait until the time of trial to hire an attorney is often too late to get the charge dismissed completely, although an attorney can be very instrumental in getting the charge reduced. The importance of representation

by an attorney at the initial stage cannot be overemphasized. If you are arrested, you will be taken first to the Bureau of Investigation to be fingerprinted, identified and your arrest record checked. You will probably be informed by the police that you can call your lawyer after this initial intake procedure, but it is crucial that you insist on speaking with your lawyer prior to being processed because once the Intake procedure begins, you will not be allowed to see your lawyer until the entire procedure has been completed. And remember, the intake procedure affords the police an opportunity to check the person's previous record and begin interrogating him. No matter how unwilling you are to answer questions, many people break down to some degree and offer even seemingly innocent offhand remarks which could be used later.

The police may tell you that you are allowed one phone call. However, if it is necessary to make more than one call to contact your lawyer, they should allow you to do so. If the police know that you mean business and you are assertive in insisting on your rights, they are less likely to hassle you because they won't want to have their arrest thrown out on a technicality.

It is also extremely crucial that the attorney be present with the party in the District Attorney's office. The attorney will present facts and ask questions of the officers which will often convince the Assistant District Attorney that no charge should be issued. And if the District Attorney does not throw out the case at this point, the attorney can usually get the charge reduced.

So what this all comes down to is very simple, if you are arrested or hassled by the police, keep your mouth shut, and call your lawyer immediately, and if your lawyer is not immediately available, continue to refuse to answer questions, no matter how innocent they may seem, other than name, address, date of birth and social security number, until you are able to contact your lawyer.

-- By Atty. Georgia Felger of the law firm of Walther & Halling.

GAY YOUTH

INTRODUCTION. This will be indispensable especially for people concerned with youth--counselors, teachers, clergymen, parents. For it gives a "from-the-inside" look at the complex, and sensitive, and misunderstood, issue of a minority-within-a-minority. That is, those young people whose sexual orientation happens to be same-sexed, out of neither compulsion nor "neurosis" but simply natural personal choice.

To all readers the article will stimulate understanding. But to some it may appear either extreme, or one-sided (propagandizing). If so, consider that it may not be the article itself which makes you feel this way, but simply its very new variance from the only other thing we had all been taught on the topic--namely, society's "homophobia" ("a pervasive and irrational dread of homosexuality"), plus certain specific