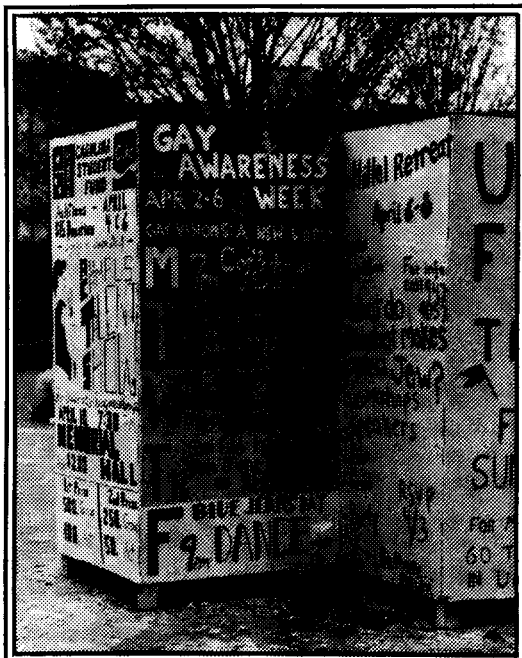


LAMBDA

Carolina Gay Association Newsletter

Volume 10, Number 4

April/May 1984



G A W — 1984

Gay Visions of a New World

The straight and gay communities of Chapel Hill should certainly be more aware, and hopefully more understanding, of gay and lesbian issues after CGA's Gay Awareness Week (GAW) held during the first week of April. The Week's activities included a film, workshops, lectures, and a coffeehouse. The theme of this year's programs was "Gay Visions of a New World," and the week's events, from painting the cube on Monday to disco-ing on Friday night, provided fulfilling experiences for campus gays and hopefully enlightening experiences for our heterosexual friends.

Activities began on Monday, April 2, with a coffeehouse in the Campus Y lounge. Lightning Brown and Mark Evans read poetry, and a monologue from the Harvey Fierstein's Torch Song Trilogy was performed by Jim.

Tuesday's events included a "coming out" workshop led by Mark Evans and a lecture entitled "Lesbian Issues" by Ms. Lou Sawyer, a psychologist at the Androgyny Center in Raleigh. Sawyer discussed the universal needs and stages of all relationships--lesbian, gay male, and straight--and the kind of affirmation lesbians and gays can find in supportive relationships while living in an environment that is often hostile.

Wednesday featured two additional
(see GAY AWARENESS, page 4)

Lambda Wins Award

In its March 27 issue, The Front Page awarded its 1983 Media Award for "Best Gay Newsletter" to Lambda:

"Lambda, published by the Carolina Gay Association of the University of North Carolina. Despite a shoestring budget, a sometimes hostile student government, and a severe shortage of volunteer labor, this informative newsletter gets better every issue. Good coverage of news, local and otherwise."

Thank you! (Beam! Beam! Blush! Blush!)

And now if you'd like to subscribe. . .

Coors At It Again

While the brewer of Coors beer is no stranger to controversy, perhaps the chairman should restrict his public comments to the art of making the brew.

The Wall Street Journal (03-08-84) reports that William K. Coors, chairman and chief executive officer of the Adolph Coors Company, recently told an audience of minority businessmen in Denver that the economic problems of black-governed Africa have resulted from "a lack of intellectual capacity," and added that "one of the best things they (slave traders) did for you is to drag your ancestors over here in chains."

An ad hoc committee of black leaders called the remarks "outrageous and appalling" and began considering a boycott of Coors beer.

A Coors company spokesman also concedes that some angry retailers have called Coors distributors, ordering them to remove "your racist beer from our shelves."

The members of the Coors family have long been a funder of conservative causes, such as the Heritage Foundation. The North Carolina Independent (03-16-84) reports that the Coors Company was the object of strikes and boycotts from 1966 to 1978 by Teamsters, Mexican-Americans, blacks, women and gays because of discriminatory hiring practices. The company routinely used polygraphs to screen job applicants based on responses to questions about their sex life, drug use, and political ideas.

Gay Republican Addresses State Conference Despite Rumblings

People attending the recent NC Gay and Lesbian Conference at NC State University in Raleigh heard California gay Republican activist Frank Ricchiazzi urge them to get involved in politics within their political parties to help dispel myths and fears about gays and to work for their civil rights.

The three-day conference convened on March 30, and drew nearly 100 people from throughout North Carolina and some from Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. In addition to the keynote speech by Ricchiazzi, weekend events included lectures and workshops by several national and state gay figures and evening entertainment by comic Robin Tyler and North Carolina musicians.

GAY REPUBLICANS CANCEL SPEECH

The keynote speech by a gay Republican provided the only controversy for the conference. It seems that pressure from David Flaherty, NC Republican Party chair, caused the original keynote speaker, Robert Roehr, to cancel at the last minute. Roehr is president of the Capital Area Republicans club in Washington, DC, a part-time fundraiser for the Republican National Committee (RNC), and a member of the Reagan-Bush '84 campaign in Washington.

In a brief statement released to conference organizers on Friday, the first day of the conference, Roehr said conference publicity "misrepresented" him as appearing as an official of the RNC and that the publicity caused "difficulty for myself, the party, and its candidates." He said he had agreed to speak "as a private citizen, not as a representative of the Republican National Party."

In an interview with the gay newspaper The Washington Blade, Roehr said that there was concern on the part of the party and at least one of our candidates down there as to my appearance," but he said he had no "first-hand" knowledge of which candidate that was. (The Washington Blade, April 6, 1984).

Joe Herzenberg and Lightning Brown, two of the conference organizers, told the Blade two press releases had been sent out that included identification of Roehr's RNC and Reagan-Bush '84 affiliations. The information was from a vitae Roehr provided them.

Brown said he believes the trouble began when a reporter called Flaherty for comment on Roehr's appearance before a gay group. Brown told the Blade, "My

presumption is that somehow Mr. Flaherty got involved and wanted to stop any gay Republicans from coming into the state to talk to people."

Flaherty, in a phone interview with the Blade, said he learned from a newspaper account that "someone from the RNC and the Reagan re-election committee was coming to talk to a gay group." He said he called the RNC national office and spoke with chief-of-staff Bill Phillips and "just asked" for verification of Roehr's affiliations. Flaherty maintains he did not put pressure on Phillips to have Roehr cancel his speech and did not know that Roehr was gay.

"If I could have, I would have been more than anxious to have them think twice [about allowing Roehr to speak before the group] because it's contrary to what our party position is. We support strong family values," said Phillips according to the Blade.

BILL Greener, communications director for the RNC, said it was "inaccurate" for conference organizers to portray Roehr as an RNC official but said it was Roehr's own decision to cancel the speech.

Roehr was the second gay Republican to cancel as keynoter. Former Maryland Congressman Robert Bauman also declined, saying his appearance at the NC conference could hurt the re-election efforts of his "personal friend" Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), who is in a heated contest with Democratic Gov. Jim Hunt.

CALIFORNIA GAY REPUBLICAN KEYNOTER

In a last-minute scramble for a speaker, conference organizers secured Frank Ricchiazzi, chair of the Republican Party in California's 55th Assembly District, which includes part of Los Angeles. He is also vice president of the Log Cabin Club, an organization of gay Republicans.

Ricchiazzi spoke of his 1982 race for the California Assembly. He said he heard some negative comments as word spread that he was gay, but through discussions with party members some people realized "the gay issue was not the issue that would affect that election."

Though he lost the race, he won 32 percent of the vote in a district that is only 21 percent Republican.

He said that the California Democratic party took the gay vote for granted. But his race "showed that if the Republican Party would offer somebody who would be open to the gay community, the gay community would not stay in one party."

Ricchiazzi also described the important influence of gay Republicans in the passage of AB-1, the bill which would have outlawed job discrimination against gays in California. The state's Assembly and Senate narrowly passed the bill, but Gov. George Deukmejian vetoed the measure in March. Ricchiazzi vowed to secure passage of the measure again and to again put the legislation on the governor's desk.

Ricchiazzi reiterated the need for gays to get involved in electoral politics to educate and break stereotypes.

"To all of you who are Republican, the Republican Party belongs to me...and to you. It does not belong to a Jesse Helms or an H.L. Richardson. And we're going to fight them!"

LIBERTARIAN & DEMOCRATIC REBUTTALS

Jere Real, A Virginia free-lance writer and former member of the Libertarian

(see REPUBLICAN on page 10)



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Is It That Time of Month?:

Hepatitis A, B, Non-A/Non-B

You pull yourself out of bed, groaning and aching, and feeling like crap. You had a good time at the bar last night, but really didn't party any heartier than usual. So you pop two or three aspirins, squirt some Visine in your eyes, and prepare for the day ahead, thinking your "hangover" will be gone by lunchtime.

But it isn't. You feel just as lousy three days later as you did that first morning. There's no energy, no appetite, a slight fever, nausea, perhaps pain in the joints and a sore throat. A few days later your urine may turn dark and your stool a light color. After that, you may begin to take on a slight "glow," with a sickly yellow hue to your skin and the whites of your eyes.

What do you do? Pick up the phone and give the doctor a call! You have the symptoms of hepatitis.

Hepatitis--an inflammation of the liver--is a serious disease which can affect anyone in the general population. But, just as with some other afflictions, gays are particularly hard hit, due to our proclivity for "intimacies" with several partners. This disease is actually three different diseases, all with some common symptoms and consequences.

TYPE A HEPATITIS

Type A Hepatitis--"infectious hepatitis"--is, by far, less dangerous than the other two types. The virus that carries Hepatitis A lives in the intestinal tract and is passed in the infected person's feces. This virus can be introduced into a person's digestive system (and ultimately to the liver) by contaminated fingers in the mouth, anal-oral contact, contaminated penis to mouth, or a number of other ways. H-A does not cause chronic liver disease, does cause an immunity against further H-A developing in its "victim," and, once the infection is gone, cannot be transmitted from the formerly-infected person to anyone else. Treatment for exposure to H-A includes a gamma globulin shot, which is very inexpensive, and abstaining from drugs and alcohol for a doctor-specified time.

TYPE B HEPATITIS

Type B, or "serum hepatitis," was originally believed to be transmitted only during a blood transfusion from an infected person or by the use of a syringe that had been used on an infected person. It has been learned that the guilty virus is in other body fluids--saliva, semen, urine--as well as the blood. Anal intercourse and deep "French" kissing can transfer H-B. H-B is dangerous. It can survive in the body for years, wreck the

liver, and infect large numbers of people over a period of time. Infected persons can remain carriers of H-B for as long as they live. Five to ten percent of gay men may be chronic carriers of H-B and not even know that they've had the disease, since sometimes the symptoms are so mild they're never even noticed.

Treatment for exposure to H-B, though the same as for H-A, is different. Gamma globulin is still used, but it's a different kind and much more costly. Again, abstinence from alcohol and many drugs is a must.

VACCINE FOR HEPATITIS-B

Now, finally, for some good news! In 1982, Merck Sharp & Dohme introduced a new drug: Heptavax-B. Made from the blood of H-B carriers, Heptavax-B is a vaccine for H-B and has proven to be very successful. The vaccine is expensive--but well worth the cost--and very limited in supply. A series of three shots over a period of six months constitutes the vaccination, which may provide immunity for up to five years. The vaccination has not been known to have any serious side-effects. More good news: the Heptavax-B vaccination is available at the Student Health Service. This is a preventive measure, however, and will not "cure" chronic carriers.

HEPATITIS NON-A/NON-B

The "newest" type of hepatitis, Hepatitis Non-A/Non-B, is still somewhat of a mystery. The only things known for sure are that it is transmitted in blood, can cause permanent liver damage, and that a person can be a chronic carrier. A person is diagnosed as having Hepatitis Non-A/Non-B once H-A and H-B have been ruled out by tests. Even though H-A type gamma globulin may not be an effective treatment, it is used. It can do no harm, after all.

Hepatitis in any form is a disease that must be taken seriously, especially by gays. It is important to recognize the symptoms and get prompt medical attention. If you don't have symptoms, it's still a good idea to have a blood test for H-A, H-B, and H Non-A/Non-B at least once a year. If you've never had, or don't have, H-B, a very wise move would be to have the Heptavax-B vaccination.

Two good books dealing with hepatitis and other gay-related health concerns are:

The Gay Health Guide by Robert L. Rowan, M.D. and Paul J. Gillette, Ph.D. (Little, Brown & Company) and Gay Men's Health by Jeanne Kassler, M.D. (Harper & Row)

-Ron

(GAY AWARENESS, from page 1)

lectures, one on "Racism in the Gay Community" by John Stanley of Raleigh's Black and White Men Together and the other on "Gay and Lesbian Health Issues" by a volunteer with the N.C. Lesbian and Gay Health Project. We applaud everyone who trugged through the torrential rain that night to attend these lectures.


How many students can fit into a closet? Well, 43 gays and straights crammed into a Union room designed for 25 to view the videotape "Pink Triangles" on Thursday. "Pink Triangles" deals with straight attitudes on homosexuality, homosexuality in the straight world, and the history of gay oppression, especially during the Nazi era. Homosexuals in concentration camps were labelled for extermination with pink triangles, from which the film derives its name, and were frequently treated as criminals by the liberating armies of the Allies.

Tracy Osment, a sympathetic straight viewer, said she was "shocked" by the film. "I never realized that gay people were so targeted during World War II," she said.

Rev. June Norris of St. John's Metropolitan Community Church in Raleigh lectured on "Gays and Religion" Thursday evening. She reviewed and explained the eight Biblical passages that deal with homosexuality from Leviticus to Romans and then discussed her enjoyment of her own special work within the local and national lesbian and gay community. A lively discussion following the lecture.

For some, the highlight of the week was the annual "blue jeans day" on Friday. Gays and straights alike were asked to wear their blue jeans as an outward sign of support of gay people. Robert Pharr, a freshman and chairperson of CGA, explained in a spirited letter to the Daily Tar Heel that blue jeans day is a time for gays and lesbians to "say the hell with the world; I am who I am," and a time for straight people "to experience some of the anxieties that gay people face every day" about

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public perceptions and judgments of them.

The Daily Tar Heel also covered the Week with an article on Ms. Sawyer's lecture and with a positive "blue jeans day" editorial. The paper provided more coverage of this year's Week than ever before.

Gay Awareness Week came to a festive end at a dance on Friday night. The event was organized as a CGA fundraiser and voter registration drive, and registered voters were admitted at a reduced price. Registrar Joe Herzenberg was present to register new voters. About 60 people danced to Mike's medley of Cindy Lauper, Grace Jones, Huey Lewis, and other favorites.

The CGA wishes to thank everyone who participated in GAW-1984: the lecturers, the workshop leaders, people who provided food and drink for each event, Joe Herzenberg for his week-long voter registration drive, the volunteers brave enough to paint the cube and work at the CGA table in the Pit, and everyone who wore blue jeans on Friday. The week was a definite success, and next year all of us --lesbian, gay and straight--can look forward to a better CGA, an even better Gay Awareness Week, and a community that is more sensitive to the issues of homosexuality, intolerance, and racism.

-Robert



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The Hepatitis B Vaccine

Last January I met a handsome gay man who had just received a very negative report on the condition of his liver. He had had hepatitis, and the prognosis was not good. The meeting made me stop and think again about getting the vaccine, so I decided to go to Student Health to discuss the vaccine with a health professional.

I talked to a doctor who did not ask me anything about the frequency, starting point, or nature of my sexual experience, suggested that I have tests run to see if the vaccine was necessary, did not recommend that I receive the vaccine if the test indicated I was susceptible, did not know how much the tests or the vaccine would cost, and mentioned offhandedly that "some people in the health profession" were concerned about the possibility of contacting AIDS from the vaccine. I was told that we could spend all afternoon discussing that issue (and it was obvious that he was not going to make time for any kind of discussion) but that, if I wanted to know how much the tests cost, I should ask at the lab and that I could find out at the pharmacy about the cost of the vaccine. He gave me some pamphlets to read and said to come back later if I wanted to discuss the vaccine.

I went down to the lab, explained to the nurses that Dr. _____ had told me to ask about the cost of the tests and was told that the lab was not supposed to answer those questions. After repeating that I had only come at the doctor's suggestion, someone begrudgingly looked up the cost, which turned out to be \$35 or so.

The people at the pharmacy were, on the other hand, helpful; they told me the vaccine costs \$109, answered my other questions to the best of their ability, and gave me the waiver sheet to read. The vaccine is ordered at the beginning and middle of each month and takes a month to come. Because I had already read a lot about the vaccine, I decided to go ahead and order the vaccine without getting the tests.

"IT IS IMPORTANT TO VACCINATE PERSONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THEIR HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVITY BEGINS"

-Centers for Disease Control

When I got home that afternoon I read through the pamphlets I had been given. Here's what I found in the article on the vaccine in the Centers for Disease Control Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (June 25, 1982):

1. "More than 10,000 patients are hospitalized with hepatitis B each year,

and an average of 250 die of fulminant disease.... Chronic active hepatitis develops in over 25% of carriers (100,000-200,000) [of the estimated pool of 400,000-800,000] infectious carriers in the U.S. currently), and often progresses to cirrhosis.... It is estimated that 4,000 people die from hepatitis B-related cirrhosis each year in this country, and that more than 800 die from hepatitis B-related liver cancer."

2. Hepatitis B virus is "highly prevalent in certain groups.... Homosexually active males and users of illicit injectable drugs are among the highest risk groups, acquiring infection soon (10-20% per year) after adopting these lifestyles."

3. "Screening in groups with the highest risk of HBV infection...will be cost effective unless testing costs are extremely high."

4. "Persons at substantial risk of HBV infection who are demonstrated or judged likely to be susceptible should be vaccinated. They include: ...Homosexually Active Males--Susceptible homosexually active males should be vaccinated regardless of their age or duration of their homosexual practices. It is important to vaccinate persons as soon as possible after their homosexual activity begins."

GOING TO STUDENT HEALTH...WAS A FRUSTRATING, CONTRADICTIONARY EXPERIENCE

Reading the Centers for Disease report made me very angry with the doctor I'd seen; besides #3, I wondered if he'd read what he had given me. Besides his callousness in dealing with a sensitive issue, I was also angry that he had brought up but did not have any substantiation for his fears about the possibility of contacting AIDS from the vaccine. All in all, going to Student Health for the vaccine (except for the pamphlets) was a frustrating, contradictory experience.

Doctors have bad days too, but that's a weak justification. Another friend of mine who is "homosexually active" went to Student Health, and his doctor recommended that he wait until someone comes out with a vaccine produced by genetic splicing, since it would also be cheaper. I suppose if you like to play poker with your life and your wallet, it's worth the wait.

If you have decided to do something about the tests or the vaccine through Student Health, here's the sequence:

1. Talk to a doctor (they can't all be as bad as mine) and see about getting the tests.

(See POKER, page 6)

(POKER, continued from page 5)

2. If you are susceptible and want the vaccine, go to the pharmacy, order it, and sign the release form. The charge can go on your student account, or you can pay for it then.

3. When the vaccine arrives, sign in; the clerk will then send you to the nurses station. You can receive the three shots in the arm or buttocks. The second shot is given a month after the first, and the third six months after the first.

Last week I went in for my second shot. While I was lying there waiting, the nurse asked if I wanted it on the other side this time. It was the only refreshing moment in the whole experience.

Hepatitis B is nothing to play ostrich with and ignore; every homosexual male who is, plans, or wants to be sexually active should do something about the tests or the vaccine. Gay Men's Health reports that, "In many American cities, between one-third and one-half of new infections occur in gay men. Studies show that between 50 and 75 percent of gay men have or have had hepatitis B."

As a physician friend of mine pointed out, if you have the mildest case possible, you'll be in the hospital for a week, miss out on school or work, and run the risk of becoming a carrier or of damaging your liver. \$109 is a lot of money, but if you are or will be "homosexually active," you're playing a costly game if you ignore the potential for getting the disease.

-Bill

. . . and he-e-e-r's Johnny

(Lee and I were not entirely successful in our attempt to secure an orderly transition to next year's Lambda staff, so here we are again with the school year's last issue.)

I would be most remiss if I did not thank Lee Mullis most heartily for all of his energy given to Lambda this year, as well as for his most appreciated even-tempered friendship. Second, a thank you to the people who worked on advertising, particularly Jerry. The issues would not have appeared without their work, and the importance of the job shouldn't be lost in phone calls and ad sizes. And a final thank you to the staff for their infinite number of suggestions for future articles and their hard work on their own.

In the past two years I have often felt better about CGA's newsletter than about CGA itself. I am happy to say that Robert Pharr as chairperson has made CGA more visible, more visibly concerned with racism and lesbian issues, and more vital this term.

Next year will be Lambda's 10th anniversary--no small feat on a campus surprisingly hostile (for its liberal reputation) to the freedom of choice about affectional/sexual orientation. Let's hope Robert gets his "banner year" and Lambda it's 10th anniversary of issues next year.

Thanks,
Bill

Crook's Corner

Gourmet magazine says our cooks are "taking pride in cooking regional dishes, preparing them with a verve that makes them newly appealing."

Food and Wine selected our chef, Bill Neal, as one of the 60 best American chefs in 1983.

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Three Freshmen Revisited

Our first issue this academic year contained an interview with three Carolina freshmen who had just come out. To round out the year, I interviewed two of the three, "Stephen" and "John," a second time. The third, "Michael," did not return to school this spring. Stephen ended up becoming CGA's chairperson and was recently elected to the Campus Governing Council (CGC). He moved out of the dorm second semester and now lives with two straight roommates who know he's the CGA chair and are supportive. John became involved in a relationship soon after our first interview; he moved out of the dorm because of harrassment and now lives off campus with his lover. He works for the Sexuality Education Counseling Service (SECS) and is also a member of the CGC. Although both people are open about their sexual orientation, I have retained their pseudonyms for the sake of continuity. I don't think they are typical gay freshmen, but their recounting of their freshmen year is illuminating nonetheless.

-Bill

HOW DOES THE REALITY OF YOUR FRESHMAN YEAR MATCH UP TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

Stephen: My expectations were a lot different from what has happened, but I'm very satisfied with what has happened. I wanted really good grades; I got really average grades. I wanted to come and find a lover and have sex all the time; I didn't find a lover and am not having sex all the time. I wanted to come and find really strong gay and political organizations and work really hard in them; I found ones that weren't very strong and am working really hard in them. And I'm satisfied with all that. And I'm happy with all that except for having a lover and lots of sex; I could definitely deal with that. I haven't met Mr. Right, obviously.

John: I didn't expect so much to happen. I thought it would be a nice, calm year, delving into academia, getting really good grades. I've come to the realization that good grades are really not that important. My personal development has taken precedence over my grades and just about everything else. I didn't expect to grow as much as I have; I don't feel like the same person. I didn't expect to be as politically active as I am or to find a lover, and I didn't expect a lot of the things I've had to deal with in that relationship that have helped me grow as a person. I'm also facing reality more; I've had a lot of problems with friends and the relationship, and I've dealt with them. I really wasn't prepared for the kinds of problems I found in a gay relationship because I've never been as close to anyone.

When I had a girlfriend there was still a barrier there, but in this relationship my lover and I are so compatible that we just slipped past all these barriers. As a consequence little things and not so little things are amplified because of this compatibility. Differences in how we view things. Plus, I didn't realize how much energy the relationship would require. I had nothing to base my expectations on, and I didn't know where anything was going. It was a free-form

relationship, and I had to mold it into what I wanted it to be. That was very difficult because I felt that if I made the wrong decision, I would have to live with it.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH YOUR PARENTS?

Stephen: Nil. They still don't know. I know that if I don't tell them sooner or later, they're going to find out. The only change has been that I've set a date when I'm going to tell them. I think one of the reasons I came out so much was that I really wanted to tell my parents, and I wanted to be forced into it; so, I've forced myself into it. My parents are the only people who know me that don't know that I'm gay. I'm going to tell them this summer. The reason I decided to tell them this summer is because,, if they do this big rejection thing, I don't want to have to deal with it on top of being CGA's chair, school, and all of the other stuff that I do. I need to drop some things before I tell them.

John: My mom knows, and my dad doesn't. She been over to meet my "roommate," and she knows that he's my lover. She was impressed that I hadn't turned out to be a sleazy child molester. She had a lot of misconceptions before, but she was open and caring enough so that she's still interested in me; she learned a lot about it, and she still cares.

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THE STRAIGHT AND GAY STUDENT COMMUNITIES AT CAROLINA?

Stephen: I think that straights are safe in that they don't go around beating up gays here. The average straight person is not empathizing and certainly not sympathizing with the gay community. There are a lot of straight people on campus who are pro-gay and go out of their way to be supportive; they're not in the majority however. I feel like a large number of the students have negative attitudes about gays and don't want to deal with the issue.

(See FRESHMEN REVISITED, page 8)

(FRESHMEN REVISITED, from page 7)

The gay community seems to be just as involved as the straight community in making good grades, getting a job, and having a good time. They can be very apathetic, though. In a number of ways they really are helping each other by forming a number of small communities. There's a definite women's community, a white gay male community, and a black gay male community. The lines are not that strict, but there's not a unified community. The black community has to be invisible for the most part because gayness is dealt with in a different way in the black community. Coming out for black people is more difficult because they aren't going to find the same degree of acceptance in the black community as they would in the white. Also, they feel like they're already dealing with being a minority on this campus and don't want to have to deal with being another. I think that black gays are more willing to socialize with white gays than black straights are willing to socialize with white straights.

John: I think that there are a lot of really supportive straight people. There are also a lot of people that just don't care; they have never looked at it or confronted their feelings. I tend to like to confront people with the issue. The bad experiences I had in the dorm (having my room trashed and people writing obscenities on the door) were because of my particular roommate. There are a lot of people like him around. It's made me more scared than I would have been, but I'm not crushed by it. It was simply his upbringing and situation. He probably thought I wanted to molest him, which is a big joke.

I feel comfortable around straight people who know that I'm gay, but if they don't know I feel nervous because they're assuming that I'm straight. Basically if someone asks, I don't deny a thing. But it's not a "Hello, I'm John and I'm gay," and I don't go out of my way to publicize it.

As far as the gay community goes, there are a lot of little gay circles, but no big community. I'm a part of many little circles but not part of a unified community. It's strange that there's a campus with so many gay people, but all of the potential strength is diluted.

DO PEOPLE IN STUDENT GOVERNMENT KNOW THAT YOU'RE GAY? HOW MUCH DID BEING GAY INFLUENCE YOUR DECISION TO RUN?

Stephen: I think they know about me since my name has been in the Tar Heel a few times. Being gay had a lot to do with it for me. I really think that gay people should stop allowing sympathetic straights to talk for them; they can't speak for us

from experience. I'm gay, and I'm going to talk for myself. I'm proud of being gay, and it was a major reason for running.

John: I'm not sure how many people know. I did put down CGA on the sheet for "Conflicts of Interest," which is on public display. No one was running from my district, and I realized it would be a good way to have a gay person on the CGC; I felt like I could do so much. I didn't know of any gay people in CGC then. I'm very proud of the clause that came through our committee for the Office of Student Life [a recommendation that groups include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies]. When the clause first came to the committee, it didn't have the sexual orientation clause in it. I looked at another SEEDS [Students Effectively Establishing a Democratic Society] person on the committee, and we felt that it wouldn't get out of the Rules and Judiciary Committee without the clause about sexual orientation.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF CGA?

John: I have mixed feelings about CGA. It's good that it's there, and it's picked up a lot since the new chair started. In a lot of ways, it doesn't reach the people it should be reaching. It does reach people who are out and already know things in the gay community. The main event that shaped my perception of CGA this year was when I went by the office at the beginning of the year. There were three people sitting there who were extremely rude and not helpful at all. That really turned me off. I've done some outreaches and had really positive experiences doing them.

John, it seems like you've focused your energies on groups that can improve things for gay people outside CGA (like CGC, and the Sexuality Education Counseling Service) while Stepehn has gone for improving CGA itself. Is that true?

John: Yes. I have a lot of straight friends here, and whenever they hear those three letters together, they freeze up and say "those people." I don't feel like I needed to deal with that preconceived notion if I could go through other channels and get around to it and show them that gay people aren't that bad. Then they would realize that CGA isn't so horrible.

Stephen, do you disagree?

Stephen: Yes, because I think we are deluding ourselves as gay people if we work with other organizations that don't deal directly with gay issues. It's time to stand up for ourselves. We're more (see FRESHMEN REVISITED, page 9)

(FRESHMEN REVISITED, from page 8)
interested in the gay issue than other issues because we've been dumped on more because of homosexuality.

What do you think of CGA?

Stephen: I came into this university feeling very negative about CGA, but I had the realization that I was not justified in feeling really negative unless I was willing to do a bunch of work for CGA. I did a whole bunch of work, and I feel positive. I'm hoping next year will be a banner year.

CGA often does too much preaching to believers; we don't reach the people who are closeted or inactive. In general, CGA doesn't reach as many people as it should.

"I WANT GAY PEOPLE TO REALLY FEEL THAT CGA IS THEIR ORGANIZATION..."

I want gay people to really feel that CGA is their organization; every gay person should feel like CGA is doing something for them. I think that the fact that CGA is on campus at all reaches a lot of closeted homosexuals. They see at least one CGA advertisement and know that there is at least one other gay person in the world and that they're not alone.

CGA needs new people to come in constantly to give new ideas. This year the positive things that were done happened because new people did bring new ideas and the old people stood around and said, "Hey, we'll help." CGA has the resources to reach beyond the campus. Our budget is larger than other gay student groups in North Carolina, and we have a lot of gay people on campus who are bright and experienced and can do a lot for us.

CGA NEEDS TO BE MORE VISIBLE

Finally, I think CGA needs to be more visible. That's part of the reason I'm

trying to be so visible. There's a definite problem when you have CGA chairs that aren't "out" on campus. A good way to improve visibility is to do coalition work. When they organized the April 4 celebration in the pit commemorating Dr. King, I went to the meeting of the organizers and said, "Look, why didn't you involve CGA and the Association for Women Students? We are groups that have been very concerned with racism in our own communities, and you didn't involve us. Here we are doing a program on racism in the gay community the same day, and you didn't ask us for any input." I think they actually listened. We need to get involved in everything.

Plan to Help

With this, the final issue of Lambda for this academic year, we put out a plea for help next year. Without your support and contributions of time, effort, and ideas, Lambda cannot exist. If you can write, read, use scissors, ruler and glue (if you're more advanced, even a razor knife!), please think about helping next year when you are planning the year's schedule.

The issues this year were better than any of the past, and next year's can be even better, but only if you want it that way and are willing to do a little work.

Lambda is one of the few ways for Carolina gays to be informed of what's coming up and what's coming down. It is read by people all over campus--students, faculty, administrators--and all over the state, and is used by other gay publications to inform their readers of happenings here in Chapel Hill.

Volunteer your talents and a few hours of your time. You can retain your anonymity if you wish. Get in touch--now or next fall--and help us continue to annoy Jesse Helms and Bob Windsor!

-Ron



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A Private Club For Members & Their Guests

(REPUBLICAN, from page 2)
Party, was not as optimistic about the acceptance of gay rights in mainstream politics. Real researches the "New Right" and its incursion into U.S. politics, particularly the Republican Party, and he detailed several elections where Republicans hung the "gay issue" around the neck of the opponent.

"Get involved," he said, "but be realistic. Anything we can do in any party will help us. But bear in mind that the odds and some of the cards are stacked and always have been."

Tom Chorlton, who heads the National Association of Lesbian & Gay Democratic Clubs, disagreed with Real and saw more reason for gay political optimism. He said the South was a hotbed of organizing and outliend successful efforts in Richmond, Fort Lauderdale, Louisville, and Birmingham and in Mississippi and Oklahoma.

"Here in North Carolina in 1984, you have the greatest opportunity to demonstrate that [gays are everywhere]."

Chorlton concluded by saying, "Lesbian and gay Americans will no longer tolerate second class citizenship."

WORKSHOPS ADDRESS TACTICS

All three panelists led popular workshops Saturday afternoon. Larry Bush, a full-time journalist writing about gay politics, conducted a session on "gays in the media." He outlined several scenarios demonstrating that "we have no control over the media that affects our lives."

Bush said the media was just now beginning to know us as a community and that "we have trouble articulating what brings us together." He then discussed methods of dealing more effectively with the media.

Other popular workshops included: a panel discussion of the lesbian/gay information gap; overcoming internalized oppression; nuts and bolts of political organizing; gay literature; gay legal issues; and couples.

"I DIDN'T GIVE UP MEN TO EAT TOFU."

-Robin Tyler

Comic and musician Robin Tyler entertained the gathering on Saturday night with a quick-witted monologue of satire and commentary on feminism, separatism, Judy Garland, vegetarianism, straight male behavior, Christ as a Jew, and political correctness.

She emphasized the gay rights movement as being about love. "You gentlemen, gay politics is not crotch politics; it is not about the right to have sex.

"We are not talking about a movement from the waist down. We are talking about the right to love, the right to have families, the right to get medical insurance, to protect our lovers if they are dying, the right to visit them in the hospital."

She declared her opposition to Reagan's re-election. "If Reagan is re-elected, he will be the man to appoint the next Supreme Court. ...Reagan has to go. ...It's hell on us now, but if Reagan is re-elected it's going to be hell on us for the next 25 years."

CLOSING EVENTS

Sunday's events included an ecumenical church service led by St. John's MCC of Raleigh, and Democratic and gay student

organizational caucuses.

A plenary session turned up several suggestions for the next statewide conference, including more women and minorities in planning and participation, more statewide advance publicity of the Conference and the planning meetings, holding fewer workshops per time period, and better fundraising so that registration fees would not be the sole revenue source.

There was also a lively discussion of a site for the 1985 conference. Some people felt it should move outside the Triangle Area. And others proposed holding it concurrently with the 10th annual Southeastern Conference. The first Southeastern Conference was hosted in Chapel Hill in 1975. No decision was made, but an on-going steering committee was initiated, and their planning meetings will be announced in advance in the lesbian and gay press.

-Lee Mullis

Health Issues for Mid-life

The middle years, ages 45-65, are a time of rapid change for many women. Physical changes present new health challenges, and family changes can require major psychological adjustments. Knowing what to expect, how to care for her changing needs, and where to go for help if problems arise can help a woman face mid-life with confidence rather than uncertainty.

A new series, "Health Issues for Mid-Life Women," sponsored by Women's Health Counseling Service in Chapel Hill, is designed to provide answers to many of the most perplexing questions faced by mid-life women. The series begins on May 9, at 7 pm in the Presbyterian Student Center in Chapel Hill. Topics will include:

May 9: "Healthy Aging I"

May 16: "Healthy Aging II"

May 23: "Intimacy and Relationships"

For info, call Brenda Edwards: 968-4646

'84 and Counting

Where Candidates Stand

As part of "'84 and Counting," a coalition effort to register gay and lesbian voters and ensure that gay issues are addressed in the presidential campaign, the National Gay Task Force has played a role in eliciting position statements on gay rights from two presidential candidates.

Walter Mondale has stated, "I fully support the [Democratic] platform as enunciated in 1980, and strengthened in 1982, to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. I support, and I will support, legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. ...I will use the power of the Presidency to prohibit discrimination in Federal employment [and] ... immigration."

Jesse Jackson also supports equal rights: "People of various sexual and racial persuasions must be part of a legitimate bona fide movement to afford equal protection under the law for all citizens. The Constitution does not say that one's citizenship is jeopardized because of one's race or sex or sexual preference."

-from NGTF'S Task Force Report 11:1

Dark Years, Different Lifestyle

The following story, submitted by a Carolina student, is very personal and makes judgments about an issue that is controversial in the gay community. The opinions are the student's. Some readers may find the language too coarse at times, but because the article is very personal we have decided to leave it in the language of the author. The occasional coarseness is also more expressive than the appropriate substitutions. The article may antagonize those who disagree with its conclusions, but we hope that it will encourage everyone to examine their own opinions, both negative and positive, about the issue. Reader responses, as always, are welcomed.

-Editor

My story is about my "different lifestyle" and how I lived in it for five years until a few good friends helped me out. I would like to stress that this story is about my life and how I overcame my problem. I also would like to state that not everyone who participates in "bathroom sex" believes it is wrong, and that is why I am dedicating this story to those who are still having "bathroom sex" and those who turn their heads without lifting a helping hand. I hope that these people will change.

Before I begin my story, I will explain why I believe this type of sex is wrong. This might seem unnecessary, but there is obviously a large number of people who disagree with me. First, there is a great risk that people take with their health when they don't know anything about the background of the person with whom they are having sex. Second, and more important, I found the experience to be very damaging emotionally. Everyone that goes into a bathroom for sex has different reasons: power, a quick thrill, a relationship, or to know that you are wanted. One thing is certain, though: most people do not feel good about themselves or other people.

I compare this behavior to alcoholism, except that it is worse. When people are depressed, some tend to use sex as a drug to make them feel good for a short while. Like alcoholics, they build a tolerance and need more and more to make them feel good. Eventually sex becomes such a necessity that it controls their lives. It happened to me.

My story begins when I was 14 or 15 in a public bathroom in Minnesota. I had always found myself entranced by bathrooms. I guess it was the sexual zeal of actually getting a glimpse of another man's cock and comparing it to my own. It was also the excitement of seeing and doing something forbidden: loitering in a bathroom.

One day as I was washing my hands for the fifteenth time and drying my hands under the heater, I felt a pair of hands cup my groin and squeeze. I turned around and saw an elderly man massaging my groin. I guess I was a little shocked and scared that my loitering would actually result in physical touching. The man leaned down

and whispered, "You like that?" I mumbled something, and he said, "Come with me." I followed him into a smaller bathroom in a department store where we both went into one stall. Before I knew it, I felt this man sucking on my cock. It was all over before I knew it, and as I was scurrying to put my pants on and meet my mother the man whispered in my ear, "This is our secret, eh?"

It was not until two or three days later that I actually started thinking about what I had done. When I did, a deep sense of anxiety washed over me and left me crying. I felt that I couldn't tell anyone, not a single person. From that moment on I started leading a secret, dark life, contrary to my public happy-go-lucky personality.

I didn't go back to a restroom until about a month later. As before I waited around, busying myself with personal hygiene, until another man approached me. This time I knew what to do and didn't want to be considered a novice. After our quick sex, I realized there was something different; we hadn't spoken to each other.

As my life went on I became more and more obsessed with getting out of the house and going to a shopping mall for sex. I remember making up reasons to tell my mother so she would take me there: birthday present shopping, party shopping, and Christmas shopping. (I lived for the weeks of pre-Christmas shopping.) For two (see DARK YEARS, page 12)

St. John's Metropolitan Community Church

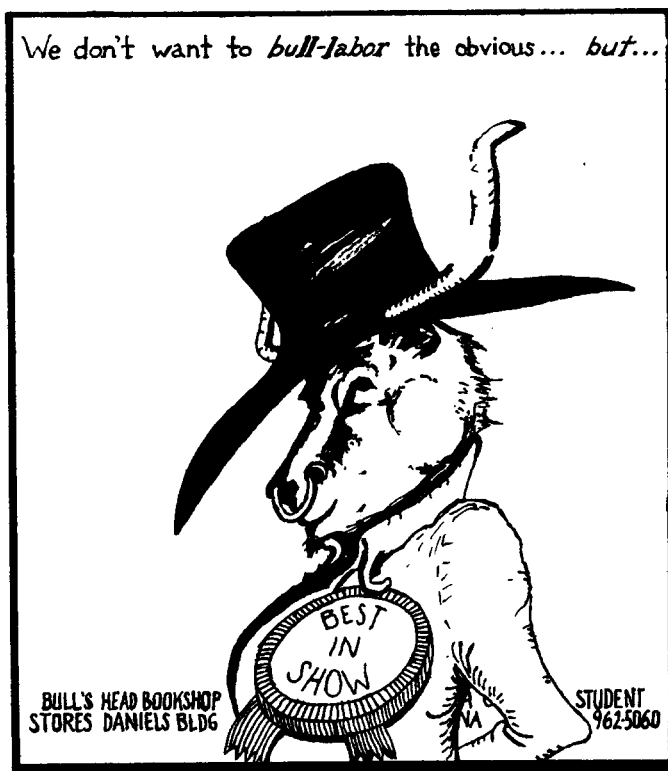
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(DARK YEARS, continued from page 11) and a half years I got away with leaving my mom in the mall for an hour while I had sex. Soon I was old enough to drive, and this only enhanced my chances of sexual encounters, but it also opened the door to the other aspects of being gay.

One night after working late at a basketball game in Durham, I decided to go to a gay bar. I paid my \$4 and strolled inside wearing my huge down jacket. I felt out of place, but I kept moving through the crowd. Someone stopped me and said, "Hey, can I help you? Let me show you where to put your coat." I was so scared and nervous that I headed for the door without even saying goodbye to the middle-aged man.

The next time I went to a gay bar was during my senior year of high school. I was more relaxed this time and decided to go all out that night, since my parents were in Jamaica. I arrived at the bar



early, wandered around and got a beer, and then decided to play a couple of games of pinball. Half way through my second game, a quarter was slapped onto the machine. I turned around and smiled; there stood my prince charming, Steve. He asked me if I wanted to play doubles, and I said, "Sure." After two games, a few beers, and a couple of dances with Steve, I was sure I was in love. I asked him if he wanted to spend the night at my house (I wasn't very good with lines).

After careful consideration and a quick consultation with his friend, he agreed. We went to my house, had some Pepsi, and talked. We talked a long time, about everything from Europe to sports. When we both decided it was time to retire, I asked him if he wanted to sleep in the same bed. He agreed. We snuggled and talked for a while longer, then during a pause I let my hand brush his stomach and then let it rest on his crotch. He turned to me and said, "What would you say if I

didn't want to have sex tonight but just wanted to hold you?" I turned to him and thought, then smiled and told him it would be fine. I savored that moment for a long time because he really meant what he said. For the next three months we saw each other as much as possible.

I was so happy whenever I was with him; I wanted as much time together as possible. I even decided to give up bathroom sex so that I'd have more time to spend with him. But there was a sudden realization in my body that I could not give up bathroom sex; it had become a basic need in my life. I was so terrified that I turned to Steve for help; I explained my lifestyle in hopes that he would hold and comfort me.

Instead my friend, my lover, explained to me that he needed to stop seeing me. When I tried to reach him the next day his phone was disconnected. My letters to him went unanswered. I cannot begin to explain the empty, hollow feelings I had inside. The road ahead was not any brighter. My grade point average dropped from a 4.0 to a 2.3 in a matter of months. All I wanted to do was graduate and enter college.

I found that in college sex was easily obtained. My first experience was by accident. I was studying in the library when I went to use the bathroom and saw the bathroom stalls filled and a few people standing outside. I was amazed at the variety of people there, from football players to professors. Needless to say, in my depression, I overindulged myself with this abundance of sex. At a peak week I would spend as much as 40 hours in different bathrooms.

It was not until someone from my dorm found me having sex with another man that I actually had a nervous breakdown. I ran into the woods and sobbed for hours. I thought about myself, my parents, and where I was going in life.

Luckily, I was not without friends who cared for and loved me. One good friend gently urged me to go to the mental health center. That was my first step. I gradually started thinking about what I was doing to myself and realized that I really needed someone else's help. Initially I saw someone at student mental health and then transferred to a clinical social worker.

During this time I was still very upset with myself because I couldn't stop having bathroom sex right away; I realized that if I stopped immediately, I would again feel a huge void in my life.

Although I have been in therapy for a relatively short time, I feel much more positive about myself and other people. I know that I haven't conquered my problem yet, but I am confident that I will. Sometimes I pity myself because I wasted five years; I realize I learned a lot in a negative way. I know that I will use what I consider as dark years to make my life brighter.

Carolina Alphabet Soup

The boy with the crisp white slacks is staring at the dance floor and moving his body to the beat of the song. Behind him, the boy with the jeans and t-shirt is also staring at the dance floor but is motionless, as if posed for others to see. Momentarily Mr. Jeans' eye is distracted by the movements of Mr. Slacks' body. He notes the crispness of the slacks and the earring in one ear. He sees that Mr. Slacks is attractive but not particularly muscular. He watches the arms move and the body sway almost too emphatically from side to side. He quickly shakes his head and turns away. "Just another queen," he mutters to himself, as his eyes return to the dance floor....

This scene, fairly common in gay life, is the result of a division between the conformist and the nonconformist within the gay community. This division is explored by Marshall Kirk and "Erastes Pill" in an article titled "Idols of the Tribe" in last June's Christopher Street (issue #77, pp. 22-31). This separation, while not encompassing all gay people, is evident in terms of self-identification (how the gay man sees himself) and public appearance (how "straight" society sees him). The authors classify the two groups as Q-type ("the homosexual on display"), either very effeminate or leather macho, and the R-type, who is straight-appearing or acting. Qs represent the extremes of masculine and feminine gender roles, while Rs fit the norms straight society has set them as straight men. These images are constantly reinforced by literature, pornography, and film.

Qs are frequently ridiculed by Rs because they are so openly on display.

Many Rs blame Qs "for the weird profile of homosexuals as a whole" (p. 27). Rs are, therefore, less likely to admit their sexuality to society for fear of being labeled a stereotypical Q. But many Qs see Rs' actions as a facade that covers up and hides the gay person beneath the surface. Qs also resent the fact that Rs do not usually accept them as gay people.

According to Kirk and Pill, Qs are more likely to be social and political activists since they are already visibly gay to society. Rs benefit from this activism but do not participate for fear of public exposure in their conformist worlds.

Thus, an "oppression sickness" (p. 31) continues in gay life, although it is often ignored by gay activists who choose to present a unified front to the straight world in order to achieve social acceptance and civil rights. The basic (and perhaps overwhelming) problem with these subgroups and the antagonism between them is that they are based on appearances. The division between Qs and Rs can end only when gay people are comfortable enough with themselves to accept diversity in others. We need to explore our identities as individuals and not let ourselves be put into stereotypical groups. Otherwise, we are merely reacting to society's stereotypes of gay people as dangerously freakish or as nonthreateningly conformist, rather than expressing our own identity within society. Since society has encouraged gay people to fulfill one of these two negative roles, either as total outsiders or as peripheral (see ALPHABET SOUP, page 14)

R

Q

Rs like to think they pass as straights on the street. They value highly their acceptance in general society, and many are careful to sustain friendships in the straight community. Rs are proud of their manly appearance, and typically rankle over the camp use of feminine pronouns for gay males. They may be receptive to, or even obsessive about, social conventions and norms based on gender distinctions. They may, for instance, painstakingly affect a studied "male" indifference to apparel and grooming.... By and large, Rs were kids who, for one reason or another, could conform with ease, and so did. Perhaps these young men included the handsome, well-built, athletic, or aggressive ones by native endowment; they were the baseball captains, the popular boys, the regular Joes, and the queer-baiters.

In actual fact, Qs often are not, and feel like they do not wish to be, "straight-acting and appearing." The extreme Q is a homosexual on display.... Qs are outwardly gayified; they have bought into strict outgroup stereotypes which, whether screaming or ultra-masculine in their details, constitute a burlesque of gender roles.... Standard manliness is often troublesome to the Q, and may be deflated by camp mockery or artificial overkill.... Whereas Rs usually could conform, and so did, many Qs felt that, for whatever reasons, they could not conform during their youth, and so did not. Those reasons might include passivity, effeminacy, homeliness, remarkable prettiness, lack of athletic skill, or almost any other cause for unpopularity among male youth.

(ALPHABET SOUP, from page 13)

but impotent parts, it's up to gay people to change these roles. By resisting labeling (whether by straight society or by other gay people) and working towards being self-aware individuals who are willing to express their individuality within the gay community and society as a whole, gay people can help create a new society which encourages the expression of individuality at the expense of stereotypes.

-David



LAMBDA

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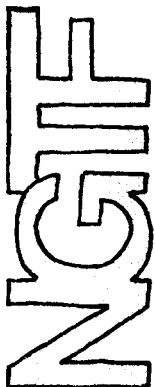
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Idols of the Tribe

The sexual objects of Rs are usually other Rs; Qs, for the most part, are scorned.... For Rs, the perfect "10" -- the sexual object possessing the one feature he feels he lacks and wishes to capture -- may very well be the straight boy who is, by definition, unattainable.... If masculine, normal-looking Rs become the chief sexual objects of other Rs, does this in turn mean that flamboyant Qs are the ideal sex objects of other Qs, or that Rs do not interest Qs? To the contrary.... It is our impression that, for both Rs and Qs, archetypal Rs are the "idols of the tribe." It is the R whose natural masculine grace tops the overall hierarchy of desirable traits in the fierce gay competition of good looks.



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Carolina Gay Association Newsletter

Postal Update

Plaudits . . .

Last fall we appealed to our subscribers to help us out of a financial crisis. The U.S. Postal Service would not allow us to continue using the University's non-profit bulk mail permit and said we'd have to buy our own permit and mail at a higher rate. You, dear friends, quickly came through not only with enough money for these expenses but with kind and encouraging letters. We are very grateful for your support!

and apologies

In the same breath, we must apologize for the late delivery of our March issue. Though it was "on the street" on Feb. 28, the Mail Room had not ordered the new postal meter slug for us. It didn't arrive for several weeks, and the issue wasn't mailed until the last week of March. We think these hurdles have been cleared and that you'll be receiving better service beginning with this issue.

The Book Corner

Myths, Monogamy and Freedom

Man to Man by Charles Silverstein (New York: Wm. Morrow, 1981), 348 pp., \$12.95 (hardback)

The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck (New York: Touchstone, 1978), 316 pp., \$6.95 (paperback)

I used to believe that I was fairly conservative about the issues of monogamy and promiscuity (as they are usually and somewhat inaccurately described) until one evening at a meeting I heard an obdurate man opine that "serial monogamy" was just another form of promiscuity. I decided I was not so far to the right.

Extremists aside, most gays argue one of two sides about homosexual sex, romance, love, and fidelity. As a rule the Monogamists favor the notion that gays, except for their oppression, are just like straights. The Promiscuity Advocates argue that gay alliances are unique creations, prone to dangers unsuspected in straight relationships and further hazarded by years of omnipresent oppression and sexual frustration.

Both sides are represented in Silverstein's Man to Man, which is based on interviews with 190 men around the country. The Monogamists are supported by Silverstein's statement that:

Beliefs about heterosexual marriage are the foundations on which gay love relationships have been constructed.... Gay couples pattern their behavior after that of their parents and other heterosexual couples in their community.

In actual practice, feelings about monogamy are often expressed as below:

I want my lover to be mine and only mine, and I want to be his and only his. ...We do everything together. It's as though we are a normal married couple, the only difference being that we're two gay males.

Sometimes an unnecessary defensiveness is apparent:

I believe in monogamy. I'm sorry. I believe the joys and benefits you get from having one person in your life is worth a little sacrifice. ...You may think it's stupid, old-fashioned, virtues like faithfulness, but I don't think it's bullshit. I think it's very valuable.

But despite these beliefs in many Monogamists and because of the differing beliefs of the Promiscuity Advocates, according to Silverstein, "At some point in the life of every gay couple the monogamy battle will be fought."

Why? Silverstein claims the three most commonly given reasons are (1) "need for a greater variety of sexual experiences than one lover can provide," (2) "a way to avoid feelings of property ownership and

possessiveness," and (3) (this one I find hard to believe) "a means of learning new sexual techniques to bring back to the love relationship."

These hardly exhaust the list however. "Phillip" says:

I still feel that a commitment to a relationship like this has very little to do with what I choose to do with my body. ...I differentiate between having sex and making love. When I feel strongly toward a person, I make love. When I don't, I have sex. And I can enjoy both of them very much.

Or, as "Jim" put it:

Gay relationships to me are very exciting because there are no rules. Each relationship has at its disposal an infinite number of rules that it can create. ...Once you put boundaries on me, like monogamy, there's no way for me to grow. I want rules of the heart, of the spirit.

Such value systems give the Monogamists heebie-jeebies.

Silverstein also outlines what he sees as the principal reasons for demanding monogamy: (1) a belief in a romantic ideal (often a belief connected with a moral value), (2) feelings of jealousy ("enmity motivated by fear, the fear of being abandoned"), (3) feelings of envy (resentment of "another person's perceived superiority or success"). Never really coming down on one side or the other, Silverstein remains descriptive, not prescriptive. After all, the book is titled "Gay Couples in America."

* * * * *

When I was thinking about these three reasons, I was struck by the fact that two of them are negative. And I would have felt better about the one remaining if I hadn't just finished rereading M. Scott Peck's wonderful The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth.

There's a fascinating discussion of what Peck calls the "Myth of Romantic Love":

While I generally find that great myths are great precisely because they represent and embody great universal truths, the myth of romantic love is a dreadful lie. Perhaps it is a necessary lie in that it ensures the survival of the species by its encouragement and seeming validation of the falling-in-love experience that traps [some of] us into marriage. But as a psychiatrist I weep in my heart almost daily for the ghastly confusion and suffering that this myth fosters. Millions of people waste vast amounts of energy desperately and futilely attempting to make the reality of their

(see MYTHS, page 16)

(MYTHS, from page 15)

lives conform to the unreality of the myth.

The "necessary lie" of the myth of romantic love does not ensure the survival of the species in gay couples, so the myth's one potential virtue is negated. Nonetheless, the issue is as much a problem in non-procreative relationships as it is in procreative ones, and is a major problem for most of the gay men and women I know. If the myth of romantic love is another negative reason, no positive support came forth from the 190 gay individuals Silverstein interviewed, and it's rare to encounter them in gay circles.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WASTE VAST
AMOUNTS OF ENERGY...ATTEMPTING TO
MAKE THE REALITY OF THEIR LIVES
CONFORM TO THE UNREALITY OF THE MYTH

These are very real problems. If one reads Peck's book with this question in mind, you can find at least three reasons to support fidelity in [gay] relationships. First, once a relationship has passed the falling-in-love and there's-still-stars-in-my-eyes stages, the individuals begin to realize that they are not "one" with the beloved, that the other person is not who they were fantasized to be, and that "the beloved has and will continue to have his or her own desires, tastes, prejudices, and timing different from the other's. One by one, gradually or suddenly, the ego boundaries snap back into place; gradually or suddenly, they fall out of love.... At this point they begin either to dissolve the ties of the relationship or to initiate the work of real loving."

It is precisely this point where so many gay people are arrested; just when the work of building a relationship should begin, off goes Juliet or Romeo on her charger looking for the next myth. Even if a couple decides to "open" their relationship, the primary relationship suffers because energy is not being directed to create a better relationship.

The second reason is an outgrowth of this problem. Peck states that, "Ultimately, if they stay in therapy, all couples learn that a true acceptance of their own and each other's individuality is the only foundation upon which a mature marriage [=relationship] can be based and real love can grow." If we keep breaking up when these individualities are first realized, we are prevented from every grasping this truth, that the strength of a relationship is based on each partner's independence and separateness.

Third, sexual fidelity is a direct symbol for each partner's commitment to their relationship. Peck believes that:

Commitment is inherent in any genuine loving relationship. Anyone who is truly concerned for the spiritual

growth of another knows, consciously or unconsciously, that he or she can significantly foster that growth only through a relationship of constancy. ...Couples cannot resolve in any healthy way the universal issues of marriage [=coupling]--dependency and independency, dominance and submission, freedom and fidelity, for example--without the security of knowing that the act of struggling over these issues will not destroy the relationship.

Every gay person who has been involved in a relationship knows the experience of being insecure about broaching difficult issues because of the fear of losing the other partner. The stresses of third-party sex and the pressures they add to a relationship that needs work serve to undermine the vital perception of constancy.

I admitted at the beginning that I was a bit conservative about these issues, and I think that the "no rules" freedom advocated by some isn't going to help create gay individuals who feel positive about themselves and their potential for forming lasting relationships that nurture growth. Peck's book is a help. He doesn't specifically address gay issues, but there's a lot there to make you think about who you are now and why, who you are becoming, and how your past will color your future.

One of the goals of gay liberation is the freedom to be emotionally healthy. The freedom to be promiscuous is also a freedom that must be safeguarded, but its consequences for the ways gay people treat relationships must be acknowledged. When gay people come out they often experience a valuable period of sexual exploration which compensates for the talk our parents never gave us on how to make love to someone of the same sex and all those dry years. But if we never try to learn how to build lasting relationships along the way, our arrested development will be our own creation.

-Bill

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Chapel Hill, NC 27514

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Calendar

Chapel Hill Lesbian Potluck: third Saturday of each month at 6:30pm. Call 929-2546 for info.

Dignity--Triangle: Gay Catholics and their friends meet every Sunday evening at 7. Call 829-9077 for details.

Dukes Levi/Leather Club: meets 2nd Sunday of each month, 7 pm, at The Power Company, Durham. Write P.O. Box 3111, Durham, NC 27705

Gay AA: meets every Saturday at 8pm at MCC, corner of Wade Avenue and Dixie Trail, Raleigh.

Gay Men's Folk Dancing: meets every other Friday at the Ark on Duke University's East Campus. Call Jeff or David at 929-9769 (CH) or Carl or Alan at 596-4511 (Durham).

Gay Support Group: meets every Tuesday night in Minister's Study of the Unitarian Church, 3313 Wade Avenue, Raleigh. Call 834-3302 for details.

Metropolitan Community Church: Worship services each Sunday in church at corner of Wade Avenue and Dixie Trail, Raleigh, 3:00pm. Call 834-2611. Bible Study--Tuesdays, 7:30pm Prayer and Praise--Wednesdays, 7:15pm Volleyball--Wednesdays, 8pm, at Jaycee Park on Wade Avenue. Non-religious Rap Time--Thurs., 8pm

Parents of Gays: meets third Thursday of each month at Unitarian Church, 3313 Wade Avenue, Raleigh, 7:30pm. Call 834-3302 for details.

Over Thirties Potluck for Lesbian/Gay Women: last Saturday of each month. Call 477-5726 (Durham) or 933-0036 (CH)

Raleigh NOW: meets first Tuesday of each month at Athens Drive High School, Room 142. Call Joy Osborne at 832-3660 for info.

Triangle Area Gay Scientists: meets second Saturday of each month. Call Dan at 929-4997 for info.

Women's Choir: meets every Sunday at 4:30pm. Call Barb at 489-1358 for information.

Women for Sobriety: meets every Tuesday at Presbyterian Student Center, Henderson Street, Chapel Hill. Call 929-0471 for more information.

Lesbian Couple Workshop. Running for ten weeks, sponsored by the Androgyny Center, Raleigh. Call 848-0500.

April

21 "The Fifth of July," produced by Duke Players at Duke University. Call 684-4059 for ticket information.

29 Benefit Auction for Charlotte's Queen City Quordinators, at Brass Rail. Contact QCQ at P.O. Box 221841, Charlotte, NC 28222

May

25-

28 Integrity/South, 3rd Annual Meeting for gay Catholics and their friends. Write them at 290 - 8th Street, #5, Atlanta, GA 30309 or call (404) 872-0929

June

3 Train excursion, in private coach, from Charlotte to Asheville and return. Sponsored by Acceptance, Charlotte's social/discussion group. Limited space. For info and reservations, call Jim Fetchero at (704) 364-6471.

Resources

. . . FROM MURPHY TO MANTEO . . .

Going to the hinterlands for the summer? Want to find a lesbian/gay group near you?

Then write for a listing of all known lesbian and gay organizations in North Carolina. Listings are by category, and the booklet is available for \$1 + 50¢ postage from:

Ron Lambe
Running Water Farm
Route 1, Box 127-E
Bakersville, NC 28705



Health Conference Focuses on International Concerns

The National Gay Health Education Foundation will present the Sixth National Lesbian/Gay Health Conference and the International Lesbian/Gay Health Conference on Saturday, June 16 through Tuesday, June 19, at New York University's Washington Square campus in Greenwich Village.

This year's conference theme is "Toward Diversity" and reflects its multi-focus purpose with special emphasis on Third World, international and lesbian health concerns. The conference will also include the Third AIDS Forum under the auspices of the Federation of AIDS Related Organizations (FARO).

This conference will bring together lesbian and gay health providers and consumers to share information and ideas, to coordinate networking and caucusing and to provide a forum for professional support and development.

Those attending the conference will include alternative health care providers, alcohol and drug treatment specialists, chiropractors, counselors, dentists, nurses, nutritionists, physical therapists, physicians, physician assistants, psychologists, public health workers, and social workers.

The conference sponsor, the National Gay Health Education Foundation, is dedicated to the coordination of educational programs and research in the area of lesbian/gay health care issues.

Following are some of the themes to be addressed at the conference:

Gay Holistic Health
 Lesbian/Feminist Health Issues
 Lesbian and Gay Aging: Realities and Challenges
 The Health Needs of Lesbian/Gay Youth
 Guidelines for Healthy Gay Male Sexual Activity
 Alcoholism Services
 Coming Out Professionally
 Creating a Gay Community Service Center
 The Ideal Women's Therapy Program
 Addiction and Sexuality
 Racism in the Lesbian/Gay Community
 Alternative Fertilization
 Relationships and Intimacy
 Clinical Update on AIDS
 Third World Health Concerns
 Lesbian Mothers/Gay Fathers

Proposals for additional workshops and panels should be sent to the conference office as soon as possible for inclusion in the program and a sourcebook on lesbian/gay health issues to be published in conjunction with the conference. English is the official conference language.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone: (day) _____
 (area) _____

Phone: (evening) _____

Profession: _____

Area of work: _____

Organizational affiliation _____

Registration fee covers the cost of attending all workshops, including the Third AIDS Forum.

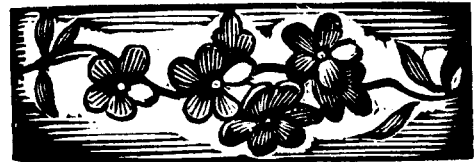
\$75 regular (\$65 before May 8)

\$50 student/retired people over 65 (\$40 before May 8)

Send proof of full-time student status, e.g., copy of student ID.

All checks must be payable in U.S. dollars. Make checks payable to NGHEF/ Conference or The Health Fund and send to:

NGHEF/Conference
 80 -8th Avenue, Suite 1305
 New York, NY 10011



Women's Orientation

The Women's Health Counseling Service in Chapel Hill will hold an orientation meeting for its training program on at 7:00 pm, Wed., May 2, at the Women's Resource Center, 406 West Rosemary Street, Chapel Hill. The actual training of volunteers begins the following Saturday.

The 30-hour training and apprenticeship will cover women's health concerns, counseling skills, crisis intervention, role-playing, and community resources. Counselors are trained to provide counseling, referrals, information, and education on women's health and pregnancy-related concerns.

Volunteers are also needed for publicity and fundraising tasks. These posts do not necessitate counselor training, and the volunteers can begin working immediately after orientation.

If you are interested in being part of the program, call Brenda Edwards at 968-4646.