

CAMP INK

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Homosexuals and



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CAMP INK



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EDITORIAL

This month's CAMP INK stands in the sign of DISCRIMINATION, with the memory of the Tribunal still fresh in our minds. The tremendous response of the gay community in providing the 46 cases, the attendance at the hearing on the Saturday and the handing down of the report on the Sunday, the tremendous pitching-in and help from the many people associated with the organisation of the event, and above all, the time and energy and attention given so freely by the four distinguished Tribunalists, made this the outstanding happening for CAMP NSW, for the gay community of Sydney in particular and of the whole of Australia in general. As Peter de Waal said in his opening address: "It makes you proud to belong to this organisation".

A lot of behind-the-scenes work is still to come: the transcription of the entire proceedings from the tapes has already been done; the proofreading and rationalising of the text will be next, and then the laying out, production and printing of the booklet. We hope to have it available by early April, as a permanent record of a giant step towards our liberation.

Significantly, at the same time that the Tribunal was in progress in Sydney, our gay brothers in Melbourne were being subjected to police harassment on one of the more popular 'beats'. In this same issue is a letter of protest to the Chief Secretary from the Melbourne Homosexual Law Reform Coalition, which shows that a lot of progress still needs to be made.

Tying in with the Tribunal submission on lesbian mothers, we have an article on custody cases, which reveal the vast gaps in the legal minds when it comes to assessing suitability to bring up children. Although the cases come from England, it can be applied directly anywhere in the English-speaking world, particularly Australia.

The case of Sandra Willson, one of the Tribunal submissions, is another example of discriminatory treatment of homosexuals, and deserves our attention and support.

Attitudes of psychiatrists, although some of them have come round a bit, are still several decades behind the times. Just look at the article about "curing" young children from "effeminate" behaviour. If you hear of anything of like nature going on in Australia, please let us know!

Resources Library

The library is gradually taking shape. We have been collecting material on homosexuality from various sources and hope to be able eventually to supply articles, books and extracts to researchers on any subject related to homosexuality, (female and male), trans-sexuality, transvestism and pederasty.

The library is available for genuine research by the whole community (gay and hetero). You can contact the Librarians by phoning either:
Peter de Waal, 827-3063 OR
Terry Goulden, 666-6110 (wk) or 587-8524

Donations of books, articles, magazines newspapers, posters, badges on homosexuality will be gratefully received.

The library will also have an Archive function and therefore any records of Australian Gay groups and documents of historical value will be welcome, and we will take steps to ensure that they are properly preserved.

T.G.

Tribunal on

27-28 November 1976

Homosexuals and Discrimination

REPORT ON THE TRIBUNAL ON HOMOSEXUALS AND DISCRIMINATION.

by cecily davis

Phew! It's all over, the Greatest Show on Earth, otherwise known as the Tribunal on Homosexuals and Discrimination, and what a success it was.

It was a solid-packed Saturday, with 46 cases being put before the Tribunal. It got a bit too solid at times, even for the hardest souls, but at least the point was made, and very well, about the many and varied kinds of oppression the homosexual faces in this society.

Only a couple of grievances - there was an attendance of about 200, when we could have cheerfully accommodated 1,000, and the media, with one or two minor exceptions, chose to ignore us.

The reasons given by various reporters for their lack of interest were quite fascinating, but I think the real reason was that we were doing something legitimate, straight down the line. I'm sure if we'd all dressed up in drag and waved a few banners, they'd have been there.

One trendy current affairs programme wanted Jim Cairns to be interviewed by their weeny-bop reporters, which we thought was a bit infra. Somebody else blamed the petrol shortage. A catholic radio station wouldn't touch us because Mike Clohesy's sacking from a catholic school was on the agenda, while an afternoon housewife's programme was staging a 'be unkind to poofers' week. So publicity-wise, we couldn't win, even though we'd done our homework with press releases and lots of phone calls. Next year we won't invite the bastards: we'll subpoena them instead!

I won't go into too many details about each case, or the recommendations from the Tribunal. We're publishing all that soon, and you can buy a copy.

There were sackings, more sackings, and the case of Helen Pasley, who has been sacked more than once for her sexual preference.

Excerpts from a Festival of Light publication were read. Did you know that lesbians were lacking in proper body image? That we had aggressive dominating fathers and lacked an adequate mother figure to copy? That we should have been boys? Yes! And did you know that the high-minded young man who does not kiss your daughter before marriage is very unlikely to do so after marriage? The magazine "Stallion" was their most scientific source of evidence on homosexual behaviour.

The Tribunal rightly recognised the danger of militant, repressive pressure groups.

While FoL felt we should seek comfort in abstinence, the Church of England report was not much more encouraging. They preached equality for lesbians - i.e. we should be criminalised, too. They also urged that the police carefully review their current tactics of snooping around gents' toilets, to ensure that the boys in blue don't get corrupted while performing their important duty of rounding up poofers.

More militant homosexuals were seen as a threat - we expect society to change, instead of changing ourselves to suit society.

We then went on to legislation, and attitudes of government departments, and the refusal of private companies and government bodies to give homosexual unions family status.

Fourteen miscellaneous cases later, after hearing Mother's reaction, and worse, Grandmother's reaction, it was time for lunch. If it hadn't been for dear Fred, who makes such excellent sandwiches, I do not think we could have gone on.

The contentious position of the lesbian mother was examined in a South Australian case in which the judge had grudgingly given custody to the mother - the father tended to produce loaded guns during domestic arguments.

Custody was given, along with a million provisions - that the mother live apart from her lover, that they never spend a night together in the same room, or express affection in front of the children. Sounds like a ten year sentence in the cupboard.

No such provisions would have been made for a heterosexual relationship, nor would their sexual practices have come under such close scrutiny.

Sandra Willson's story was the grimmest of the lot. She was committed to a girls' home for having an affair with a girl way back in the fifties. Upon her release, with all her illusions completely shattered, Sandra decided against suicide - they would be glad - and decided instead to 'get one of them'. She murdered a taxi-driver, but was found not guilty on the grounds of insanity.

In 1971, she was miraculously discovered to be sane, but she's still in jail, with little likelihood of being released, even though she has applied each year since regaining her sane status.

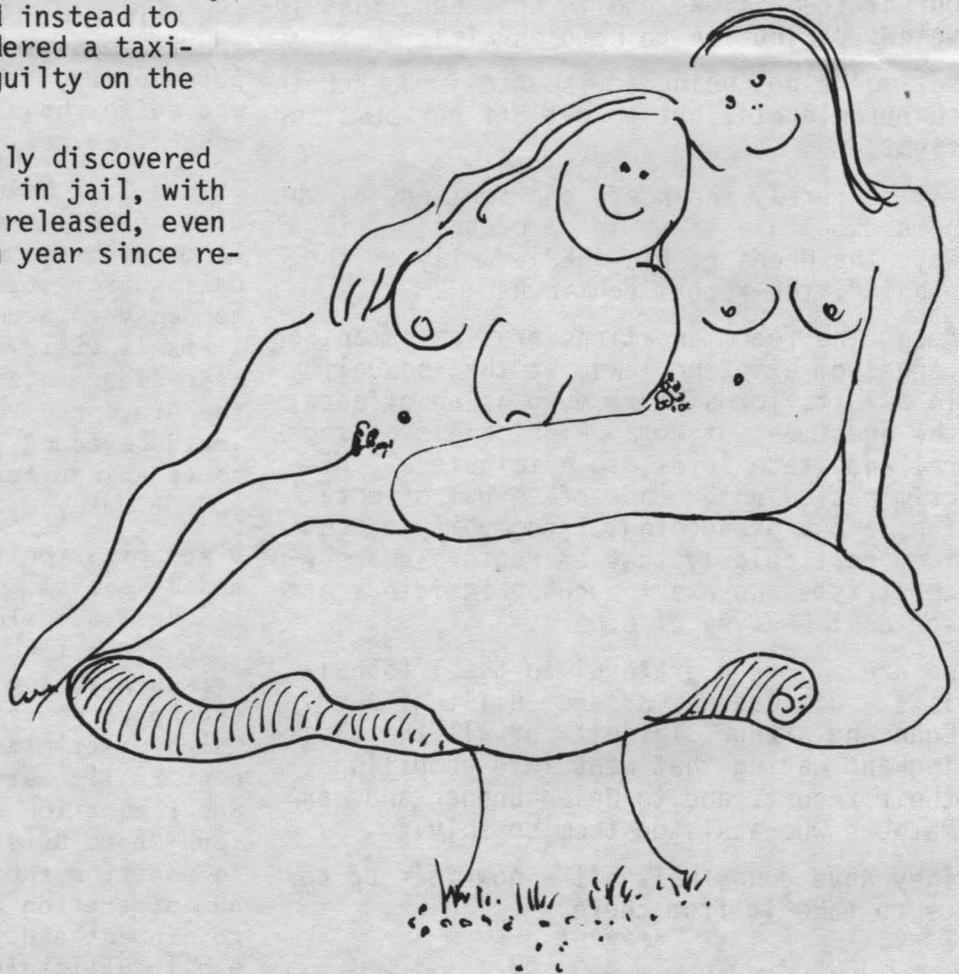
Prison authorities in their wisdom reckon she must be institutionalised after seventeen years, and if she's not institutionalised then she must be dangerous.

CAMP NSW will be joining the fight to obtain the release of Sandra Willson. The Tribunal expressed their disturbance at the way in which the Mental Health Act is administered in NSW, and urged her immediate release.

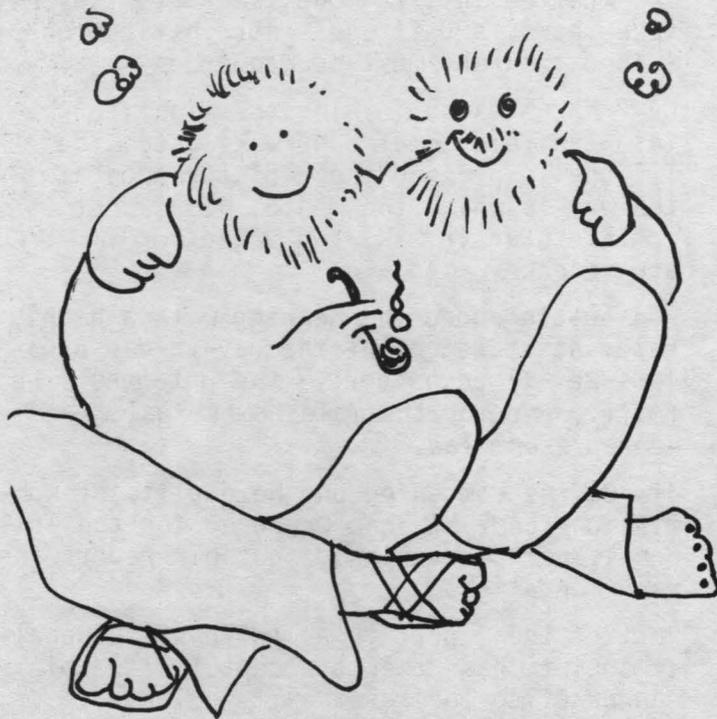
Ron Austin ended the hearing with a highly relevant statement of the day-to-day problems we all encounter: - the putdowns, the family, and for the male homosexual, the ever-present law.

Jim Cairns commented on the quality of submissions CAMP NSW had prepared for the Tribunal, before handing down their report and recommendations.

Part of the report is as follows: "Generally society has come to accept that people can practise their sexuality privately. Public outrage expresses itself only when sex becomes a public issue. This is applied with particular severity to homosexuals.



Tribunalists Report



The following is the REPORT which the members of the Tribunal on Homosexuals and Discrimination handed down on Sunday, the 28th November 1976, after a 6-hour deliberation.

TRIBUNAL ON HOMOSEXUALS AND DISCRIMINATION.

The inquiry by the Tribunal on Homosexuals and Discrimination took place in Sydney on November 27 and 28, 1976. At this stage the Tribunal desires to make known its findings and a report on those findings.

The Tribunal emphasises that the subject of homosexuals and discrimination is an important, complex and difficult one; and that this inquiry may have to be followed up by further investigation and the calling of further witnesses.

The Tribunal found that there is a general tendency to ignore homosexuality as long as it is invisible, secret or kept quiet. Homosexuality is punishable only when it comes to public notice. In every case brought to our notice, it was public knowledge that invoked retribution to homosexuals".

The Tribunal sees the pursuit of maximum individual freedom of belief, expression, action and life-style consistent with the freedom of others to be an intrinsically desirable goal. Homosexuals are a sub-group within the main group such as women, migrants, prisoners, mental patients, commune dwellers, pot-smokers, atheists, aboriginals and others who suffer negative discrimination, oppression and repression.

No, we're not being advised to jump back into our closets, but to get off our bums and fight!

"It is rarely the needs and feelings of the homosexual are taken into account: it is always the needs of his (HER) family or the public", the report continues.

It has long been recognised that repression of sexuality has existed. There are many problems of heterosexual repression but homosexuals suffer more severely. There is a general tendency to accept homosexuality as long as it is 'invisible, secret or hidden'. This was made clear in evidence in the case of schools the Army, the Post Office, and it certainly would be found in government departments, service industries, churches, trade unions and private employment.

Among the recommendations are: amendment or repeal of existing laws, so that sexuality in all its forms be removed as an offence; the enactment of Human Right Bills at federal and state level, to eliminate all discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation; and a broadening of community education, particularly that of doctors and psychiatrists who exert such an insidious effect on the lives of others.

Discrimination takes two forms: 1) legal, and 2) social.

We are all very grateful to the Tribunalists - Jim Cairns, Bridget Gilling, Barry Egan and Arthur Gietzelt for all the thinking and caring that went into compiling their report, and to Helen Coonan and Jane Mathews who assisted them so ably.

1) Legal discrimination is in the form of laws against homosexuals as such, e.g. the Crimes Act, the Summary Offences Act,...and a second category which is in the form of laws which discriminate against non-married people e.g. Public Service Act, the Income Tax Act, Superannuation Act, Stamp Duties Act and various State Duty Acts.

They have done their bit - now it's up to us to take it from there.

In addition there is the interpretation and administration of the law by all forms of government and the discretionary powers of public officials.

2) Social discrimination by authorities, e.g. police, media, churches; the medical profession, service industries, government departments, private employers, etc. Further, there is social discrimination by the general public, e.g. families, neighbours and individuals.

Most societies have an inhibited and repressive attitude towards all sexuality. Homosexuals are seen as practising a life-style which is unnatural, a threat to the survival of the nuclear family, non-procreative, non-conformist and possibly violent. Generally, society has come to accept that people can practise their sexuality privately. Public outrage expresses itself only when sex becomes a public issue. This is applied with particular severity to homosexuals.

The Tribunal found that there is a general tendency to ignore homosexuality as long as it is 'invisible', secret, or kept quiet. Homosexuality is punishable only when it comes to public notice. In every case brought to our notice, it was public knowledge that invoked retribution to homosexuals. Doubtless however, this is part of the general attitude to sexuality. To a very significant extent however, extramarital heterosexual activity was tolerated, even if 'invisible', or hidden or performed privately in accepted conditions. Admittedly there is some discrimination against homosexuality when it is private but the whole weight of society is applied to homosexuals when their sexuality is known or acknowledged.

The punitive aspect against homosexuals takes many forms. They face the taunts of their relatives, the police, public administrators and people generally. Again, they face blackmail and prosecution which is rarely if ever applied to heterosexuals. Their livelihood is threatened, their civil rights curtailed and their private lives are constantly under scrutiny.

The Tribunal finds that most of those who discriminate against homosexuals do no longer rely on the Bible or upon the will or command of God, but upon public opinion. Public opinion is against homosexuality, therefore it is wrong. But today public opinion seems to rely especially upon doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists. The University has taken the place of the Cathedral. This 'democratic' ar-

gument against homosexuality is modern and effective. Evidence was given that this view (that the public is against homosexuality) is probably correct. But it is necessary to point out the significance of militant, repressive pressure groups, which, as in the case of a church in Mosman, a school in Eastwood and doubtless in many other places, appear to have been able to bring about the dismissal of a Church secretary and a teacher both with excellent work records, who had apparently much support in their areas. It has to be pointed out that community views are not independently arrived at, especially in the case of discrimination, when often the basis of action is gossip or prejudice. It became clear in evidence that where attitudes are formed towards homosexuality, it is rarely the needs and feelings of the homosexual that are taken into account: it is always the needs of his family or the public.

The Tribunal finds that community attitudes arise principally from an inability to understand sexuality as an integral part but only one facet of human experience. Rarely is there any genuine effort to promote discussion and understanding of sexuality. Rather there are dictatorial and prurient directives and bar-room type talk.....

Any effort therefore to promote discussion of homosexuality is ineffective, decried and ridiculed. The general public is thus denied an opportunity to understand sexuality and especially homosexuality. In the circumstances, it is wrong simply to accept community values or attitudes to judge the issue of homosexuality or the behaviour of homosexuals. In fact, community attitudes are based on an inadequate understanding of homosexuality and inadequate opportunity to obtain it.

It appears that a reason that people wish homosexuality, if it occurs at all, to be 'invisible', is that 'it can be learned and passed on; that homosexuals can be created', that 'your child is a target for homosexuals! This view is held despite the fact that there is no evidence on whether homosexuality is acquired or not is taken into account. The attitude is based on uninformed fear and prejudice. This view is undoubtedly adopted by judges as well as militant pressure groups acting against homosexuals. This argument becomes irrelevant when homosexuality comes to be seen as one of a whole range of accepted life-styles and thus ceases to be a threat to society.



Left to Right: Peter Trebilco, Jim Cairns, Juni Morosi, Mike Clohesy.

It may be claimed that people have the right to discriminate against homosexuals or other people like women, blacks, atheists or communists. In the case of teachers, the Tribunal was able to examine the matter. Parents and others claim they had a right to refuse to have their children taught by a homosexual person, although they readily accepted a heterosexual teacher even though such a teacher may not necessarily be a good teacher. They appear to do so because they believe that their children would be seduced by a homosexual or be taught to be a homosexual. There is no evidence that homosexuals are more likely to seduce or mis-teach a student than is a heterosexual - indeed, probably much less likely.

Evidence was given that the same standards and laws should apply to homosexuals as to heterosexuals. Firstly for example, are they good teachers or not? Evidence was given that homosexuals are no more or no less likely to be good teachers than are heterosexuals.

They may be more conscientious than the average; more likely to be understanding and sympathetic to individual needs and problems than the average person. It was also put to the Tribunal that children should be educated so that they can better understand sexuality and life-styles different from their own. It was put to the Tribunal that this equips individuals far better to choose and to protect themselves against seduction and undue influences of so many other kinds which are exerted upon them.

The Tribunal accepts this view. It recognises however, that in contemporary society, children as well as adults are unable to obtain an adequate knowledge of sexuality and of ways of living different from their own, and so are vulnerable to undue influences of many kinds. It is difficult to deny therefore, that some protection is justified. In the case of homosexuality, it is reasonable to apply the same laws and standards to homosexuals as to other people.

Evidence was given that it is desirable to exclude the sexual component as such, altogether from laws and standards. What should be wrong and unlawful is the use of force or undue or unequal influence against another person. The Tribunal accepts this view. Its application would require new laws to define and protect human rights and the amendment of many other laws.

THE TRIBUNAL RECOMMENDS:

- * the enactment of a Human Rights Bill at the Federal and State level which would include the elimination of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. (As advised by the N.S.W. Attorney General, we note with satisfaction that some legislators are already moving in this direction; for example, Mr. John Dowd, Liberal Member for Lane Cove, N.S.W.)
- * the amendment and/or repeal of existing acts and regulations so that sexuality in all its forms is eliminated from the law and only violence and undue influence remains an offence.
- * that there be a significant increase in community knowledge and therefore understanding, of sexuality and especially of homosexuality and change in community opinion and action.
- * that there should be an examination of existing material on sexuality and personal development being used in educational establishments. This material should not merely be confined to contemporary human and sexual relations but should examine the many and varied forms of human and sexual relations and their consequences. All references with a sex/sexuality bias should be eliminated.
- * that there should be a broadening of the education of doctors, especially psychiatrists, psychologists and all others who exercise authority or make decisions about the lives of others, so that the existing sexual bias is eliminated.
- * practitioners of alternative life-styles should be brought to the teaching of courses in personal development and in all other relevant areas.
- * action should be taken to prevent the censorship of publicity about legitimate activities of homosexuals.

- * state authorities should take action to prevent discrimination against and persecution of homosexuals in jails and other institutions.

The Tribunal notes that there are other areas on which further evidence is required before a recommendation can be made, and would welcome further evidence at a future occasion. The Tribunal is disturbed at the way in which the Mental Health Act is administered in NSW in respect of persons found not guilty on grounds of mental ill health, and later found to be sane and no longer needing to be detained. On the evidence presented to the Tribunal it appears that Sandra Willson, still detained in a N.S.W. jail long after having been found sane, should be released.

Dr. Jim Cairns, M.P.
Mr. Barry Egan
Senator Arthur Gietzelt
Ms Bridget Gilling

TRIBUNALISTS.

Sandra Willson

WHO IS SANDRA WILLSON ?

In 1959, when she was 20 years old, Sandra Willson shot a stranger dead. She was acquitted of murder on the grounds of insanity and confined to a psychiatric hospital at the Governor's Pleasure. In 1971, a panel of psychiatrists determined that she was sane, and she was transferred from hospital to a jail.

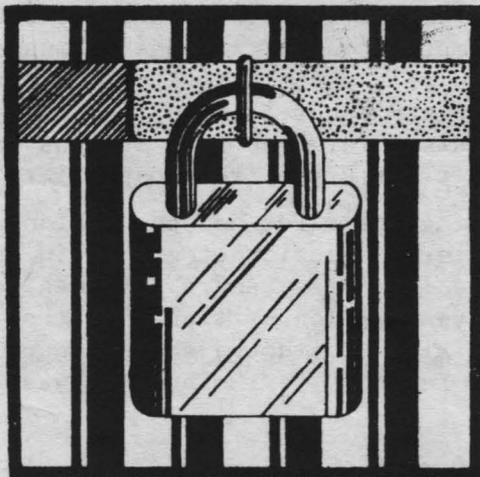
The average term for persons sentenced to life after conviction of murder in New South Wales is 13 years. Sandra has been confined for 17 years - longer than any other woman in Australia - although she has applied for release in every year since she was judged sane.

In the opinion of psychiatry, Sandra was not criminally responsible for murder. Her sentence is already disproportionate for someone convicted of that crime. Psychiatry has judged that the mental state that accompanied her act no longer exists.

Like George Jackson and the Three Marias, Sandra Willson is in jail less for what she has done than for who she is. Sandra Willson is still in jail for two reasons: she has survived every attempt to crush her will and while she repents her crime, she does not repent her lesbianism.

From her youth onwards, Sandra Willson has suffered societal prejudice and punishment because of her sexual non-conformity. Her schoolgirl crushes on teachers and other students were ridiculed and rejected. At 17, she moved into a flat with another girl and commenced what she described as a very happy relationship. The police, urged to the flat by another girl's mother, arrested them and they were charged with being exposed to moral danger. The Children's Court heard the intimate details of their sexual relationship and Sandra was sentenced to Parramatta Girls Home and ordered to undergo aversion therapy to alter her sexual preference.

For two years after her release Sandra held a number of short-term jobs. In 1959, she commenced training to be a psychiatric nurse at Rydalmere Hospital in Sydney. There she fell in love with another trainee and they began a passionate affair. When pressure was put on the other girl by senior staff, she broke the relationship with Sandra, saying that she now considered their affair to be unnatural and perverted.



Sandra describes her reaction:

Upon those words 'I can never see you again' I went into a state of shock...I felt like killing myself on the spot.... By a long train of events I decided that killing myself alone was no good - People would be glad to see me gone - so if I killed one of them, 'society', someone would cry and possibly be sorry that they had interfered in my life and my right to live.

On the 29th April, 1959, Sandra Willson murdered a Sydney taxi driver. Six days later, on the 5th May 1959, she gave herself up to the police - for her own reasons. She writes:

I chose my victim by accident but felt that, although he had to die, in my grief-stricken mind, I could not hurt him by letting him see the gun and feel, for those last seconds of his life, the terror of dying.... I thought after this to go 'straight', love men, lead a normal life. Then my conscience caught up with me and also - wasn't I a coward, not willing to die, but able to allow another to die....

Prison was the best punishment - a time of living death when each day I would remember her and grieve over losing her. I gave myself up to the police.

On the 3rd of July, 1959, the City Coroner found Sandra Willson had a case to answer and committed her for trial at the Central Criminal Court on August 24. Judged unfit at the time to stand trial, she was retained in a psychiatric hospital. Over a year later, she was judged fit to plead the proceedings against her and on the 15th of November, 1960 her trial began. She pleaded not guilty to the charge of murder.

The trial lasted only one day. The sole defence witness, government psychiatrist Dr. John McGeorge, testified that Sandra Willson was certifiably insane and hence incapable of reasoning that her offence was wrong. After a five minute retirement, the jury reached its verdict: not guilty on the grounds of insanity.

Under New South Wales law, a judge has only one option when this verdict is returned, and he sentenced Sandra Willson to be detained in strict confinement to await the Governor's Pleasure. She was committed to custody at Parramatta Psychiatric Hospital.

A Governor's Pleasure sentence recognises diminished responsibility for criminal liability because a person is temporarily or permanently insane and it acquits the person for these reasons. It further provides an indeterminate sentence, generally within a psychiatric institution, so that the person may be given the opportunity to regain their sanity. The presumption is that if at some time in the future that person is judged to be sane and no longer to constitute a threat to the community, they can be released.

IN 1971 SANDRA WILLSON WAS DECLARED SANE.
IN 1976 SANDRA WILLSON IS STILL IN PRISON.

Caught in the classic Catch-22 situation imposed on all institutional inmates: if she is meek and subservient and takes her pills, they argue that she is institutionalised and incapable of surviving in the world outside. If she demonstrates her grasp on reality by expressing her anger and resentment at the petty violence which is the currency of prison relationships, she is judged to be incapable of suppressing her violent urges.

Sandra Willson is still in jail for two reasons:

She has survived every attempt to crush her will.

She does not repent her lesbianism.

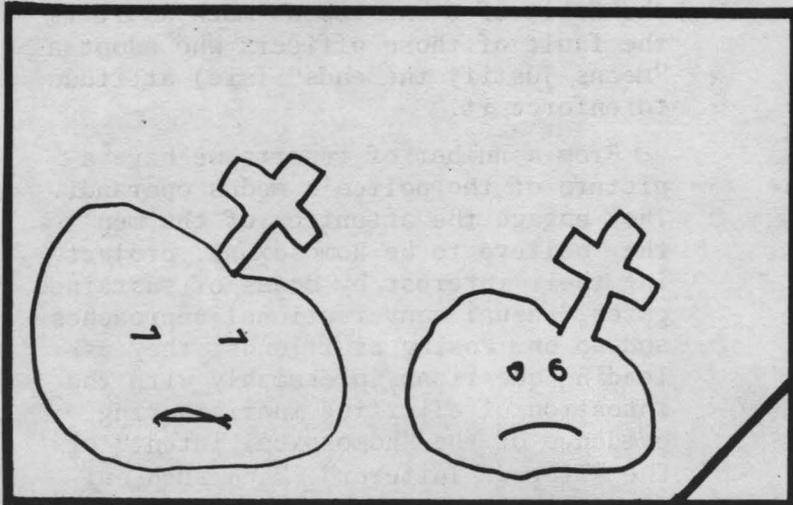
SANDRA WILLSON MUST BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY!

FREE SANDRA WILLSON

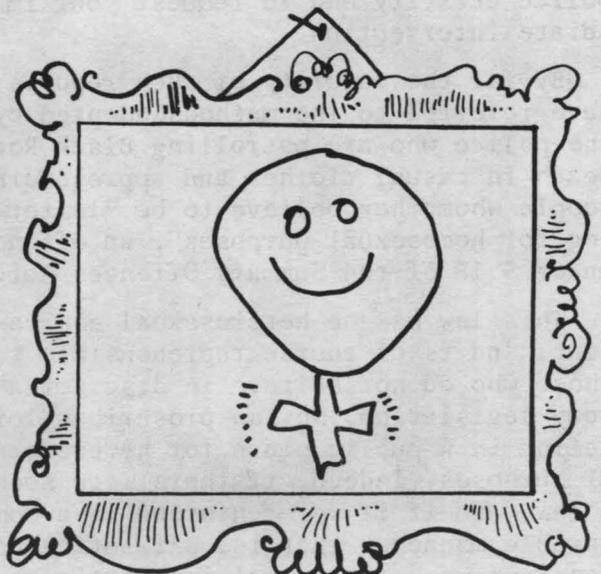


Found not guilty of murder but insane. 11 years later certified sane - but not released. Average life sentence 13 years. WHY IS SHE STILL IN JAIL AFTER 18 YEARS?

This poster is available from Women's House. Cost; \$1. All money to the Free Sandra Willson Campaign.



Being a woman is a cross you have to bear, my dear . . .



you reckon?

police persecution

POLICE ENTRAPMENT AND HARASSMENT IN MELBOURNE.

The Victorian Homosexual Law Reform Coalition has issued pamphlets, leaflets and hand-outs to warn the Melbourne gay people of intensified police activities on the local 'beats'. Instructions on "what to do if you're caught" giving basic information, have also been distributed. A Solidarity Picnic on Black Rock Beach (one of the 'blitzed beats') has been arranged as a show of strength and solidarity. Additionally, the Coalition Collective sent the following letter to the Victorian Chief Secretary:

The Honorable Vance Dickie, M.L.C.
Chief Secretary,
Old Treasury Building,
Spring Street,
Melbourne, Vic. 3002.

Dear Sir,

Through the voluntary legal services operated by some of the organizations of this Coalition, we have become aware of a wave of questionable police activity directed against homosexuals.

A special meeting attended by representatives of all member organizations directed the undersigned to protest this police activity and to request your immediate intervention.

By far the majority of such reports have referred to the methods adopted by the police who are patrolling Black Rock Beach in casual clothes and apprehending people whom they believe to be "loitering for homosexual purposes", an offence under S.18 of the Summary Offences Act.

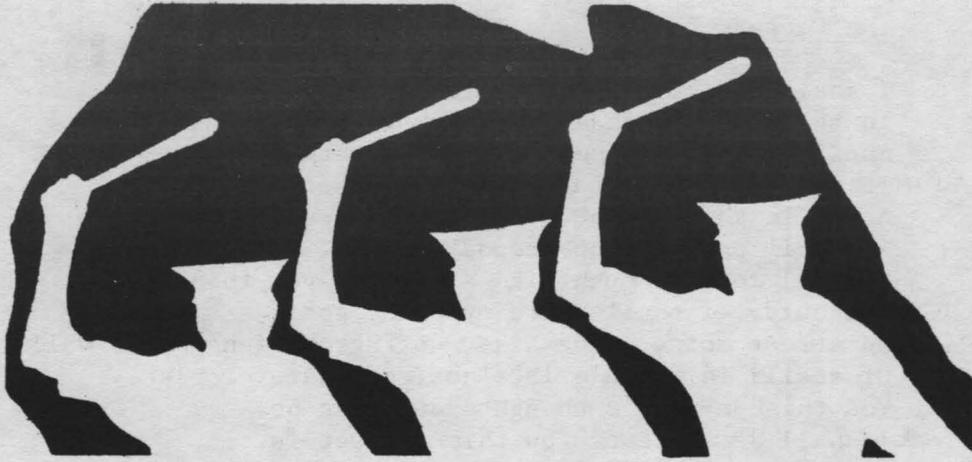
This law has no heterosexual equivalent, and is of course reprehensible to those who do not believe in discriminatory legislation. No law proscribes loitering in a public place for heterosexual purposes. Indeed, if there were such a law, and if it were enforced in a comparable manner - that is, extracting confessions of heterosexual inclinations from people who were entrapped in well-

known public meeting places for heterosexuals - then our State would be quickly denounced by most people as a totalitarian one. The situations are equivalent except that because of social stigma and legal persecution resulting from our society's history of anti-homosexual prejudice, those with homosexual inclinations are forced to meet in a more clandestine manner.

Our prime purpose in writing to you now however is not to condemn the anti-homosexual laws, but to address your attention to the methods being used by police in Melbourne at present to affect prosecutions for alleged breaches of one particular law.

Because the offence of "loitering" is such an ill-defined one - essentially the offender is being punished for having homosexual intentions - successful conviction requires confessional evidence of the accused. Naturally few would willingly supply such evidence - and any officer who is instructed to affect a conviction is obliged to use means which might infringe the civil rights of the suspect. We would stress that this is the fault of a bad law as much as it is the fault of those officers who adopt a "means justify the ends" (sic) attitude to enforce it.

From a number of reports we have a picture of the police's modus operandi. They engage the attention of the men they believe to be homosexual, projecting their interest by means of sustained gazes, casual conversational approaches and so on. Posing as friends, they ask leading questions, presumably with the intention of eliciting incriminating evidence of the "homosexual intent" of the alleged "loiterer". When such evidence is forthcoming, the policemen identify themselves and arrest the "offender".



In cases reported to us, when evidence of "homosexual intent" was not explicitly revealed, the police have still detained the person, and have extracted written statements by threat of prison and publicity in newspapers. In one instance, a man who initially refused to comply was interrogated for three hours before signing a statement under duress.

(Signed by Gary Jaynes, Willem Tetro and Carl Reinganum. Copies were sent to the Victorian Premier, The Hon. R.J.Hamer, M.L.A.; The Hon H. Storey, M.L.C.; Mr. Maxwell Crellin, M.L.A. ; Chief Commissioner of Police, Mr. Jackson; Mr. A.C. Holding, Leader of the Opposition; the Chairman of the Equal Opportunity Advisory Council, and the President of the Victorian Council for Civil Liberties)



We feel these practices constitute a gross abuse of police power and resources. It is not the legitimate function of the police force to entrap people into committing an offence - albeit an "offence" which has no victim - and it is certainly not their right to prise confessions from people by threats and intimidation.

We urge you as the Minister in charge of the Police Force to investigate this practice and to exert due control over the officers responsible.

Yours sincerely,

We wish to congratulate the HLRC for the prompt action taken, and hope Vance Dickie takes appropriate measures to end this persecution of gays. Melbournians: if you have been caught or know someone who has - particularly if they haven't been to court yet - contact Gay Liberation urgently on 41-4926. In Sydney, ring Phone-A-Friend, 660-0061.



The Poet as Lover

I shall curl my hair and let it wave
 In the wind. I shall dress my feet in sneakers
 And let a woollen sweater wrap my breasts
 In its prickly embrace. I shall carry
 A red leather notebook and always wear
 A pencil on a string around my neck.
 I shall look as much like a poet as you think
 I should. I shall write my penny poems
 On street corner sidewalks, on factory fences and walls
 Of stalls in women's latrines, or whatever place
 You think a poet's thoughts ought to be.
 I shall be whatever you think a poet is.
 And then
 I shall shed my poet's clothes beside your bed
 And slide between the sheets. I shall reach
 to touch your two warm breasts and hear you sigh.
 I shall stroke your hair and kiss your ear.
 And then,
 Remembering the dark puddle of clothes
 Lying on the floor beside your bed,
 I shall lie back in frustration and wonder
 Who is making love to you inside your head.

...Kate Edwards

THE DUCK MAN

Waddling on webbed feet up Drutt Street.
 Through peak hour crowds he passes
 On York Street intersection,
 waving to passing buses
 with happy wings and friendly bill.

In Park Street a bystander gazes with
 amazement
 Then turns his back to deny your existence
 He is a lift driver, night watchman or
 clerk
 Lives in suburbia and is in a rut.

Office workers laugh at you, I love you
 Your difference adds colour to our city.
 In seeking conformity we achieve mediocrity
 There is a secret duck man in us all.

How subtly we oppress each other
 With whispers, sneers, alienation,
 humiliation
 "She's a slut, he's a wog or poof".
 But the duck man has busted free.

....Lance Gowland
 Written after seeing a man dressed as a
 duck in the city.

EYES

Sweet almonds of life
 Deeper than volcanoes
 Heat of the summer sun
 Cheeky elves dance
 Manifesto of life

Understanding
 fear
 desire
 Truth--eternal

Love unlimited
 Love without question
 Deep and infinite as the eternal sea
 Love before life

All that could be said
 is spoken there:
 dreams of eternal bliss
 and firey passion.

....Lance

down to earth

Between the 1st and 14th December 1976, the Alternative Lifestyles Festival, DOWN TO EARTH, was held at the Cotter River in Canberra. A CAMP-contingent of about a dozen took part for most of the important last 4 days, and by dint of example (CAMP and GAY and PROUD T-shirts) and education (200-over attendees at workshops at which homosexuality was the major subject) we made quite an impact on the festivities. There were far more smiles than stones!

However, we did feel that the majority of those at the Festival were more concerned with alternative technological questions than with the basic underlying emotional attitudes and when the time came to enter Position Papers, we worked up the following Manifesto which sets out our basic ideas and ideals:

MANIFESTO ON SEXISM.

We are concerned that the issue of sexism is largely being ignored at the Festival. Part of sexism is the process of assigning certain roles and qualities to people on the basis purely of their gender. So women are encouraged to be submissive, passive and gentle; men are encouraged to be dominant, aggressive and strong. This is done to maintain the power of men in this society and to keep the nuclear family as its basic unit.

This process affects us all, and we would hope that the people searching for alternatives would be examining the conditioning processes which have made them the people they are. That, before they create alternative structures around them, they would look at the way they see themselves and their relationships with other people.

Are men stopping their power trips and giving women the chance to speak? Are women taking the opportunity to be assertive? Are men developing the tender, gentle side of their personality which is suppressed at the moment? Is there true equality in relationships? Do people recognise that women and men can be anywhere on a continuum of human qualities rather than women being at one end (submissive, passive and gentle) and men at the other (dominant, strong and assertive)? Is being emotional seen as a positive attribute?

Before we can begin to change these things, however, we have to accept that the qualities commonly attributed to women as being as valid as those attributed to men. For in this male-dominated society at the moment, only the male qualities are prized. Men must realise that their potential as people is increased rather than diminished by taking on the qualities previously the domain of women.

Until these changes take place, no true alternative can be found. The problems which have brought us here to the Festival are the products of a male-dominated culture in which power, exploitation and competition win the day. So the basic values influencing the behaviour of each of us and of society in general must be changed.

Therefore looking at sexism and searching for alternatives leads us inevitably to demanding a radically new society.

In this new society the stereotype nuclear family will no longer exist. Rather, a range of lifestyles will be available: group-relationships, communal living, gay families, being single, and any other family structure based on equality of members.

The purpose of education in a new society will be to help individuals achieve their potential. It will do this by providing and encouraging choice and control of one's own life. Options, now closed to females and males, will be opened up.

There will be no new society until sexist religious dogma which constrains human behaviour and development is confronted and changed.

As homosexual women and men, our awareness of the issues raised in this paper has come from our struggle to liberate ourselves from the oppression we suffer as a direct result of sexism.

Part of fulfilling one's sex role in this society is to form a relationship with a person of the opposite sex. Thus homosexuals are seen not to conform to the norms prescribed.

IT IS UP TO YOU NOW: either you're living and thinking alternatively or you're not. If you're living and thinking alternatively obviously you're looking at the effects of sexism on you personally and on society.

Down To Earth Homosexual
Collective. 11 Dec. 1976

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Down To Earth Movement Conference /
Festival - Cotter River, 10-15 Dec.

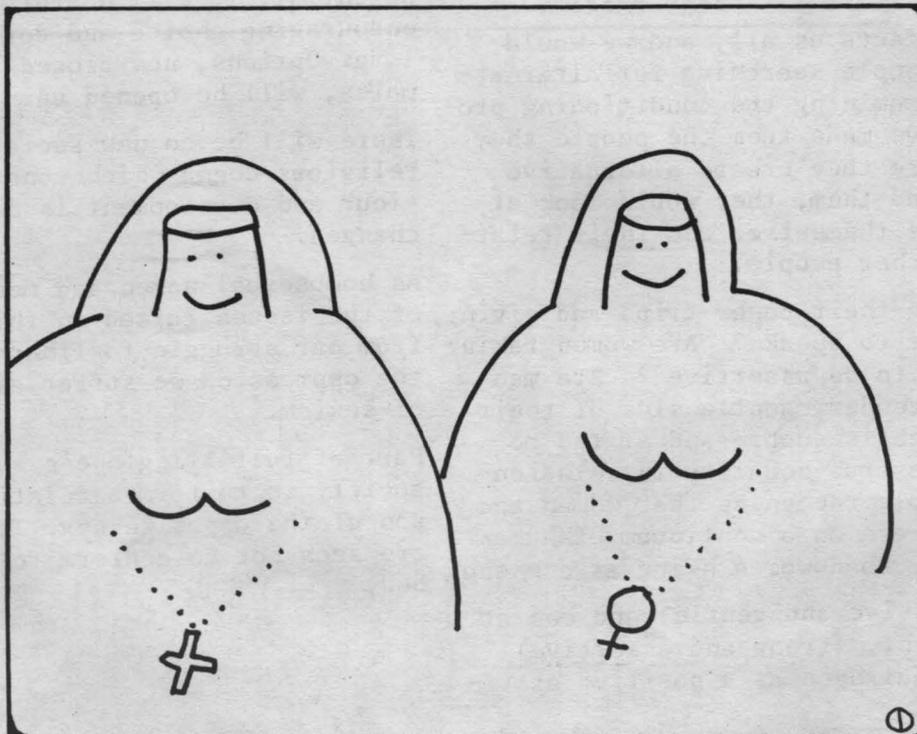
For the last 5 days here approximately 8,000 people have enjoyed a festival of friendship, gentleness and love. Here we have made ourselves a community for change in Australia; we have made a reality that in the realm of subtle experience will mark our community the vehicle for a change, that in time will come to all of mankind. What we have begun here, and what will begin from what has become here, has drawn out of dreams a reality for which humankind has in the past shown itself prepared to kill; it is a reality we have achieved because we have been prepared to love.

Our wholeness has come from the experience of our common origin and drawn us through the difficulties of diversity, our attitudes and life styles to a unity so deep and so abiding that not one of us who has shared this experience, will leave without being deeply changed.

We have reached into each other here and found ourselves, where once many of us were afraid to touch each other, afraid to be intimate, afraid of the thought of love. We have in a few short days broken through into a consciousness that is so powerful in its newness, that it is as yet difficult to describe.

The Down To Earth Movement has become so human, so valuable and yet so individual that it will take months to assess. For each of us, aware of common feelings, the desire for individual and social change, the interest in self-improvement, without imposing value systems on others, or wasting ourselves in a blind pursuit of the dollar, has become of prime importance.

We have found a greater understanding of love. Wholeness is what we have achieved and in that, the Earth, for here in a way that cannot be denied, we have shown that we care and can live in harmony with our environment.



This festival has shown us to be so diverse, and from so many walks of life that we are obviously no alternative, but the possessors of a new and greater consciousness of human society.

Each of us, in returning to our homes will become the manifesto with which there has been such difficulty in the past 2 days. When we leave here, we will each become the example of what has happened at this festival, for about us, in these few short days, the whole world will turn. The nature of what we have achieved here, cannot be said, but will be seen by others in the clarity of our eyes and the tenderness of our touch.

We are each the manifesto of the Down To Earth Movement, we are the ones who will carry what was once a dream and continue it as a reality. No words can say what we are, no words can tell the impact we will achieve as examples of what has happened here: we are the ones, and we no longer need words.

* * * * *

CAMP CLUB ROOMS & COFFEE SHOP

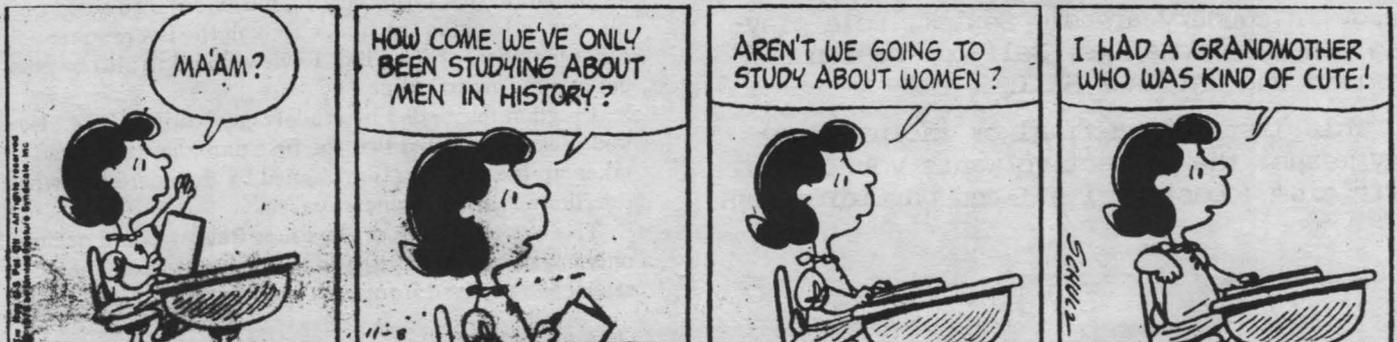
- # Executive Meeting every second Monday night at 8 pm.
- # Open every night - also Saturday afternoons.
- # TV lounge, cards, darts, chess, etc.
- # Fortnightly parties - ring Phone-a-Friend (02) 660-0061 for dates.
- # Women's social night and discussion group Wednesday nights.
- # New Members' Night Fridays 8 pm.
- # Young Camp Saturday afternoons 2 pm.
- # Open discussion Group alternate Mondays - Phone-a-Friend for dates.
- # Actions Group: Alternate Wednesday nights at 8 pm.

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(Near Broadway)**

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Worldwide Gay Penfriends Ass'n
c/ 3A Oxford Street
Paddington, NSW 2021.



CONFERENCE

THIRD NATIONAL HOMOSEXUAL CONFERENCE.

The third National Homosexual Conference will be held in Adelaide on the weekend beginning Friday the 27th August, 1977, somewhere in the Adelaide University Union.

The proposed theme is: "Ending Sexism", and the intention is that we convene to share action and experience in some positive way, rather than merely get together to talk. The Conference Collective intends to form a group which will liaise with organisations and individuals in each State, so that we come to the conference with specific things to do; everyone would have had a chance to discuss and/or work at a regional level first.

At this time, the Collective needs to have an idea of the level of interest and the areas of greatest concern, so that they can arrange the available time to best advantage to all. They feel also that it may be necessary for some groups with special interests, to have closed sessions for those who are familiar with the subject, so that these can work without interruptions to go back and explain previous work to those new to the subject. Open groups will also be scheduled to promote wider education for those who need to broaden their perspective.

The following areas have already been suggested:

- SEXISM*.....
- " in EDUCATION (primary, secondary, tertiary)
- " and the ARTS,
- " and TRANSSEXUALISM,
- " in COUNSELLING SERVICES
- " in the MEDIA,
- " in the LAW,
- " in MEDICINE,
- " in RELIGION (Christian/otherwise)

Special problems for isolated Gay people (e.g. in country areas), Sexism, role-playing and relationships; Self-oppression and Sexism; and GAY/CAMP SEXISM.

This list is not final or inclusive by any means: the Collective wants your ideas, criticism (constructive!) and participation.

At this stage the Collective would like to know how you feel about these proposals: do send your reactions to: 1977 National Homosexual Conference Collective, Box 1204, GPO, Adelaide, SA 5001.

As CAMP NSW intends to take an active part in this Conference, we would like you to send a copy of your letter to the Secretary, at Box 5074, GPO Sydney 2001. We will notify members through the Newsletters and the Camp News Bulletin of meetings that we will hold to prepare ourselves for this Conference, and will invite every interested person to take part in the discussions.

HOMOSEXUAL FILM BAN

(WNS/SF) - A film about homosexuals living in New York has been banned by the Queensland State Films Review Board. The film, *A Very Natural Thing*, was banned only two days before it was due to begin screening on August 22, following a complaint from "a member of the public".

The Films Review Board is supposed to act on complaints about the suitability of films. The chairman of the board, Desmond Draydon, has appeared on television and radio to justify the action of the board. In a debate on ABC TV's *This Day Tonight* on August 20, he said: "We are not going to allow films on the screen that show males or females cavorting together."

The film was apparently brought to the attention of the board by a smut-hunter who noticed a review of the film in the University of Queensland student union paper, *Semper Floreat*. This review summarised the plot as follows:

"The main character of the movie meets a man in a downtown gay bar; they have an affair, shift in together, and after a time, call the affair off. He then becomes involved in a Gay Liberation demo, meets a previously married man, and attempts a less idealistic affair."

Hardly hard-core pornography eroding the moral fibre of Queensland citizens. Radio station 4ZZZ-FM reported an allegation that board chairman Draydon had acted on his own in banning the film, although the law requires other members of the Films Review Board to also be present at a review screening.

Draydon responded by crudely gay-baiting 4ZZZ. He said it was interesting that the first time the station had taken up the case of a film banned by the board was when the film was about homosexuality.

This bigoted action of the Films Review Board occurred only days after the beating to death of a Brisbane homosexual had received front page press coverage.

Greg Adamson

Not For Lesbians Only

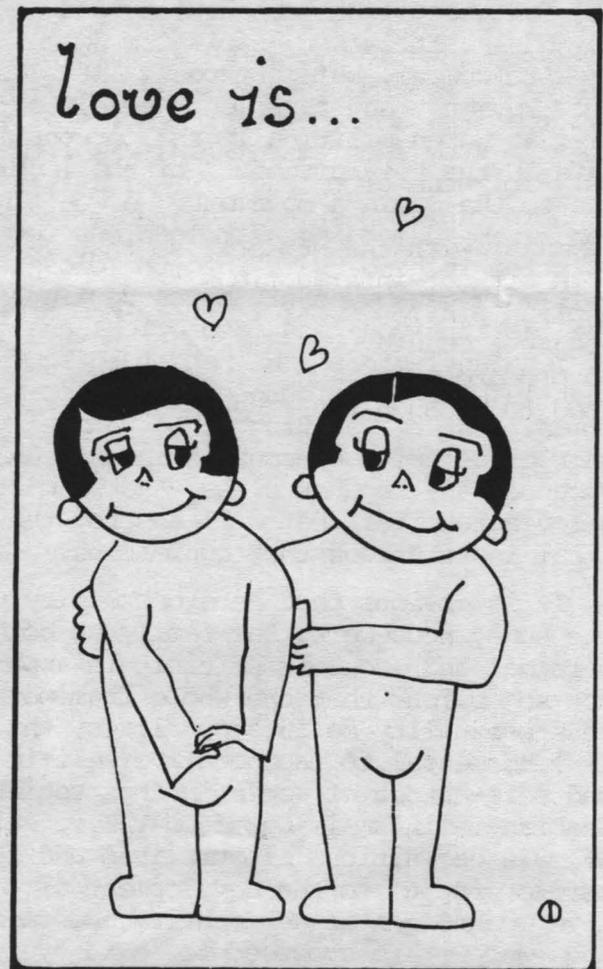
(The following is an extract of a speech given to feminists at a Socialist-Feminist Conference in Ohio in July 1975, about ideas on lesbian-feminist politics.)

It is important - especially for political groups who wish to give priority and credence to lesbian issues - to remember why separatism has happened, why it is not a historic relic but still vital to the ongoing debate over lesbianism and feminism.

In my own personal experience, I, and the other women of THE FURIES collective, left the women's movement because it had been made clear to us that there was no space to develop a lesbian-feminist politics and lifestyle without constant and non-productive conflict with heterosexual fear, antagonism and insensitivity. This was essentially the same experience shared by many other lesbian-feminists at about the same time around the country. What the women's movement could not accept then - and still finds it difficult to accept - is that lesbianism is political: which is the essence of lesbian-feminist politics. Sounds simple. Yet most feminists still view lesbianism as a personal decision or, at best, as a civil rights concern or a cultural phenomenon. Lesbianism is more than a question of civil rights and culture, although the daily discrimination against lesbians is real and its alleviation through civil libertarian reforms is important. Similarly, although lesbianism is a primary force in the emergence of a dynamic women's culture, it is much more. Lesbian-feminist politics is a political critique of the institution and ideology of heterosexuality as a cornerstone of male supremacy. It is an extension of the analysis of sexual politics to an analysis of sexuality itself as an institution. It is a commitment to women as a political group which is the basis of a political/economic strategy leading to power for women, not just an "alternative community".

There are many lesbians still who feel that there is no place in socialist feminist organisations in particular, or the women's movement in general, for them to develop that politics or live that life. Because of this, I am still, in part, a separatist; but I don't want to be a total separatist again:

few who have experience that kind of isolation believe it is the ultimate goal of liberation. Since unity and coalition seem necessary, the question for me is unity on what terms? with whom? and around what politics? For instance, to unify a lesbian-feminist politics developed within the past four years with socialist feminism requires more than a token reference to queers. It requires an acknowledgement to lesbian-feminist analysis as central to understanding and ending women's oppression.



not caring whether you're
Arthur or Martha

The heart of lesbian-feminist politics, let me repeat, is a recognition that heterosexuality as an institution and an ideology is a cornerstone of male supremacy. Therefore, women interested in destroying male supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism must, equally with lesbians, fight heterosexual domination - or we will never end female oppression. This is what I call the "heterosexual question" - it is not the lesbian question.

Although lesbians have been the quickest to see the challenge to heterosexuality as a necessity for feminists' survival, straight feminists are not precluded from examining and fighting against heterosexuality. The problem is that few have done so. This perpetuates lesbian fears that women remaining tied to men prevents them from seeing the function of heterosexuality and acting to end it. It is not lesbianism (women's ties to women), but heterosexuality (women's ties to men), and thus men themselves, which divides women politically and personally. This is the "divisiveness" of the lesbian issue to the women's movement. We won't get beyond it by demanding that lesbians retreat, politics in hand, back into the closets. We will only get beyond it by struggling over the institutional and ideological analysis of lesbian-feminism. We need to discover what lesbian consciousness means for any woman, just as we struggle to understand what class and race consciousness means for women of any race or class. And we must develop strategies that will destroy the political institutions that oppress us.

It is obvious that heterosexuality upholds the home, housework, the family as both a personal and economic unit. It is apparently not so obvious that the whole framework of heterosexuality defines our lives, that it is fundamental to the negative self-image and self-hatred of women in this society. Lesbian-feminism is based on the rejection of male definitions of our lives and is therefore crucial to the development of a positive woman-identified identity, of re-defining who we are supposed to be in every situation, including the workplace.

What is that definition? Basically, heterosexuality means men first. That's what it is all about. It assumes that every woman is heterosexual; that every woman is defined by and is the property of men. Her body, her services, her children belong to men. If you don't accept that definition, you're queer -

no matter who you sleep with; if you do not accept that definition in this society, you are queer. The original imperialist assumption of the right of men to the bodies and services of women has been translated into a whole variety of forms of domination throughout this society. And as long as people accept that initial assumption - and question everything BUT that assumption - it is impossible to challenge the other forms of domination.

Lesbian-feminism is not a political analysis "for lesbians only". It is a political perspective and fight against one of the major institutions of our oppression - a fight which heterosexual women can engage in. The problem is that few do. Since lesbians are materially oppressed by heterosexuality daily, it is not surprising that we have seen and understood its impact first - not because we are more moral, but because our reality is different - and it is a materially different reality. We are trying to convey this fact of our oppression to you because, whether you feel it directly or not, it also oppresses you; and because if we are going to change society and survive, we must all attack heterosexual domination.

Charlotte Bunch.

Women's News Service No.8, July 1976

.....A I R L I N E S.....

AREN'T THE ONLY ONES TO CATER

FOR UNDER - 25S.

young camp

Saturdays 2 pm 33A Glebe Point Road.

Ring 660 - 0061 for details.

P R I S O N S .

Of prisons I know naught -
That is,
If prison be a place
That's hedged
With iron bars
And thick grey walls of stone;
With little whitewashed cells,
Barred, clanging doors
And heavy, ponderous locks:
The majesty of law
I've not been caught
Transgressing.

But prisons of the mind -
I know those well,
Enslaving people full of talk
Of freedom,
Who have no clue
To teach the meaning
Of true liberty.....

And prisons of the heart
That tie the victim
More powerfully
Than the chains,
And torture
That leaves the rack of old
A toy.

And prejudice -
The greatest fetter of them all,
That binds all truth
To notions preconceived
And holds ideas
The enemy of man.

Deliverance of fetter
Of this kind.....
Oh, freedom
Of the soaring mind!
No prison walls enclose so firm
As man's own fear
Of lonely peaks,
Of difference
From peers.

Herta L.R.
(Reprinted from TABLEAUS, the
Australian MENSA Newsletter)

JENNY.

Slim.
Lithe.
Blond hair blowing in a freedom
Symbolic of yearning soul freedom ?
Eyes bright, alert
Yet sad.
Too much of the adult have they seen
I wonder did they gaze with Childhood's joy ?
Hands reaching out to seek a world
Tiny worlds made.
Paintings
Art creation
But inner creativity must also give birth
What does it want this sensitive soul ?
Feelings locked up do yearn to be bared.
Love held in
Will some day out !
Freedom will come
And one day joy
But sadness and suffering
Are life's launching pads.
We must all launch forth
So Jenny the greater the suffering
How ever so much greater the flight.

Loretto. 17-12-'74

the school and homosexuality

There is no doubt about the fact that some gay people have the most stimulating school lives but don't let these people fool you into thinking it's a bed of roses in school. It isn't. It's hell at times.

My own school is a very tough, very heterosexual one. I realise that my fellow gays are all around, but you try finding them. The fact is that they have been taught that homosexuality is something to be laughed at and to be stamped out. When they begin to realise that they do not 'conform' to standards that have been laid down, then they get pretty cut up about it. Even those who are "Glad To Be Gay" have a rough time. To come out in my school would be a disaster for me. The teachers would offer me sympathy and the standard visit to the eminent head-shrinker who would make me "normal" again (who do they think they're kidding) and my fellow-students would most likely kick me around the playground.

Even if I did get away with it lightly it would be a terrible strain. I would always be a figure of fun and to be with those nice boys with them hating me would, to say the least, lead to frustration. The point is that I hate living a lie, even though I am open outside of school. I am a homosexual. Nothing can change that fact. I would not wish things to be different. I believe that the oppression that gay people are forced to put up with directly stem from the school and the home. It is in those two places that we are brought up. In those two places we are taught the shaky principles of what is right and wrong. There we are taught to like and to hate.

CHE is at the moment concentrating on law reform but they must never forget that the fight does not end with law reform. It goes on into schools and homes. When you hear of people being murdered or committing suicide because they are gay, we must never forget that it is not the laws that murder people but other human beings. They in their turn will bring up their children to hate gay people.

The vicious circle goes on. The only way to get true equality is to aim at young people. Show them what their attitudes do to people and how important the matter of sexual attraction is to whether you like someone or

not. Why can't people understand teach that sex, of any form, is only natural. I urge CHE to fight strongly to get into schools. Be warned, there is another generation of homophobics in the making and they in turn will bring up their children to hate gay people.

Brian Robertson.

From CHE Youth News 4 (U.K.). Brian Robertson is 15.

CAREERS OF HOMOSEXUAL STUDENT TEACHERS IN DANGER

(WNS/The Australian)—Teacher's College students who joined homosexual organisations could be rejected by the Queensland Education Department, stated the Minister for Education, Mr Bird.

Answering questions in Parliament, Mr Bird said the council of the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education had decided unanimously last week not to suppress the activities of a homosexual group.

He said the council did not endorse the group's activities, but it did not believe it should act as a censor on student groups.

"A clear distinction needs to be drawn between the role of the council, which is responsible for the overall management of the affairs of its college, and the Department of Education as the employer of teachers after graduation from a college.

"Students who participate in the activities of homosexual and lesbian groups in college should not assume that they will be employed by the Education Department after graduation."

Women's News Service No.12, Dec 1976

Have You Read....

our Camp News Bulletin

written by our very own journalist,

Cecily Davis.

Camp News Bulletin comes out every second week. You can pick up a copy at the Club-rooms, 33A Glebe Point Road, Glebe.

This gives you all the information about what has been happening and what are the future happenings.

Pick one up and read it: it's worth it!!

Out of the closets ----- into the courts-----

(A report on discrimination against lesbian mothers in custody battles.)

There have always been children brought up by parents who are homosexual, but until recently their homosexuality has been a closely guarded secret. Because of prejudice in the law involving custody of children, lesbian mothers are finding that the risk often involves losing their children. Normally in "tug-of-love" cases the courts would give custody to the mother since child care is assumed to be the woman's role. The husband may participate in major decisions, contribute financially and have access at weekends and holidays. The judge will only separate children from their mother if there are overriding factors like the mother's health, or actual neglect or cruelty. Such considerations are obviously relevant to the children's welfare.

The mother's sexual orientation is taken to be just such a factor, and no other evidence has to be produced to disqualify her at most times from bringing up her children. One judge, considered to hold relatively liberal views, went to some lengths to explain that while he did not attribute blame to the mother for her lesbianism, and could even go so far as to sympathise with her, it was vital that the court distinguish between understanding and approval. To approve of homosexuality, he said, would mean the decay of society as we know it and could only corrupt others.

A lesbian with openly feminist ideas poses a double threat. She is seen as a direct challenge to family life and the traditional sexual roles which the courts uphold. A head-on political clash takes place with all the power on one side. (A few cases have been lost by women only because of their feminist involvement, without the added stigma of lesbianism.)

In one of the early cases, much was made of the mother having subversive feminist literature in her home - magazines like SPARE RIB and SHREW were used as evidence against her - and she was accused of exposing her children to "an exotic atmosphere in which intellectual opinions expressing themselves as an eagerness for total feminine freedom, sexual and otherwise, will have a marked influence".

The judge declared that her "passionate interest in the women's liberation movement" was likely to mean that her daughters would grow up with "little or no respect for the ordinary obligations of family life" and "be exposed to propaganda about sexual morality which could expose them to quite extraordinary risks in adolescence". Having painted this picture of life in what he described as an unhealthy "milieu of feminine fanaticism" he then felt quite justified in "protecting" the children involved by separating them from their mother.

An American judge stated: "It is difficult to conceive of a more grievous indignity to which a person of normal psychological and sexual constitution could be exposed than the entry by his spouse upon an active and continuous course of homosexual love with another. Added to the insult of sexual loyalty per se (which is present in ordinary adultery) is the natural revulsion arising from the knowledge of the fact that the spouse's betrayal takes the form of a perversion."

Some judges may pay lip service to more liberal views, but these are the kind of attitudes underlying courtroom debate. The choice is seen to lie between the stigmatised, afflicted deviant, and the "normal" husband who presents the very picture of decent, solid virtues, often with new wife and mother-substitute in tow. The verdict comes as no surprise.

Sue went into court last month with what looked to be a very strong case. She had an excellent team of feminist lawyers and very good reports from welfare workers, psychiatrists, character witnesses and all the rest. The very young age of the child made it less likely that he would be removed from his mother. Against this was the fact that the father offered a mother-substitute in a heterosexual family with the possibility of new brothers and sisters. While the judge allowed that all four contenders were "attractive personalities" he approved particularly of the new wife. "She is the only adult without psychiatric blemish". (The judge even reprimanded Sue for not having made friends with this fine woman who was trying to take her child away! Incidentally, Sue and Mary's only "psychiatric blemish" was their homosexuality.)

The judge granted that there was little to choose between the two homes, and that John had an excellent relationship with his mother, so the judgement was based on the "problem" of the mother's sexual orientation. Both parties produced psychiatric reports on the possible effects of a child brought up in a lesbian household and the judge chose to accept the negative conclusions of the husband's witness, a psychiatrist who wrote: "John's mother practises statistically abnormal sexual acts which can be looked upon either as a deviation from normal or frankly perverted. I have no evidence before me to state that this environment will not affect John's future emotional and psycho-sexual development. In the absence of a father or father-figure, male identification is not possible unless a substitute father is provided and this, within the setting of a homosexual environment, would not be satisfactory. The only person or persons John would be able to identify with would be his mother and her cohabitee and sooner or later he must learn that they engage in unnatural acts. It would be difficult to imagine that this young boy could go through his adolescent period of development without feeling shame and embarrassment, of having a mother who has elected to engage in sexual practices which are statistically abnormal. I think it would be agreed by a large body of practising clinical psychiatrists that persons who engage in homosexual patterns of behaviour have personality difficulties."

Most of these assertions are just that - unfounded assertions - but they carried weight in court rather than the report from the mother's psychiatrist which was much more moderate and emphasised the quality of the mother-child relationship.

After the judgement, Sue wrote: "I really do not know how to find words to express my reaction to this delicate queer-bashing. Anyone would think that the sexual aspect of our relationship is the be-all and end-all. I love John and can't envisage life without him but it seems that at the moment there is nothing we can do; we have been advised that it would be pointless to appeal. I suppose we have paid the price for our love and we are both very sore at the cost. We shall never lose these battle scars completely and the judgement will stick in our throats every time we try to swallow it."

The obsession with the mother's sexuality is striking in many cases and the husband may dwell on details designed to reinforce the court's phobia of lesbianism. The courts apply a double standard to the question of the lesbian couple showing any physical affection to each other with children around: in a heterosexual relationship this is thought to be good for the children by contributing to a loving, secure atmosphere, but it is considered detrimental - almost obscene - in a homosexual relationship.

The myth of lesbians as child molesters is often in evidence and the courts may ask the mother how she will manage if her woman friends make sexual advances to her daughter. It is hard to believe that the judge would voice his concern about a woman's new husband seducing her daughter - though it is far more likely to happen.

As Sue's case showed, the new wife, although often a complete stranger to the children, plays an important part in strengthening her husband's claim for custody, particularly if she has children herself. His lawyers paint her as the picture of respectability and draw maximum contrast between her and the 'deviant' mother.



Although the custody battle is assumed to be between the mother and the father who both wish to bring up the children, once the father has custody he often plays a minimal part in their daily lives. If he has not remarried the children may be cared for by relatives or a succession of housekeepers.

Time and again fears that the children will grow up homosexual and be influenced in its favour, and that the social stigma against homosexuality will harm the child, are taken as facts to be used as evidence. One American judge of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court did try to counter these biases, but he is an exception: "If the children are raised in a happy and stable home, they will be able to cope with prejudice and hopefully learn that people are unique individuals who should be treated as such." Perhaps this can give us some hope for English court decisions, though at the moment it seems to me that the backlash of intolerance which is growing in the present crisis makes the outlook look grim.

The crucial factor is what the person is like as a parent. Neither heterosexuality nor homosexuality are in themselves guarantees of good parenthood; how the parent defines herself (or himself), her religion, politics, lifestyle or sexual preference is irrelevant. If the court is to question someone's "fitness" to be a parent it must be on grounds that would apply to anyone - lesbian or heterosexual, black muslim or macrobiotic.

Eleanor Stephens.

This article was condensed from a more complete and comprehensive one appearing the the September 1976 issue of SPARE RIB.

THE DARKER SEX.

No.

I don't hate men.

I quite like men.

In fact some of my best friends are men.

I just wouldn't like to meet one in a dark alley,

Or have one marry my sister.

cecily davis

But it's okay if one married my brother.

cd/jg.

RELATIONSHIPS



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WELCOME.

"against our will"

(The following are excerpts taken from a chapter of Susan Brownmiller's book "Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape"; Penguin Book, 1976 (Available at the Feminist Bookshop). The chapter is headed 'Power, Institution and Authority' and deals with Prison Rape: the Homosexual Experience.)

It is finally being acknowledged that one of the main problems of prison life is the assault and rape of other inmates by their fellow men. Shrouded in secrecy and misinformation, so-called homosexual "abuse" in prison was formerly thought to be symptomatic of the deranged brutality of a few prison guards or an "infection" spread throughout a cellblock by a certain number of avowed homosexuals within the prison population. More information and a relatively enlightened modern perspective has drastically altered this old-fashioned view. Prison rape is generally seen today for what it is: an acting out of power roles within an all-male, authoritarian environment in which the younger, weaker inmate, usually a first offender, is forced to play the role that in the outside world is assigned to women. In a wicked twist of irony, it is often the avowedly homosexual youths, because of their "feminine" mannerisms and pariah status, who fall victim to the most brutal of prison gang rapes - and when prison authorities segregate homosexuals these days, as they do in the New York City Tombs, it is for their own protection. The other favoured category of inmate who is earmarked for prison rape - perhaps the favoured victim - is the slight, sensitive young man, whatever his sexual persuasion, who cannot or does not want to fight.

Homosexual rape in the Philadelphia prisons turned out to be a microcosm of the female experience with heterosexual rape. Davis discovered that prison guards put pressure on inmates not to report their rapes by using the argument that the victim wouldn't want his parents and friends to find out about his humiliation. But not telling did not cause the humiliation to "go away": "After a young man has been raped," Davis learned, "he is marked as a victim for the duration of his confinement. This mark fol-

lows him from institution to institution. Many of these young men return to their communities ashamed and full of hatred."

Well-meaning people from time to time put forward the suggestion that the way to curb homosexual activity in prison lies in supplying real women - wives, girlfriends and volunteer prostitutes - for the inmate population, a highly touted feature of some Mexican jails. At their most sincere those who advocate this solution hold to the mistaken belief that prison homosexuality is the fallout of an unfortunate situation in which men have no heterosexual outlet for their emotional and physical needs, and that so-called "deviant" behaviour can be curtailed by a stock of willing women. Besides being an embarrassingly simplistic view of the nature of true homosexuality, which is not dependant in the slightest on the availability of women, this "solution" misreads the ideology of rape in the prison experience: that is, the need of some men to prove their mastery through physical and sexual assault, and to establish, most strikingly within the special crucible of the male-violent, a coercive hierarchy of the strong on top of the weak.

Incidents of rape by guards, trustees or other inmates also surface from time to time in periodic exposés of mental hospitals, women's prisons and juvenile detention centres. An imitative rape ideology among females is not unknown in the women's institutions, although it nowhere matches the male experience.

* * * * *

DON'T FORGET!
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING!
Coming up, on Monday the 21st of February
8 pm. Balmain Town Hall.
Come and have your vote counted!!!

MARRIAGE PARTNER.

We have a request/appeal/proposal for a marriage partner to enable a young alien to remain in Australia with his friend, by circumventing the present discriminatory immigration laws.

We envisaged perhaps a reciprocal agreement with a lesbian who is looking for a way to bring in a non-Australian girlfriend, but this may be too coincidental. However, any sympathetic woman who is willing to help us in our desperate situation is invited to get in touch.

Please write to P 008, CAMP INK, Box 5074,
GPO. NSW 2001

GOOD MORNING, BOYS AND GIRLS...

A Women's Educational Catalogue.
edited by Dany Torsh et al

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The Feminist Bookshop
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Palms spreading gently over hair
Open lips communicating in taste.
Fingertips tenderly compassing sensuous flesh
Sharing and creating sensitive lust.
Caressing living stronger passion
Until once more lips meet affectionately.
Stimulating the lightened opening
When sprinkling back over clear pastures
I mention that I LOVE HER.

....Jennifer

WARNING! NEW STRAIN OF VD REPORTED.

A penicillin-resistant strain of gonorrhoea, first reported in England a year ago, has now been found in many areas of the world, including Singapore, Manila, Japan, Hong Kong and the US. Two cases so far in Australia have been isolated and treated, but it could of course be imported again.

The new strain kills penicillin which is therefore ineffective in curing it. Instead, more expensive drugs must be used in curing it, and venerologists are afraid that the new strain could develop immunity to these drugs, too.

We have checked the above facts with Dr. Ann Walker of the Sydney VD Clinic who confirmed them. We would like to suggest the following precautions be observed:

- 1) If you appear to have a dose of gonorrhoea which does not clear up after the first treatment of penicillin, take yourself to the Clinic, at 93 Macquarie Street, 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. Phone: female clinic at 240-1954; male clinic 240-1948
- 2) If you are going overseas, particularly to any of the above-mentioned areas, keep a sharp eye out for symptoms, and don't delay any treatment, if required.

It should be emphasised that penicillin is still the best, most efficient and cheapest form of treatment for gonorrhoea, and only if it fails to clear the symptoms should the new strain be suspected, but then it should be done fast.

1977 LESBIAN CALENDER.

The Adelaide Lesbian Counselling Group has again produced a calender with women's themes: 15" by 10", each month with a photo with lesbian meaning: Before & After; Shameless Hussies, women together. The cover is a group of 30 women on a pub crawl; the back has an explanation of the Adelaide Lesbian Counselling Group. Price is \$ 3.- posted, available from:

Adelaide Lesbian Counselling Group
Adelaide Women's Liberation Centre
Bloor House
Bloor Court. Adelaide, SA 5000.

Warning : the following article may make you sick

Homosexual and Lesbian groups at the U.C.L.A. (Uni. of California, Los Angeles) are protesting strongly against the University's "Gender Identity Clinic". They are outraged by a four-year programme, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, under which half a dozen researchers are experimenting on pre-pubertal boys who have 'gender-identity problems'.

The boys are of elementary school age. All have been specially for the experimental study by psychiatrists who think they've detected signs of 'effeminacy'. The aim is to stop little Johnny from turning into a homosexual, a transvestite, or a transsexual: to ensure that boys WILL be boys.

The programme is headed by Dr. Ivar Lovaas, of the University's dept. of psychology, and Dr. George Rekers of the Fuller Theological Seminary in L.A. who explain that they are working only to save these youngsters from future unhappiness. Many children, Dr. Rekers notes, display 'gender disturbances'; they 'dress up' in women's clothes, use feminine gestures and voice inflexions, avoid rough games, and so forth. Other children may persecute them, and in later life, says Rekers, they tend to become trans-sexuals or effeminate homosexuals, facing grave problems in a hostile society.

For example, Rekers observes, studies indicate that up to 20 % of transsexual males attempt suicide. They consider themselves to be women trapped inside male bodies, and many of them resort to expensive and elaborate surgery, sometimes with unhappy results.

An effeminate homosexual does not wish to go to such lengths, but he may cross-dress, wear women's clothes in public, and indulge in other behaviour that could get him into trouble with the law. Catch the problem early, says Dr. Rekers, and it can be cured.

Gay Liberationists, and a number of straight parents too, don't buy this rationale. They charge that not only is it 'sexist' and 'anti-gay', it's an invasion of the child's rights because of the aversion therapy techniques employed at the clinic. Their arguments are supported by several prominent psychiatrists.

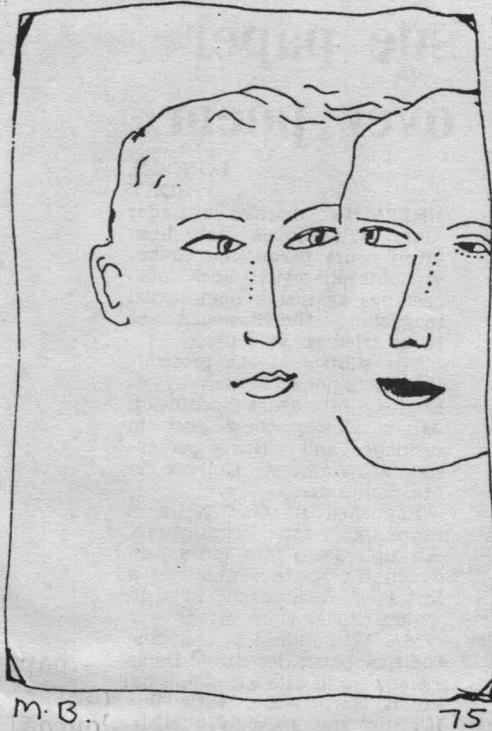
Dr. Theodore Lindauer, former Director of Mental Health Services for the L.A. public schools system, says the whole programme looks to him more like a 'crusade' than a scientific study. Dr. Rekers, who teaches at the Seminary, states that he finds homosexuality 'contrary to God's law'. His colleague, Dr. Lovaas, is known for his use of electric cattle prods in 'behaviour modification therapy' on autistic children.

"After the horror of that....particular kind of aversion conditioning" Dr. Lindauer told a L.A. gay Journal News West, "we should be grateful that the good doctor is now only using 'absence of reward' for a boy's effeminate behaviour".

What actually goes on at the Gender Clinic? Boys are rewarded or admonished according to the masculine or feminine choices they make - the male researchers being the judges of what constitutes masculinity or femininity. For example, a boy will be placed in a room with a 'therapy table' on which are a selection of toys. Nearby is his mother or female relative who pretends to read a book. She is, in fact, wired for sound: behind a one-way mirror, a researcher is observing the proceedings and relaying messages to her via an electronic bug in her ear. A video camera records everything for analytical playback. If the researcher has overlooked some trace of effeminacy, he can catch it later on television.

Little Bobby, who may be anywhere between five and eleven years, picks up a toy gun or racing car. Mother rewards him with a smile or some form of encour-

agement. Should he abandon the gun for a doll, the mother will be quickly advised to react negatively: to frown, turn back to her book, ignore the child completely. When he returns to the 'male' toy, good relations are at once restored.



Dr. Rekers and his colleagues claim to have 'cured' a number of boys who were about to sink into the murky waters of femininity. Best results were obtained with children under eight, with at least a year of therapy at the clinic, followed by a long period of similar conditioning in the home. The boy's parents continue a token system where the child is given a blue chip for performing suitably masculine actions. It can be exchanged later for some small treat. Detailed graphs record the course of the treatment.

In psychological journals the UCLA researchers have described a few of their 'cures'. Kraig, aged four, underwent 10 months of behaviour modification which included spanking for wrong choices. He was at the start, passive, non-assertive, allowed others to tease him. Now, 'he regularly returns aggressiveness in his male-peer interaction'. In fact, the researchers write, Kraig's mummy was alarmed at her son's transformation into a 'roughneck', so reck-

less in play that he was hurting himself and damaging the furniture. The psychiatrists reassured the mother that her son's 'mildly delinquent' behaviour would be far easier to overcome in later years than effeminacy.

The conditioning of eight-year old Carl was equally effective, the researchers claim with some pride. He now 'fantasizes himself as a professional football player' and tells people that he 'used to be queer but not any more!' Follow-up evaluation will continue on these children through adolescence.

But psychiatrists like Dr. Lindauer wonder how these 'de-feminised' boys can relate comfortably to women in later life. How can they have positive feelings towards women when they have been conditioned to consider everything feminine as bad? And how, in a boy of five, can anyone be sure that playing with cosmetics rather than toy guns is a sign of incipient homosexuality? The Gender Clinic, they argue, may be producing a breed of macho-bullies, queer-beaters and wife-haters, and quite needlessly, since the vast number of boys who show alleged feminine traits on occasion grow up to be heterosexual.

A group called the 'Coalition Against Dehumanisation of Children' also charges that the clinics doctors have been soliciting schools and institutions to supply them 'pre-homosexual boys' for 'treatment', assuring school principals that the children will be 'cured'. This, says the Coalition, is unethical and illegal. The programme should be stopped at once, because it is reinforcing so-called 'masculine role behaviour' which is nothing more than the outdated stereotype of the dominant, competitive, violence-prone male who oppresses women, gays and all peoples.....

(We reprint this from Hedestia's August newsletter, via AEQUUS, Christchurch's G.L.F. journal. Hedestia is the Ch.ch. Transvestite organization)

international news

THE YELLOW STAR AND THE PINK TRIANGLE

(WNS/Circle)—“The National Coalition of Gay Activists encourages the wearing of the Pink Triangle as a reminder of past oppression against Gay people and as a symbol of support for today’s Gay Liberation Movement.” The following article appeared in the New York Times to explain the significance of such a move.

By now nearly everyone knows about the Danes’ resistance to Nazi anti-Semitism during World War II, and how their resistance spared almost all Danish Jews from the barbarism that took the lives of six million other Jews. The Danish resistance was perhaps best symbolized by the reported willingness of King Christian to appear in public wearing a yellow Star of David as a sign of fellowship with the persecuted minority.

Yet while this brave stand was being made to save the Jews of Denmark, another segment of the population was systematically hunted down and sent to the death camps: Denmark’s homosexuals.

And Denmark was not unique: Many thousands of German, French, Polish, Hungarian and other European homosexuals were also interned and executed.

In the concentration camps where the Jews were compelled to wear yellow stars, the homosexuals were forced to wear pink triangles, and were treated as the lowest of the low by the Nazis.

Nearly a quarter of a million homosexuals were executed by the Nazis between 1937 and 1945, along with the six million Jews. Today, the moral revulsion against the holocaust remains strong, though perhaps not strong enough. Many know about the yellow star, but the pink triangle still lies buried as a virtual historical secret.

As a result, there is a tolerance among good people of discrimination against homosexuals that is similar to the tolerance of anti-Semitism that was so pervasive in Europe before the holocaust and that, at least according to some scholars, created a hospitable climate for the destruction of European Jews.

—Ira Glasser

(Ira Glasser is executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union.)

Women’s News Service No.10, Oct 1976

Crusader to sue paper over poem

LONDON, FRIDAY

BRITAIN’S morals crusader Mary Whitehouse has been given court permission to begin blasphemous libel proceedings against a homosexual magazine — the first such case to be tried in 44 years.

The subject of the prosecution is a poem written by an English literature professor, James Kirkup, now poet in residence and visiting professor at Amherst College in Massachusetts.

Published in Gay News, a newspaper for homosexuals, Kirkup’s poem is a fantasy in which the speaker imagines a series of homosexual acts in which Christ is involved.

Mrs Whitehouse is charging the newspaper, its editor Denis Lemon and its distributors, Moore Harness Ltd, with “unlawfully and wickedly publishing or causing to be published a blasphemous libel concerning the Christian religion.”

The maximum penalty for blasphemous libel is life imprisonment.

United Press International

The Australian, 11-12-1976

10 PER CENT IN FORCES GAY, SAYS EX-SERGEANT

(WNS/Age)—At least one in 10 people in the world’s armed services are homosexual, a former US air force sergeant said.

Mr Leonard Matlovich, 32, who is in Britain to speak at the conference of the campaign for homosexuality equality in Southampton, said a recent survey in America had shown 10 per cent of people were homosexual. There was no reason to believe this did not apply in the armed services.

The Vietnam war veteran, who has four medals, including the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star, was discharged from the US Air Force after proclaiming he was a homosexual.

Mr Matlovich said: “They gave me medals for killing men and a dishonorable discharge for loving one. It’s a crazy, mixed-up world when people are rewarded for killing and hated and punished for loving.”

Women’s News Service No.10, Oct 1976

WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY ?

You see us as hard-eyed aliens, barely female.

Remote.

You do not understand our anger. That's okay.

I only understand it myself, as I begin to grow up as a lesbian.

I have learnt to keep my softness away from you.

We keep our melting butter for each other, private from assault.

My heart is runny marshmallow.

Loving,

Yellow.

But I dare not be afraid. Of you.

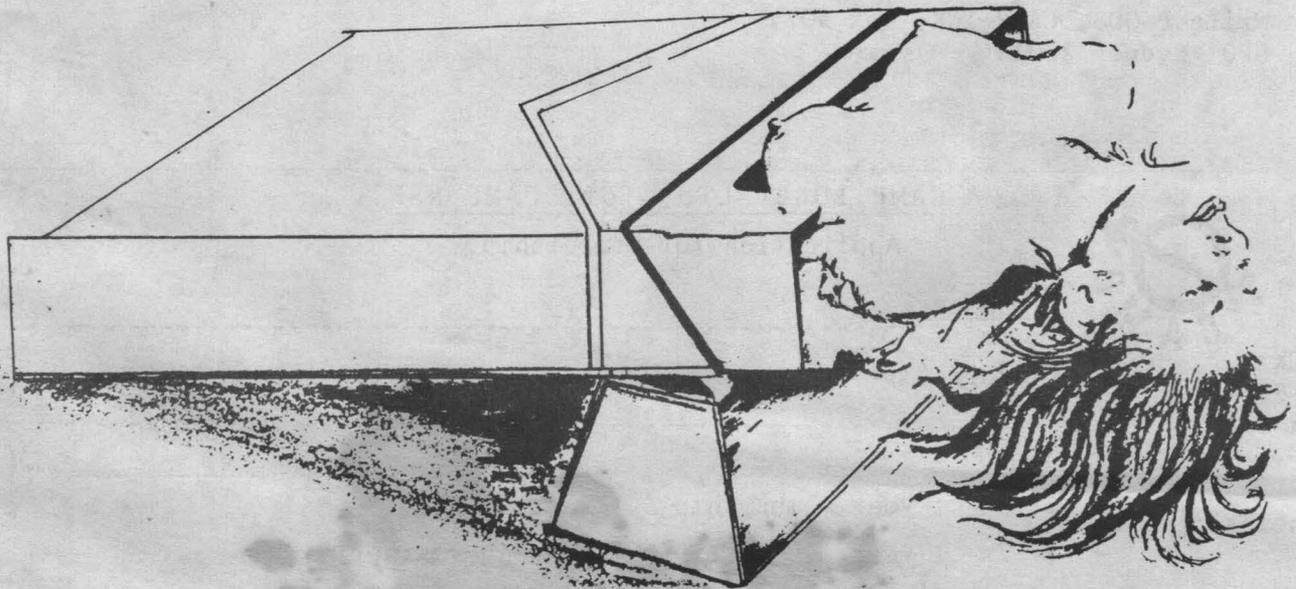
So I meet you with boxing gloved eyes.

And fight like Don Quixote, tripping on my sails.

But I still want to reach you

So I write.

cecily davis



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P 008

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