



come
together

**GAY
LIBERATION
FRONT**

compiled in the north

No. 16

15p

manchester

The Gay scene in Italy began to make itself known and heard in a serious, militant and united form some two years ago with the founding of a homophile organization calling itself, fronte unitario omosessuale rivoluzionario italiano, and meaning quite obviously, Italian Homosexual Revolutionary Front.

In a country where there is a noticable lack of socially minded people and where the family unit is so strong, where the emancipation of women has progressed at a pace much slower than in any other European country and where the temperament of the people is such that they are unable to agree on any point of discussion or argument, it is quite remarkable that an organization such as FUORI could ever have been established. But established it was by twelve or so courageous young Italians in the northern city of Turin. The membership grew quite rapidly as groups were started in Milan, Bologna and Rome, and I believe there is now an overall membership of nearly a thousand.

There are no particular laws against homosexuality in Italy as its existence is hardly acknowledged by the law. There is however discrimination on a social level, with police harassment in the gay bars and in the occasional clubs that are patronized by the wealthier Gays. To the same extent as in Britain, there is discrimination in jobs and certain professions such as teaching where to be discovered to be gay means instant dismissal. The real difficulty for the Italian homosexual lies in the family where so much pressure is put on sons and daughters to marry and have numerous children - the latter naturally having the full backing of the Church. In some of the more backward parts of the south of Italy and in Sicily the old tradition of the family making the choice of bride or groom still prevails. Homosexuality in Italy is therefore always a threat to procreation and the homosexual the real despair and shame of his family.

FUORI is working towards a social acceptance of the homosexual in Italy rather than legal reform, and this is done by means of peaceful demonstrations, posters and literature explaining homosexuality and the needs and rights of a homosexual to self expression and sexual fulfilment. I have spent many a happy hour in the company of my Roman friends, scurrying around the big piazzas with a bucket, a brush and an armful of posters which have been pasted on to the walls of bars, schools, cafes, public buildings and even a church or two.

The members of the Rome group are a mixed bunch from all walks of life and include, journalists, teachers, plumbers, bartenders, waiters, photographers, students and one very charming, gentle transvestite from Naples whose mother has disowned him. I was disappointed when I first attended the meetings to find so few women members there being three others in all. It would seem that although the Gay men have tried to interest gay women into joining and taking an active part in the work of FUORI the women are still wary of the once very chauvinistic Italian male and they feel more at home in their own feminist groups which are now springing up all over the country with a surprising rapidity.

At the weekly meetings there were discussions - always heated - on the social and sexual problems of being gay, but there seemed to be little interest in discussing actual human and emotional problems. However the members of FUORI feel proud of their united efforts to organize themselves and are pleased with the progress they are making.

There is a journal produced every month which is on sale to the general public in all major Italian cities, and contains national and international news on Gay life, political viewpoints, gossip, ads, poems and book reviews.

There have been one or two national congresses to discuss with other groups progress made and plans for the future with emphasis on the presentation of the journal. ~~Last~~ Last October FUORI felt strong enough to act as host to homophile groups from other countries at an international congress held in Milan. It was quite successful with discussions in French, Italian and English on the state of homophile movements and also the feminist movements which FUORI like other ^{gay} groups has tried to affiliate itself. Unfortunately the only report to be found in the Italian newspaper the following day was on the scuffle between members and the Press. Members tried to keep biased reporters out of the congress knowing they would write unfavourable accounts of the congress in their papers.

Are You a Communard?

A communard is a person who seeks to establish a life-style in a group of other people with some common interests, and to SHARE that life-style with them, and still be free to do their own thing with - in that framework. A Commune is not a Ghetto, but an integral part of the community as a whole; in which the members of the commune live their own life - style, but also interrelate and intergrate with the whole community.

A Communard is not given to acquisition or possession of either objects or people; but seeks to share life in all its facets with all. As a communard, I for example, own nothing but my fundamental clothing and the barest necessities of living, everything else I may have is for the mutual benefit and enjoyment of my fellows. What so ever income I may receive, from what ever source, is not mine, but that of the commune at large; as is to be used to our common good benefit and advantage. All that I require for myself is adequate clothing for my body, a bed to rest in, and perhaps to share, and food to sustain my health and if I can have the pleasure of cigarettes, and an occasional drink, so much the better. As I have a certain facility for writing, and an aptitude with words, I like to have a table and chair, pen and paper. These friends have lent or given me; but if any other communard wishes to use them, they are welcome to do so, because they are theirs as much as they are mine. So it is with everything around me. After all who can say with certainty that they will be here next year, next month or in five minutes time and what use are all the possessions in the world if one is not there to utilise them?

As it is with objects, so it is with people. A true communard does not try to possess or to be possessed by them. Each and everyone is an individual in their own right. We are all walking along our own individual journey through life, both in time and space, and in every other way. The only thing that no one can do is to spend any part of that journey twice. A true Communard seeks others to share a part of that journey with; so that, together, they can that much the better perceive the beauty of life around them, or repair any fault or error on the way, or share a joy or sorrow felt by one of them. In this way they seek to enrich each others experience of life and so on, and by so doing enhance the purpose of mankind.

A communard is not a selfish person; in fact the words I and ME cease to have any significance, and become WE and US in everything at all times.

As a Communard has to utilise none of his resources in the pursuit of acquisition of personal possessions or selfish aggrandisement they can devote their entire effort in improving the lot of their fellows; thus they become much wholer, more meaningful worthwhile people.

This is what a commune is all about. ARE YOU UNSELFISH ENOUGH TO BE A COMMUNARD? Or are you so conditioned by Society that you are still possession orientated; content to take your comforts and pleasures where and when you find them, regardless of the needs and wishes of others. Do you want to be a person, with limited aspirations, or do you want to identify with ALL HUMANITY and let life be your raison d'etre, your purpose for living, the life-style ahead? !? !?

'RE YOU A COMMUNARD? IF NOT... THEN WHAT DOES G.L.F. MEAN TO YOU?

Heads of the Valley G.L.F.

'Gay may not be good. But we're stuck with it'.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are gathered here today in the sight of a so called straight community, to witness the emancipation of our Gay World. As evident in the title we are a chapter of the Gay Liberation Front Movement. For those of you who do not know the Gay Liberation Front is a body of people striving to obtain freedom from oppression for all gays; By Liberation we mean an ending to the stigma of the word homosexual and our ostracism from society as a whole. Gay people after all are not so very different from any man or woman in the street. The only difference is, of course that we prefer members of the same sex for personal and sexual relationships.

This is not as abnormal and unnatural as it may at first appear. Identical conditions are to be found in the wild world of nature. Those well known and revered creatures, the dolphins, have been observed to spend the major part of their waking lives, when not indulging in procreational activities, to sport and sex play with members of the same sex. Can this mean, my dears, that all Dolphins are Poofs or Dykes?

The main aim of this letter is to try to get across to all Gays in the South Wales area that they should be proud of being Gay and should not cringe under the dominance of the straight majority. We want all people to accept Gays for what they are - normal healthy human beings who should be treated as such.

We would like to start local G.L.F. groups in the

places where they are needed most, the valleys and other outlying districts in this area. Remember it takes only two or three of you to "Come Out" to make others follow. This is the start of a new group and once you are a member of such a group, and of the movement as a whole, you have one hell of a lot of support. You can even learn to form your own Gay Society within the rules and confines of the society as it is at present.

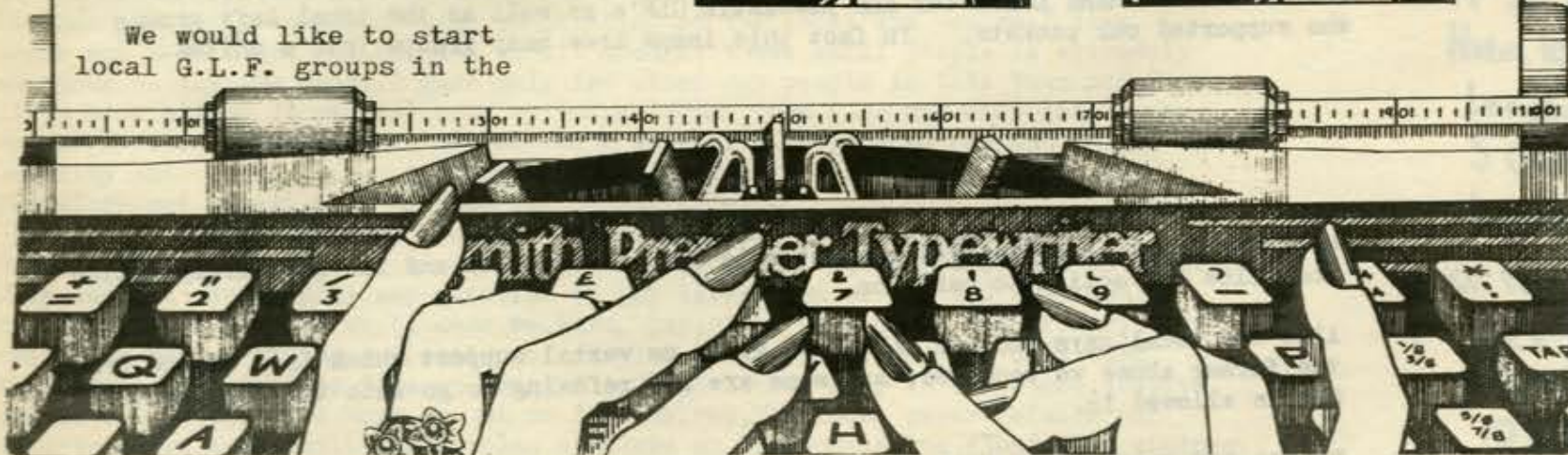
Please contact us if you need help in forming a group, or in fact need any help at all. This is one of the reasons we exist - to help our gay brothers and sisters. So help us to help you. You can write to us

Heads of the Valley G.L.F.
6, Ynysllwyd St.
Foundrytown,
Aberdare, Glam.,
South Wales.

Even if you do not need help, please write to us, for us to know at least there are some gay people who have read this. Fan mail always readily accepted.

Until the next time: Love
and Peace to Everyone.

Elaine & Babs. (H.V.G.L.F.)



REMEMBER

The Glasgow and Scottish West G.L.F. are starting a monthly News Sheet which will include a friendship gay contact service. This News Sheet will be FREE and so will the ads. for Gays to contact one another. This service is intended to stop commercial so-called 'Gay Agencies' from exploiting Gay people by charging them introduction fees.

Anyone interested, please send a S.A.E. to the following forwarding address:

5 Caledonian Rd,
London, W.1.

BOOKS

DON MILLIGAN:
"THE POLITICS OF HOMOSEXUALITY".

Published by Pluto
Press, 20p.
Available from
Bethnal Rouge,
add 3p postage.

This pamphlet was
written primarily as
an attempt to get gay
politics discussed

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among the international Socialists. Don is a member of that group as well as belonging to Lancaster GLF. As such the pamphlet does not add much to the statement of our oppression in the London GLF Manifesto, but the political programme he proposes is different, and it is this I would like to discuss.

Don argues that there are two main reasons for oppression

+ one, that we undermine the family and marriage, and two, that we, particularly the butch dyke and the screaming queen, make a mockery of the roles women and men are supposed to play. The role of the family in repressing children and training them for their future roles, ties in fairly clearly with the need of the capitalist system for a particular kind of worker and for the repression of sexuality. (Don says countries such as Cuba and the USSR have been no less oppressive to gay people.) But the connection between capitalism and gender-roles is made less clear - Don argues that it is part of the conditioning capitalism requires if it is to continue.

The economic system is such a force dominating people's lives that no real liberation is possible without first overthrowing the capitalist system. Thus Don argues that we should direct our demands for an end to discrimination not at the ruling class and state government, but rather at the organised labour movement which is the only group with the potential power to overthrow the state and end economic exploitation.

Attempts at communal living and 'life-style' politics are good because they show us what will be possible in the future, but this kind of politics can only have a limited effect since it does not challenge the economic system on an organised mass basis. Gay people do not form a united economically oppressed group, neither do we have a geographical unity around which to organise. Only the working-class has this power.

The above is too short to do justice to Don's argument, but I hope it summarises fairly his main political arguments. I would now like to add my own comments.

The weakest point in the argument seems to be a lack of a clear connection between male-supremacy and capitalism.

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I think that Don is so fixated on the economic evils of capitalism that he only assumes that everything else must be part of a very elaborate confidence trick arranged to keep the system under control. But what is obviously true is that male-supremacy existed long before capitalism, and so the domination of women cannot be said to be specifically caused by capitalism. I would argue the other way round - that capitalism is male domination developed to its highest form, where the male values of domination, aggression, competition, individualism, inhumanity and exploitation are imposed on all aspects of life. Male supremacy is not an outgrowth of capitalism, rather capitalism is the highest form of masculine supremacy.

Seeing things this way round has political consequences. I would think that men and workers will be incapable of authentic collective action (with women and children) until they take notice of the demands of Women's and Gay Liberation and change themselves, and STOP oppressing gays, women and children. They will be incapable of taking over the factories and organising things collectively until they take our demands seriously.

In this I think communal living and life-style politics have a large part to play. Living together has been the only way I've known that gay men have really been able to get to grips with the way we've been messed about by straight society the only way we can begin to understand what we really want. Only when we discover what we really want can we then find ways of getting it.

In the long term Don may be right that communes and such-like only have a limited role to play in an overall change, but at this time and for us I think they are very important.

Part of communal living has been not-working (unemployed) and sharing whatever money we can come by while not-working. We probably won't be able to do this for the rest of our lives but I think it is an important thing to do for a while. The most common question we are asked (by workers) is, "How do you fill up your time?"

People seem afraid of not-working, of not being told what to do for most of their lives dreading retirement when they'll have time on their hands and "nothing to do". Until people lose the fear of taking control of their lives we're not going to be revolutionary.

(Rumour has it that Don is in danger of being thrown out of IS for his trouble in raising these issues) These are things we should talk about more.

Bob Mellors.

THE GREAT NORTHERN FARCE

The Great Northern hotel used to contain three bars, one of which, the Buccaneer bar, was much used by homosexuals, and thus was probably an important source of money for the hotel. The hotel is owned by Henekey Inns Division which is a subsidiary of Trust Houses Forte Catering Ltd. It was decided to modernise the place, during which one bar, the York bar, was to be left open for customers. Mr Winn, the manager of the hotel, then began to refuse entry to anyone who he knew to be homosexual. A clear example was shown when a regular tried to buy a drink from this bar and was told to leave the premises by the manager in front of all the customers. He was certainly one of many who suffered at the hands of this prejudiced manager.

Gay Liberation Leeds decided that this was a clear-cut case of homosexual discrimination and should therefore be fought against. We decided to hold pickets outside the hotel to demonstrate our anger at the manager's action and get publicity to obtain more support. At the first picket, on June 30th, which was held at Saturday lunchtime, thought to be a busy time for the bar, two of us tried to buy drinks at the bar. The manager then asked us to leave. We asked him why he wanted us out of the premises, his reply "I don't have to give reasons, just get out", at which we started to leaflet the bar and then were physically shoved out of the bar by this mad creature. We stayed there for two hours giving leaflets to customers entering the bar and to passers-by. This set the pace for the next two pickets, the first of which was held whilst only one bar was still open.

At the next picket, which only about fifteen attended, two people were arrested for "wilfully obstructing the free passage of the highway", even though one of them was not even standing on the footpath. Again leaflets were given out which said: "Gay Lib is picketing because several incidents have led us to the conclusion that the manager is discriminating against homosexuals. We find the manager's attitude to us, as homosexuals, offensive. We wish the public to be aware of our indignation and to be aware that homosexuals expect to be able to gather publicly with as little interference as any other group would get."

Finally a third picket was held with over 25 people walking outside the hotel entrance (in order not to obstruct the highway), carrying banners with slogans such as "Henekeys are queer-bashers" and "The Krays drank here, why can't we?"

No more people have been arrested and the two that were on trial were acquitted with help from a friendly lawyer as there was no legal case against them.

Since then the hotel has completely re-opened and the other bars have been re-decorated but the manager still refuses entry to any Gay Liberation people with badges on.

Results:- The arrests and acquittals were printed both in the Evening and Yorkshire post; the coverage was fair to middling. One amusing part of the daily paper's article was to describe what the two defendants were wearing: "(Martin) O'Leary had painted fingernails and was wearing woman's-type blue open shoes and beads round his neck ... (Louise) Lavender was wearing an open-neck white shirt and blue bib overalls." You can draw your own conclusions as to what they meant!

We received much verbal support from Gay Lib groups, CHE and Young Liberals, and would like to thank Lancaster and Newcastle GLF's as well as the local left groups who supported our pickets. In fact this issue drew many groups into a united,

militant front in solidarity against this pig of a manager and the foul organisation who allow his action to carry on.

Also the local gays, not in GLF, have given us verbal support which is a change from the former abuse we received, and some are now refusing to go into the hotel until GLF is allowed in.

We are now going to go into the bar to buy drinks in threes and fours, and as usually happens the manager approaches us, tells us to leave, an offer we must refuse! He cannot use violence against us (other than verbal) as this would ruin his trade. He then calls the police who tell us to leave, which we do as there is no point in getting arrested. We hope that either the manager will get fed up and just let us in, or he will lose all customers, making the bar uneconomic to Henekeys so that they remove him.

If any other groups can give help or suggestions, we would very much appreciate this.

Love, Leeds GLF.

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KENT GAY ALLIANCE

most people probably think that Kent, being next to London, is a fairly liberated place to live and one can spend lazy hot summer afternoons walking down leafy lanes hand in hand with another guy or girl. True, we have the leafy lanes, the seaside etc but sadly we lack the liberation. Incredible as it may seem considering that the South East is one of the most densely populated areas we still have a very small group and it's very tough going trying to stay together. We were housed in Kent University and had regular meetings every Monday, we put up posters, we danced in the disco, we had a Gay Day in Canterbury but still we are no further than when we started. I think we must have tried every approach at reaching gay students which was our first priority but none came forward. We provided a contact address, a contact telephone number, an article in the University rag on our personal experiences on coming out, besides regularly writing to the paper to make our presence known. Anyway Kent University being a right piss off we thought we'd try the surrounding towns. With much enthusiasm we launched our Gay Day last September, only eight people turned up, two of these distributed leaflets whilst the rest marched through the city centre, each carrying two placards as we'd had twelve painted in readiness! The local press used about every snide remark it could with the heading "Gay Day runs out of puff" followed by "their pitch was queered", "the number of camp followers dwindled".

Well, as you can see there's no gay life here. People are so bloody reactionary here, we just come up against blind hostility and complete non-co-operation.

For myself, I started out as being secretary to the local East Kent CHE but after four months could't stand it any longer, they must be the ideological "stodgy CHE" group. They won't allow under 21's into the group and they've a constitution as long as your arm which they sit down to discuss every month. I resigned and formed the Kent Youth CHE and then after a few months we joined forces with Kent GLF, run by the only two gay University students, to form Kent Gay Alliance. I went to a meeting recently of East Kent CHE and we all had to sit in groups with bits of paper answering questions about what attitude we would like to see doctors and clergy adopt towards homosexuals and what we thought life might be like for the homosexual in 2001. Who the hell do they think they're kidding? They're no different from the straight world which oppresses us. They all ridicule anyone from GLF as "those silly bitchy queens" whilst they sit around in their drab Burton suits drinking coffee and making hearty jokes about "penises". For all I care they can sit in the Quaker Meeting Room till doomsday discussing constitutions and where they'll have their next ramble or tea party. What I object to is their attitude to fellow gay people who don't fit their image of "responsibility" and "respectability". Why should I give a fuck what society thinks of me, why should I think that if I adopt a "sane and sensible attitude" or take on my "moral obligations" that society will smile on me, pat me on the head and let me take out a mortgage with my "friend". I HATE this, I don't want to be a nice normal queer I want to be me.

The conservative attitude is particularly strong here, probably because so many old people move down to the coast to retire. Folkestone, where I live, is as orderly as Trumpton Green. We've had a Tory council for years and they have a strangle-hold on the town. It's really split up into two areas, one where the "workers" live, amidst the gasworks, railway viaduct, corporation tip and the other where the bourgeoisie reside in large Victorian houses in the West End and Leas. Take a walk past there on any afternoon and you can't hear yourself think for the rattle of bone china cups of Earl Grey tea and the munching of cucumber sandwiches. Entertainment, what there is of it is split up into enjoying a game of darts at the Red Cow with a load of heavy het's or listening to a load of stuck-up bitches prattling on about music or painting at the local Art Centre. I like music and I like art but to have to sit amongst these awful people is extremely nauseous to say the least. I know only two other gay people in this town and I've lived here all my 24 years. I wear my badge around town (CHE and GLF) and I wear my GLF T shirt sometimes but no one seems to notice. There's no gay pub in the locality and the nearest gay dance hall/disco is in London. Therefore one is slightly limited for social life!

We tried the usual channels at reaching gay people, we contacted the Samaritans, all they wanted to do was give me a cup of tea and quietly push me off. They declined to display any material on gay liberation or CHE and they would not refer "clients" to us because we, being gay, might be biased! The library reeled in horror at the suggestion of display a CHE poster and the only book they have, Bryan Magee's "One in Twenty" is kept locked away in the store, despite persistent attempts to have it put on the shelves. The local paper refuses our adverts so we are limited to putting stickers on billboards, bus stops, shop windows. Again, despite extensive coverage, no response.

So despite all this we still manage to carry on somehow, ever hopeful, perhaps one day we'll be the gay centre of Europe, roll on Channel Tunnel!

love,



BARRIERS

Barriers ?
Fences of protection
to prevent release
of self
of private person
Games protect
eyes protect
tongues protect
-do not defend
release
respond
join
emerge
in exhilarating joy.

We erect barriers
to protect ourselves?
What from ?

Others?
People
Men.
Why?
Because we believe
we will remain men
if we do so.

We are afraid of the unknown
ego
tripping helps break these
down and dissolves
fear
in tears
of joy



Have you any poems,
articles, stories,
drawings, comments
etc. for future
Come Togethers ?

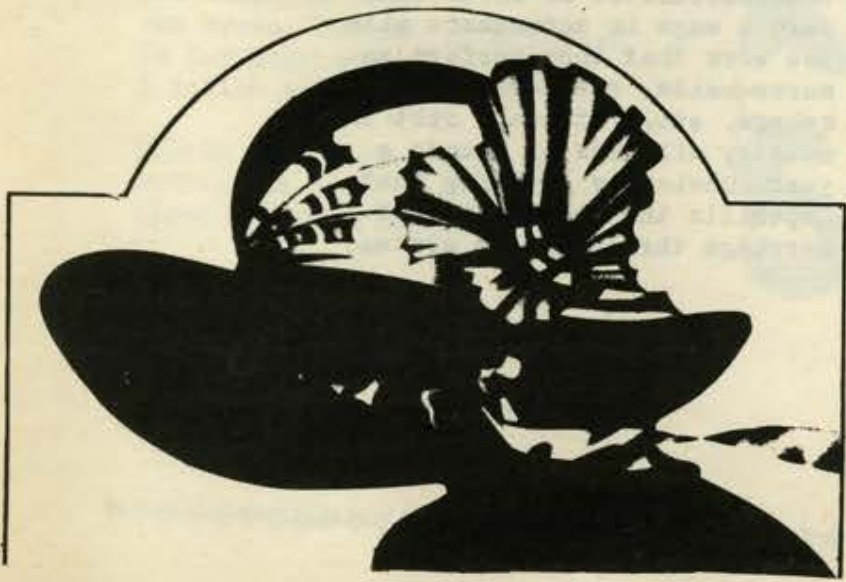
If so please send
them to:

London Come Together Group
5 Caledonian Rd
London N.1.

or to:

Rex & Alan
Flat 3
102 Hathersage Road
Manchester 13.

BY 1st OCTOBER.



Manchester Gay Alliance is Going Strong
G.L.F.; C.H.E.; Womens Group; Homophile
Society; T.V. & T.S. Group etc etc
Cover over 500 people... Join us now
All People are People. Do you live in
Salford, Stockport, Manchester, Liverpool
or area? Write to Manchester G.L.F.
and we will send full info.

Why is it that in this day and age, gay people are considered to be deprived and frustrated? In many cases repulsion gives way to an even more regrettable attitude of pity, and patronising attempts 'to help'. For instance I've just read a "New Society" article called "Unlucky in Love" which shows a really sickening attitude to homosexuals and how they dealt with "their problems". But is it our problem or one imposed on us by contemporary society? After all, gayness is only one part of the whole spectrum of sexuality taking in bisexuals and heterosexuals. In other societies such as Ancient Greece and the Arab world, homosexuality is not taken to be unusual or unnatural. How we view the world in which we live affects how we view ourselves and influences our actions.

One way of viewing society is of a world where there is general agreement on certain beliefs and values --like success being measured in terms of money. Deviance comes when people accept the generally agreed values of society, but do not have means to reach them. What does this mean when applied to Lesbians? One can say that in this country it is an important value that men and women form relationships with the opposite sex. It can be argued, and has for many years been done in ordinary gossip that it is only when a girl for reasons of looks, personality or lack of opportunity, fails to secure a man that she turns to a Lesbian way of life. Her act is not a positive choice, but something done out of frustration. Thus gayness can be viewed as a problem and as the writer of the article thought, something that is unlucky.

Certainly this explanation has some amount of truth. Although it is now less common, it was usual for partners to take up butch or femme roles that mirror the husband and wife roles in straight circles. This was quite self consciously done with the butch partner cutting her hair short, wearing masculine clothes and assuming the dominant part in the relationship. Thus a woman in one of the gay magazines wrote recently: "Plenty of femme girls like me think butches are the greatest. Without going into details, the love of my life was very masculine, not at all young, and the best lover in the world. For two years I've been trying to replace her and have a stack of timetables for any lonely fella who feels like travelling my way." This kind of attitude could cause difficulties and considerable role strain for the butch partner who was neither sexually a male or earned enough to provide the usual finances that a man is expected to provide.

One could say that some of the older homosexual organizations such as Albany Trust and CHE have also accepted the concept of common agreement in values in society. They have achieved social reforms through working

within the system and trying to influence those in power to accept the need for reform. Reform itself is seen to come in gradual adjustive fashion - not revolution, but evolution. In the main, the individual, as long as he is quite certain he is gay, is helped to adjust to the existing situation and to cope with his sexuality in a socially accepted way.

However this view of society which sees it as a harmonious world has been challenged as being far from reality. This in turn gives us a different explanation of homosexuality. Society is seen in terms of a number of competing groups, each looking after their own interests, who hold different amounts of power. If one group holds more power than others, it can successfully make rules for, and impose them on other groups. From this point of view the stigma of deviance comes not so much from what a person actually does, but rather as a result of others deciding to apply certain rules and sanctions. At any moment in time, groups will be labelled 'outsiders', but what is shunned in one period of time will be perfectly acceptable some years later., and vice versa. The use of drugs is a good example of this. In both the United States and Britain the smoking of marijuana was legal and socially acceptable up to the 1930's. However, the laws were introduced and strictly applied, even though more people die from lung cancer through smoking cigarettes, than smoking marijuana. It is the pot smokers who are forced into closed groups. Sexuality has always been a sensitive area and the lines of what is accepted or at least tolerated by society have constantly changed. We have already seen changes in the law relating to male homosexuality in the 1960's when the government decided that the morals of the country would not be too seriously undermined if they granted consenting males over twenty-one the same freedom from legal prosecution that heterosexuals over sixteen have always taken for granted. Significantly it was in areas where social control was most important for the government - the armed services- that the homosexuality that was permissible elsewhere remained banned as immoral. Changes in the law do not necessarily mean that barriers are removed, but by removing the more obvious threats of penalties it is more likely that this follows.

This brings us to the question of why Lesbianism, which has never been the subject of condemnatory laws, is regarded with such distaste and its practitioners are treated with abhorrence. The answer to the first question is that up until fairly recently any female sexuality whether straight or gay was so repressed that there was no need for the imposition of laws. It is only in recent years that women have become alive to the potentialities of their bodies, and therefore pose a threat. The spread of Lesbians goes both against class



interest and male interest. In one sense women as wives and mothers fit the capitalist economic system well. They provide stability in the sense of a constant demand for consumer goods. Also as the father goes out to work, they are one of the strongest influences in socialising the young child to enter the system. It is not just that women are politically conservative with a large 'C', but many women are rightly worried if their husband loses his job or the mortgage is not paid. Moreover women as unpaid workers help to prop up the system. It has been calculated if wives were paid a wage in accordance with the work that they perform as nurse-maids, cleaners, dress-makers, etc., it would cost the country millions of pounds a year. Obviously anything that imperils the institution of marriage threatens the system.

GAY and Proud

cont...

However it does not seem sufficient to me to look at Lesbianism just in class terms. In just as important a sense, it threatens the existing situation of male domination and assumption of superiority. To be a Lesbian threatens the male ego and make men vulnerable and exposed. As one male said after reading 'The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm', "If this book is right, then women can do without us." Just as in the Deep South white people in abject poverty used their colour as a special distinction, giving with it a certain status over Blacks in exactly the same economic situation, so men use their maleness as a sign that confers automatic privileges over their wives. Women who have made a conscious choice to opt for a Lesbian way of life, have as surveys have shown, found it more sexually satisfying than women engaged in heterosexual relationships. The idea of the frustrated Lesbian is a myth sustained by those who have a vested interest in doing so.

One of the gay badges reads 'Lesbians are Revolution', and in many respects this is true. Members of GLF do not just want to be tolerated by an existing social order dominated by powerful interest groups or to be sympathetically considered by magazine writers. Once the world is seen as a place of conflict rather than consensus, it seems natural that gay people should first understand and then challenge the existing definitions of the situation. It is not enough to hope that we will be left in peace in one of the gay ghetto bars along with such other outcast groups as prostitutes and drug pushers as happens to gay women in Manchester, or to hope that one or two clubs will turn a blind eye and allow us to dance together. Rather we must have confidence in our own rights and work together for a change in Society.

SONG OF THE SNOW BOY

O, there is ice in my heart
that entered through my eye.
I laughed at the threat -
then the pain of severing
and anaesthesia.
She stole me from
the broken circle of children.
In her mansion of ice
I polish surfaces already

smoothO, even flawless -
nothing to catch hold of. All
edges like knifeblades.

THE PHILOSOPHIES OF POPULAR SONGS

This young man once considered
Life should take the form of Art,-
believed in the philosophies of popular
songs,

moved from one failed love affair
to the next, - driving each to its climax
in the shortest time,-

hair-rending, recriminating:"Look at me;
see what lovin' has done to me;
look at my face ..." the Supemes sang.

He danced to it, - machine precision
beat, exhilaration, indentification -
dancing it, hip-shaking it - out!

And there were nights making love
in white attic rooms, - or simply awake
watching the face asleep beside him.

Then, perhaps, outside the bright ships
were passing in the night, - adrift
with dancers aboard.

But he was more usually the one
found somewhat sick at the rail,-
staring into the night,- frightened of the sea.

He was in love with the dying fall,-
in love with no-one. A romantic appalled
by his romanticism

he gained a reputation as a cynic.
His wit was borrowed; his style
of despair assumed an audience

skilled in techniques of indirection
this was lacking; masks
were taken at face value.

Original, arrogant aloof, - or
pedant and bore, - the Snow Queen
his White Goddess; useless
for any brave little girl to make
the perilous journey to his Far North.
He did not speak

of being misunderstood, exactly;-
distress signals mistaken
for firework displays. His models were not

the 'rebel' without a cause' or
'angry youngman' which partook too much
of 'realism', -

that form, most irritating,
of stylisation, and in the sixties
dated. It was his duty to be

as artificial as possible: thus, -
'How bring to lament one's fate
or advertise one's sensitivity (in the first person).

John Ash

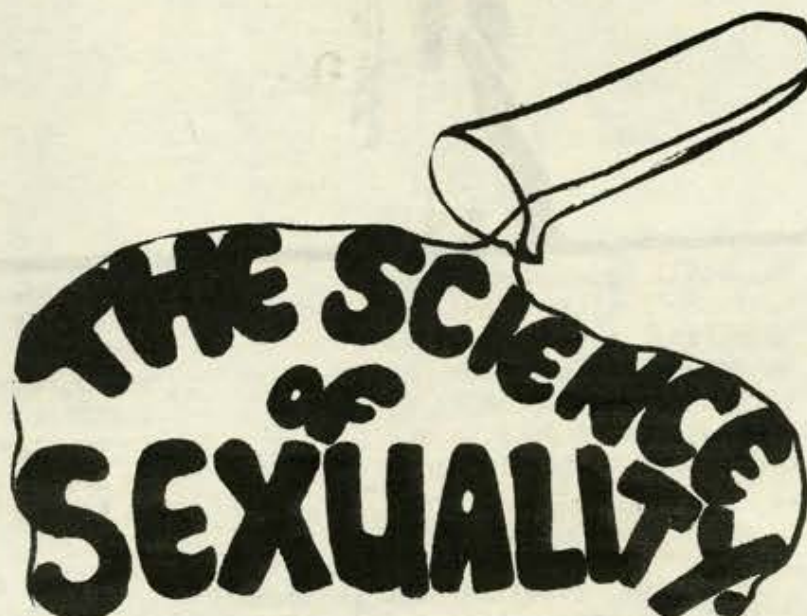
But already there is a paradox; I
am trained as a physicist - and a
am therefore an "expert". All I
can do is to ask that you challenge
me!

We hear a great deal about
the uninvolved scientist. He (and
more rarely she) does exist - I
meet them everyday. But the un-
involved scientist does not exist
in isolation. He or she only exists
within the context of a fucked up,
capitalist society dominated by
white males; and strive as he will
he can never be truly uninvolved.

Let me hasten to add that the
same applies to the far out "lib-
erated" gay person, to the milit-
ant socialist, to the anarchist
and to every sort of radical in the
world - including, of course,
myself.

I think we should take heart
in this realisation. Firstly in
that the cool, knowledgeable
scientists are warped in everything
they do and say, and are therefore
open to criticism. And secondly
that when we fail to reach our own
ideals, that we should not give up.
When we find jealousy creeping into
our relationships, when we take
straight jobs that we don't really
want to do, when we feel possess-
iveness or prejudice, it is only
an inevitable result of our being
warped people in a warped world

I want to make it clear that
I am not putting people down for
using logical scientific argu-
ments; quite the reverse. What I
am attempting to do is stress the
importance of being objective, and
attempting to minimise the person-
al bias when doing so, and pointing
out the ways in which the scientific
method is misused



One point at least in writing
this article, is that I believe
it is essential that we begin to
challenge the word of "experts".



So, in what I will write now, I will try to be cool scientific and analytical - but remember, when you read it that I am writing as a homosexual; and that I am angry at my oppression. Remember also that I am a man and male chauvinism will therefore creep into everything that I write. Remember all this and more - and be sure to point it out when and where you find it in this article.

Now, perhaps, I will begin. And allow me to begin by explaining what I mean by a scientific approach. Science is about experiencing things. Scientific laws are constructed by observing things - and when you have observed enough things you can construct rules, based on what you have observed. These rules should then predict things about other things which you can observe. If the predictions are correct, your laws are correct; if not you throw your laws out. For all the reasons I talked about in the first paragraph, I believe that this is the only way we should look at the world - we must try to be as scientific as possible. We must try to look at things in a cool, objective way - but we must remember that we can never do that completely; I have tried however, to do my best in what follows.

Since women and gay people have begun to campaign for their rights, we have begun to see a flood of literature trying to disprove what we say. All of it is scientific hogwash. I challenge any scientist to an argument on this, and I believe that I should win.

Attempts have been made to show that women are born with an "instinct" to be housewives, and that homosexuals suffer from hormonal imbalance.

One such attempt was made on the David Frost programme some months ago. Here we were shown graphs, one of which looked like this:



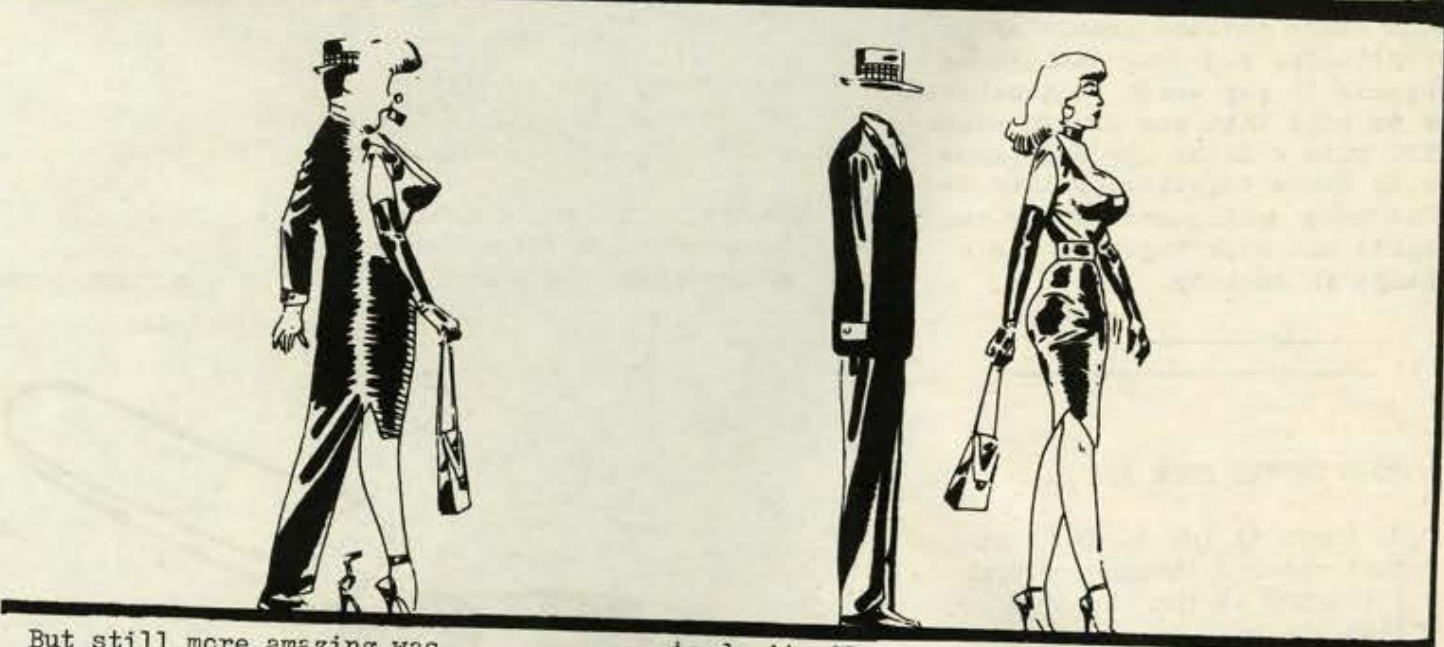
It was supposed to prove that boys are naturally more aggressive than girls! In fact, all it proves is that the scientist knows nothing of scientific method; or perhaps it was a deliberate attempt to pull the wool over peoples eyes in order to discredit the Women's Liberation Movement. In the first form at school we are taught that when we draw graphs we must label our axes, we must state the scale, we must specify the units we are using (in what units do we measure aggression?) None of this was done and the graph was therefore meaningless. Why would an allegedly self respecting scientist present such a graph

unless there was a deliberate attempt to discredit our sisters and why was she not challenged? Because she is an "expert". How sad that she is also a woman.

A slightly more sophisticated report appeared some while ago in a rag called New Scientist. Here we are told of a correlation between homosexuality and hormone balance. A notable point about the article was that the heterosexual subjects were said to have a hormone 'balance'; the homosexuals were said to have a hormone 'imbalance'. What was even more interesting was that the bisexual subjects investigated were seen to have a variable balance of hormones. Are they saying then that the subject would, depending on his hormone balance on that particular day, wake up one day and be heterosexual, and the next day find himself homosexual? We know from our own experience, that this is not the way things work; our sexuality to a large extent depends on external stimuli. Could it perhaps be that our behaviour influences our hormone balance? Why has this never been investigated? It is a reasonable enough suggestion - we have only to consider the way in which our external influences affect our adrenalin content!

we can do something about. What we are born with, and how much of it we are born with we can never know, and we cannot change, so we may as well forget about it, and concentrate on our conditioning. The only reason I have mentioned the above reports is to showup their logic and their motives. Most important to show how our ideas are being manipulated by 'experts'

I feel it is also important for us not to fall into the same trap. I do not believe it is correct to say that we are born bisexual, and that in the perfect world we would all be bisexual. What I believe we should say is that we are all born sexual, and in the ideal world all people would be sexual beings. The sort of sexuality we would have would depend on how we were conditioned and if we were conditioned outside of this male dominated capitalist world, our sexuality would be varied and changeable - we could begin to relate to people; the people that we want to, and not the people with a particular set of genitals. We could remove the constraints that most people feel are a necessary part of loving relationships. I believe this is true because I believe it to be a scientific analysis - and it is beginning to work. My sisters and brothers are beginning



But still more amazing was that the article concluded by saying that all we can be sure of is that our personalities depend on a combination of genetic and socialised factors! Didn't we know that anyway.'

The real point is that it doesn't matter! We are what we are for various reasons; and we know that a large part of what we are depends on how we are conditioned and this is the bit

to do it. Slowly of course - it must be slowly because of the world we live in - but that must not dishearten us, even the realisation of the fact that we can never do this fully in our life times must not dishearten us, we must still carry on - it is an uphill struggle.

Let me end with a very unscientific and perhaps illogical statement, but one that I like to believe - GAY IS GOOD!

Quentin Charatan

A gay women today, searching for an identity, is quite likely to become very confused. From the beginning she is encouraged to think that there are two kinds of gay women- butch and femme. This theory tends to be strengthened in gay clubs; if you are not a stereo-type gay, it is difficult for you to be accepted. The general excuse given for this is, 'If a girl is not clearly identifiable, how will other gay girls know how to treat her?'. The popular fictional concept of a gay woman seems to have been created to titillate the male's jaded sexual appetite.

In her book "The Undergrowth of Literature", Gillian Freeman illustrates this perfectly.

"It seems that erotic Lesbian literature is for men. There are various reasons why they like it or need it. It gives two for the price of one, and anyway, they find the idea stimulating... The desire is common enough for brothels through-out history to have put on Lesbian displays when required, for blue films and sexual exhibitions to include lovemaking between women, and the Lesbian initiation of a virgin to be commonplace in pornographic fiction, as well as in group sex in which women arouse other women who (perpetuating a fallacy genaral to erotica) 'spend' copiously... In fact the phallic

fantasy woman, demonstrated by behaviour and costume (bondage for instance is particularly phallic with one-legged costumes and restricted arms), is epitomized by constant reference to orgasms which are obviously masculine. The emission is even, in some instances, called semen.

Those men who need either to watch women making love, or to have two women to take part in a successful sexual act, are afraid of the psychological demands in heterosexual relationships. (It is for this reason that men keep women as 'second class' citizens, and imply their childishness and inability to make adult responses... In extreme cases a man would be able to experience orgasm only when indulging in fantasies of two women engaged in love-making which excludes him. 'Arena Three' quotes on the subject from Dr. Caprio's book, 'Female Homosexuality'. They rationalize their desire to see two women engage in sexual acts by stating that sheer curiosity prompts them. Psychoanalysts have discovered however, that in reality this represents the unconscious projection of their own homosexual tendencies.

The knowledge that many prostitutes are Lesbian is often an additional source of excitement. The man may feel he is thus forcing himself on an unwilling participant, or that he is despised- a Lesbian, totally unattracted by him physically, is the most likely person to find him despicable- or merely bisexuality in a woman is an erotic agent.

Lesbian activity appears in almost the whole range of fetishist publications whereas male homosexuality does not, (homosexual themes being, in fact, of interest only to homosexuals); women and young girls are bound, spanked, beaten, tortured, and even killed by their own sex...

Generally they are together because men want to see them together. Are they ever intended for a genuine Lesbian market? If not, why not.....

Kinsey discovered in America that a quarter of the enormous number of women he interviewed were aware of Lesbian impulses in themselves - a fact which seems to have struck the fashion photographers and editors, for there are Lesbian implications in many contemporary advertisements and features designed to sell new clothes. In the past the escort to a fashion model was a background male. Now two girls are frequently shown together, often touching, a girl in a dress has her hand

on the back pocket of trousers worn by another girl; two girls lie in an abandoned state on the floor, their legs entwined; one girl lies at the feet of another, booted feet at that."

The butch and femme image, dominant and



"... some chauvinistic male's night-time, wet dream."

passive, is pushed out by the popular press. Advertisers have also jumped on the Lesbian bandwagon. Tonik "mohair cloth for men" have discovered that a girl in a man's suit sells it faster. This series of ads have a very strong butch/femme Lesbian theme running through them. A girl with long hair in a dress lies at the feet of another in a man's suit, in a suitable Gothic setting. The whole thing is removed from everyday life in the world of fantasy! The blurb hints at decadence and sadism;- "Beauty is cruel and cruelty is beautiful... The shared decadent lilies of ultimate experience. Shadows- whispering of Darker things, walls pleased with daemons". In a further scene depicting the two girls (or the same model displaying the conflicting halves of her personality?) the advert is more explicit:

"This man, This woman, Sybarites, Wickedly beautiful, illicitly linked, instruments

of dark and secret intent. Languid, doomed narcissi".

The perversion theme is more powerful- ("wickedly beautiful"), with a strong element of ultimate punishment hinted at - "doomed narcissi". All this publicity has the effect of making the average gay woman feel further removed from the popular conception of herself. Women's Liberation has campaigned against discrimination in literature for a long time. Now is the time for the gay woman to do the same. Don't submit to being some chauvinist males' night time wet dream.

... **SUCH STUFF AS WET DREAMS ARE MADE OF....**

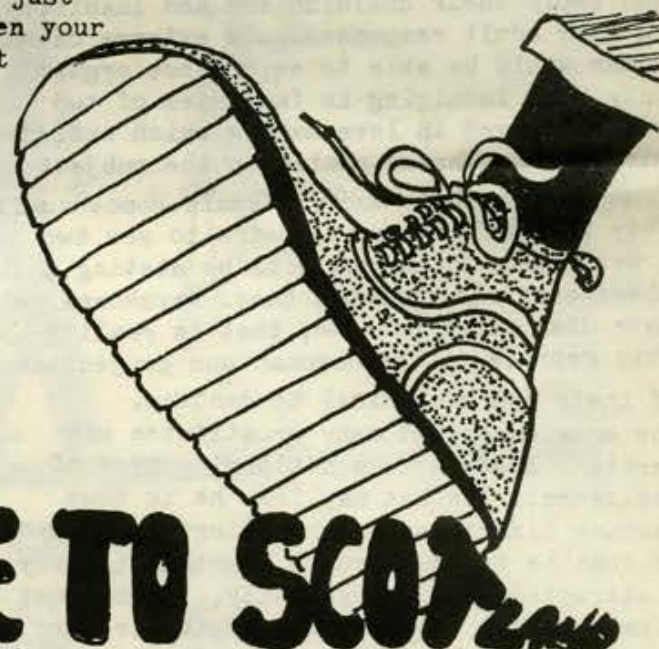


First of all, gay people in Scotland, are no different, in themselves than anywhere else. We have the same miseries, personal crises, joys, despairs and happiness as gay people anywhere else. That's personally. So, what makes Scotland so different? Why the fuss? If the gays are no different, then what is? The situation they live in. Scotland's history is its temperament, it's pattern of economic and cultural behaviour have brought about a fairly unique national atmosphere. The main event that has moulded this atmosphere has been the reformation. This country still pervades of staunch Calvinistic thought - even the atheists in Scotland seem like "presbyterian atheists". I think I should explain (or try to) this a little further. Every person who has grown up in Scotland will have quite a bit of Calvinism instilled in her/his very nature; even if she/he has been brought up in a broadminded, independent family situation or an extremely orthodox one, that person will still somehow accumulate some attitudes which can be directly attributed to the advent of Scottish Calvinism (or Knoxism). I am a homosexual, I call myself a Marxist, wear freaky clothes and do all the naughty deviant things a Dirty Pinko Commie Pervert Hippie can be expected to do but I still see, from time to time, some outrageously, reactionary Calvinist attitudes seeping out, (especially in relation to things like "love", "fidelity", monogamy, etc.). Naturally these particular attitudes offend me intellectually but nevertheless I must recognize that they exist in me, ruthlessly conditioned into me since birth by the very atmosphere of this country. I like to think I am attempting to rid myself of these attitudes but it's pretty arduous task getting rid of 20 years of pollutive teachings and educational diarrhoea. I feel I must stress how difficult it is to really rebel in Scotland. Oh yes, its easy enough growing your hair long and putting on some ratty clothes and a button-badge, smoking dope and saying "Man" at the end of every sentence, but it doesn't take much perception to see through that "Revolution", does it? I am quite sure we all know countless people whose "Revolution" doesn't go beyond just ~~explain~~ naughtiness. These people are just Mum and Dad with long hair. And I'm also sure most of us know how fucking difficult it is to get a much deeper and more thorough Revolution going on inside our own heads, never mind anyone else's. Well, that task in a Scottish setting seemw to take on multiple proportions. In Scotland, the Feu Duties are still payable when buying a house (these are duties to the Church of Scotland), the pubs close on the stroke of 10 p.m. and you can't get a drink in the afternoon or on a Sunday (except in some hotels) all-male pubs are still commonplace etc. etc. etc. Or maybe this will give you a better picture --

At a recently held Teach-In on homosexuality in Edinburgh which was organized ~~by~~ for the most part by gay people, there were four clergymen on the platform and a large contingent of clerical collars in the audience. (GLF was not represented at all on the platform). You might say, as we did at first, that is fucking ridiculous - but its not. If you lived here you'd realize just how reasonable it is that so many clergy should be present at a Homosexuality Teach-In, simply because of the amount of influence they and their Moral Welfare Committees wield in the formation of attitudes in this country. In Scotland, the men are very much MEN, and the women - well they know their place - and ne'er the twain shall meet (except in Church-condoned procreative acts, that is!). Working-class kids who have constantly been told that they are educational and occupational failures try desperately to succeed in the only way left - through their masculinity. Gangs form and fight etc. and it's be stupid of me to try and deny the fact that there's a hell of a lot of violence in Scotland - and all because of the rancid system which is oppressing their class. But, most important of all, through all crises, these kids must hang on to (it's all they have left that can gain them some "respect" for a change) is their manliness, (aggression, arrogance, ruthlessness, toughness, strength, "bravery" etc. - all these, plus a big helping of pig-headedness, add up to Manliness), because ~~if~~ if they fail in that then they will be considered all-round failures and Society sees no justification in their existence (except, perhaps, as Society's scapegoat.) However, a more sophisticated version of the big Sex identity bit seems to ~~be~~ be the be all and the end all of human existence, in middle-class homes. The Scottish middle-class seem to know, in their heart of hearts, (perhaps through some Divine Inspiration) that Darwinism is a neresy and Adam and Eve really did exist and they provide a fine example to 20th century life! Max Weber paralleled the Protestant Ethic with the Spirit of Capitalism and I can think of few other places where the relationship is more evident than in Scotland. As I say, this country owes much of its most profound heritage to Know and Calvin and the sexual attitudes of the Scottish power-elite is the area where ultra-conservative, puritanical reaction gives its most undying concentration. I suppose most of you will have heard of the late Councillor John Kidd's opinions on how he thought it desirable that the police should set the dogs on all those queers that are trying to turn Edinburgh into the "London of the North" And, at the teach-in on Homosexuality we were all horrified to hear the amazing

tirade of facist rhetoric spelling forth from the mouth of the Reverend John Gray. Thing s like how homosexuality is a misfortune and he feels sorry that we won't experience the joys of having and raising a family, and how he hopes the Church will continue to support the treatment of homosexuals! Sick and dangerous stuff perhaps, but the sickest thing about it is that there are many more millions like them -- most of whom aren't either rich, powerful, or reverend! It's when you realize this that you begin to feel and see what you are up against. Just by our very existence we are an offence and a threat to this system. However, it seems to us that the Scottish Cerberus has many more heads than the English/Welsh ones. Often we feel just like submitting, joining up with SMG, working on the Law Reform Bill along with all those remarkable Q.C.'s. Peers, Councillors, Professors etc. but submission seems much more difficult than just carrying on. We don't do much except talk and hold discos, but I'm sure everybody knows the feeling when you realize and value the fact that there are more than one of you, even if it is only two, or three, or four - - that's something. But I'm also sure we know the intense frustration of just talking, especially when your words don't seem to get

deeper than the rest of Britain's. I can only blame history for this. Perhaps, I am being unfair in claiming this and by pushing our uniqueness so much - maybe I feel a little "sour grapes" because of the lack of support and solidarity (perhaps this was through lack of understanding) which the Gay Liberation movement in Scotland, and I would imagine, Northern Ireland, has received from the English movement. I am not claiming that the struggle in the rest of the country is less worthy and small in comparison to ours, only that it is completely different and does not put the same pressures and demands upon those involved, as the struggle in Scotland does on us. It isn't just difficult, in Scotland to come out as being gay, it's fucking hard to be yourself, whether you're gay or not, when you are faced with reaction in every public and national sector and worse, when your own pocket-size, personal, made-to-measure Calvinism (remember? the one we inherit from Mum and Dad?) starts rearing its ugly head.



WELCOME TO SCOTLAND

any further than the other person's earlobes (assuming that they even get that far).

My comments on SMG and Law Reform may be taken wrongly. I have little doubt as to the service SMG has provided to the gay population in Scotland and its contribution to the position regarding homosexuality, in Scotland. I also have a certain amount of admiration for those involved in the drafting of the Law Reform Bill, but not all of us are prepared to stop there. Not all of us are content to settle for ages of consent, gay churches and marriages etc. Some of us, thank fuck, see more to being gay (and more to life, for that matter) than a wedding-band on your left hand, even if it was put there by a member of your own sex. I think that our challenge in Scotland is quite different than that in the rest of the country - - our still waters seem to run more stagnant, more putrid and

However, to know the Scottish Climate and Temperament and why the Scots are as they are, you would really need to live in the exhilarating and stultifying atmosphere of Scotland. (the Scottish Tourist Board will love me for that).

Everyone knows how fond we are of quoting Burns (ha, fucking ha!)

-- well here are two --

"In politics, if thou wouldst mix, and mean thy fortunes be, bear this in mind, be deaf and blind --LET RICH FOLKS HEAR AND SEE"

-- and a few words of wisdom --

"There's nane that's blest of human-kind, but the cheerful and the GAY".

MARTIN - EDINBURGH G.L.F.





GAY WOMEN TOGETHER

GAY WOMEN TOGETHER

"Following custom, the term 'homosexual' refers to male homosexual here...Whatever its potentiality in sexual politics, female homosexuality is currently so dead an issue that while male homosexuality gains a grudging loerance, in women the event is observed in scorn or in silence."

Footnote, Kate Millett's "Sexual Politics"

We all know why women, traditionally, have no concept of their own exploitation, infrequently join any organisation, if they're gay or bisexual become aware of this later than gay men, find it harder to hear about gay meeting places, join gay organisations less frequently than gay men. We also know that once they meet each other - usually in meetings where we're outnumbered by gay men - it's still difficult to relate to each other, to be loving, to stay together, without feeling guilty about it, without feeling that men ought to be included. We have several thousand years' backlog of communication to catch up on and not even the sense of community that a lot of groups of gay men have because we don't very often meet together as any sort of group (unless it's in a pub or club).

To the extent that a homophile community exists in Britain at the moment it exists because of the cross-fertilisation it exists because of the cross-fertilisation of ideas produced by Women's Lib and GLF in the States and the existence and activity of GEF in this country. For the first time ever we have the beginnings of a community that we belong to that's held together by love and caring for each other, that doesn't just depend on sexual preference and sexual activity, and that has a political consciousness. And this is happening in a lot of CHE groups as well as GLF ones.

Where are gay women in all this? Mostly, outside of London, as very small groups and individuals inside male-orientated and dominated groups in large towns and cities.

Most gay and bisexual women don't hear about either GLF or CHE or if they do are frightened off because they think they're 'men's groups'. And if we're honest about it, up till now neither of them has made a real consistent effort to get more women to join them. And why should they anyway? Women should be doing it.

As gay women we need to do two main things. We need to develop our position within the theory of sexual politics (let's find where we're at, baby) and use this as a basis for action. It ought to be relatively easy - everything that's been done so far has been done by women and is mainly about women. Women like Kate Millett and Shulamith Firestone are saying that 'patriarchy' is a system of power that exists in all societies and at all times (to date) and that it exists independently of any type of economic system (altho' it obviously operates through economic systems); and this is a definite move towards producing a feminist, and not a socialist, analysis of power and politics. And it's on this that the rest of their analysis of the position of women is built. And it's from this that gay lib. ideology originates. We also need to 'organise' (no, I don't mean bureaucratic structures, minute-taking and all the rest of it) and to communicate with each other (let's put our feet where our heads are at, baby). We need to be able to meet and talk to each other and to use every means we can to get publicity so that all the thousands of gay women who don't hear about any gay groups hear about us.

Manchester's a comparatively good place to live in. It has quite a few gay clubs and pubs; and three gay groups, one of which has existed for two and a half years.



But until the women's group started last November the total number of women who came to any of these groups' meetings was only about thirty, and only about fifteen or twenty stayed in contact with them (apart from parties and discos). About forty women came to the first women's meeting - and most of us had never seen so many gay women together in one room that wasn't a club; although meetings only average about twenty, about sixty women are in contact with the group and at least two or three get in contact every week. We've had a half-hour spot on local radio, ads in the local paper, posters (with a telephone number) in gay pubs and clubs, colleges and universities lavatories, libraries and shops. We meet every fortnight and talk (about just about everything), we have parties and discos, we go out together; and we're friends with each other.

Obviously it's not perfect, no one's trying to pretend that it is: but it's a beginning - and we need more beginnings.

Liz Stanley



It's time to find some peace of mind.
Away from where my work does lie, to
some far of place, among that which
constitutes nature.

To some demi-paradise, where I might
search my soul, with my own mind's
eye.

Is there such a place?

I hear there is !.

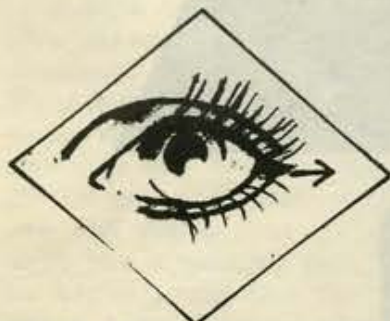
Somewhere I may eat, drink, sleep and
think alone.

To contend with only myself is not
so egotistic a case.

Only the truth is then revealed, there
is no one to influence, no love to gain.

Only the solitude, the wind, sun and rain.

STEPHANIE PATRICIA HART.



LIBERATION VIA EYE LINER?



One reason why the gay revolution will fade into obscurity is not so much due to the internecine quarrels besetting G.L.F. but the passive refusal of G.L.F. to involve itself in a wider revolutionary perspective. At a time when there is a general and growing awareness of the ecological system which we, human beings, are part of, a section of gay liberation and the gay scene in general is turned on to and hooked by consumerism. Present day Western capitalism flourished by virtue of the messiah of economic growth. Which in fact means cajoling and persuading people to want, creating through anxiety, needs; then producing goods to satisfy those needs. By this process capitalism continues by perpetuating the creation of needs, the 'satisfaction' by goods. How many women were aware of vaginal odour until it was screamed at them through ads., told it was undesirable and given (at a price!) the means to eradicate it.

Look closely at vaginal deoderants

A fair proportion contain hexachlorophene, likely to cause irritation of sensitive membranes and in the case of 28 babies in France dusted with hexachlorophene powder, DEATH. In the same context it is worth examining cosmetics. Cosmetics, a multi-million pound complex promoting a host of products, most of which are unnecessary, and promoted by the use of the groovy guy/gal image, as just one way to produce anxiety and sexual stereo type. The means by which one can attract that guy or gal. Many cosmetic

perfumes are dangerous, containing such chemicals as lead over the permitted level in eye make up. Some use various products derived from whales and other exploited animals (the next time you sunbathe think about the whale killed to supply your Elizabeth Arden sun oil)

Cosmetic products are overpackaged to the extreme and more often than not sold in 'disposable' containers. The safety of such products is questionable, not to mention the adverse effects upon resources and technology frittered upon research into a deoderant that smells like a mountain stream, instead of finding ways to feed the starving or clean the air in cities.

It is ironic that at a time when women are struggling to overthrow the cosmetic tyranny, many gay men are embracing it as potentially liberating, and super camps such as David Bowie are leading the promotion campaign.

The male gay scene has for so long concerned itself with the youthful ideal and the 'groovy guy' image. In trying to attain this ideal gay men are right for consumerism. Thus cosmetics and fancy 'fad' clothing are bought to capture the 'right' look at any particular time. Gay men are often hooked on to the ever changing fashion roundabout in an ever increasing turnover rate. The fact that

many people are willing to buy the most outrageous shoes with 3" to 6" heels which not only damage the foot and spine (probably for life) is evidence enough and symptomatic of the waste nature of the fashion scene that concentrates on obsolescence regardless of the real costs in ecological terms. It is gay men who being one of the most fashion conscious groups are exploited by the fashion promoters and used to promote the latest fad (in the same way women are via the self same boutiques) and thereby perpetuating the myth of youth and that all gays 'die' at thirty.

The time is long overdue for gay people to resist consumerism and consequently the 'ethics' of disposability and obsolescence. Gays do not live in a social vacuum nor do they live in an environmental vacuum. Only when people involved in gay liberation begin the follow through of the revolutionary basis of their struggle, opposition to capitalism and begin to create alternatives based on a rational use of the environment will the gay revolution become part of a wider revolutionary perspective, and break out of self imposed absurdism.

Geoffrey.

Liberation via Eyeliner?

City's gay-day just ran out of puff

MUMS found themselves with some explaining to do while out shopping with their children in Canterbury on Saturday. Little Johnnies and Fredas could be heard all over the city demanding, "What's omershexuality, mum?"

The word was, in fact, homosexuality, and there, before the shoppers' very eyes, was Kent's first Gay Liberation demonstration, during which a small group of homosexuals paraded through the streets. Although they waved their slogan-laden banners high in the air their messages seemed to go over the heads of many of the spectators.

The Gay day did not start off right for the small task force, whose pitch was quered by the fact that they expected

another 50 fellow mates to come from London for the demonstration.

Either British Rail or cold feet let them down as the march set off with just eight people brandishing their sex-lives on their banners, which carried such messages as "We demand the right to love" and "Gay is love."

The leaders of the exercise came from Folkestone and one of them, 23-year-old Mr. Brian Hart, explained why they picked the city for Kent's first homo demo.

"There is a much more tolerant attitude here than anywhere else in the county. That is probably because of the University," he explained.

He said that those taking part in the demo belonged to the Kent Gay Liberation Front and the Kent Group of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality.

Mr. Hart said that they decided to demonstrate to get across to the public that there were three million men and women homosexuals in this country and they were not all "poofs and pansies."

"They are not all people who fall into the typical image of a homosexual," he added. "A lot are ordinary working people and most of them are acutely lonely and we hope to help those people by showing them that there is nothing to be ashamed of in being a

homosexual; it is perfectly normal and natural."

With that, and an admission that he was really "terrified" at the prospect of taking part in his first demonstration, Mr. Hart led his troops away through the shoppers followed by a vocal crowd of teenagers and a silent posse of policemen.

The demonstrators handed out leaflets to some people, others seemed frightened to accept one. As they made their way through the streets the number of camp followers dwindled and by the time they reached the Dane John Gardens there was only a handful of teenagers and the police left.

Relieved that the march was over, the demonstrators propped their banners against the railings surrounding the Invicta railway engine. Canterbury's Gay day had run out of puff.



The Gay Liberation Front on the move.



Camp followers who found plenty to laugh about at Canterbury's Gay-Lib. demonstration on Saturday.

Gay Lib. on the march

Kent's first Gay Liberation demonstration took place in Canterbury on Saturday, when eight homosexuals paraded through the streets with placards.

The marchers belonged to the Kent Gay Liberation Front and the Kent Group of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality.

Gay Lib. demonstration

Sir or Madam,

I took part in a Gay Liberation Front and Campaign for homosexual equality demonstration in Canterbury on Saturday afternoon. As no reporter approached us, I should like to explain our reasons for holding the demonstration.

Although at least one person in 20 is overtly homosexual, this minority group still suffers from social stigmatization and defects within our legal system. Homosexual acts between consenting people is still illegal below the age of 21, all acts of homosexuality are still illegal in Northern Ireland and Scotland, and in the armed forces.

It is illegal for homosexuals to seek partners, irrespective of their age ("soliciting"); or for them to show affection in public ("public indecency"); or for them to advertise for partners ("corruption of public morals"); or to advocate homosexuality.

Homosexuals run the risk of blackmail, queer-bashing, police harassment, loss of livelihood and social status if their difference is discovered. Thus, we are condemned to isolation and loneliness.

Gay organisations exist to alleviate this suffering, by bringing together homosexuals, and helping them to combat their oppression. One way of doing this is by enlisting support and sympathy from the general public in Canterbury. On Saturday we met Canterbury people, and established some sort of contact. We hope that this will open channels to further understanding between our group and the people of this town.

CATHY McFERRAN,
Kent Gay Liberation Front,
Eliot College,
University of Kent.



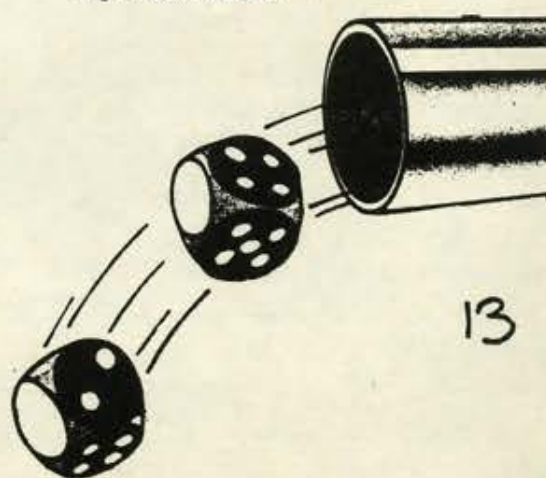
A banner announcing that one in 20 people are believed to be homosexual.

One of their leaders, 23-year-old Mr. Brian Hart, of Folkestone, said they decided to demonstrate to get across to the public that there were three million men and women homosexuals in the country.

He added, "They are not all people who fall into a typical image of a homosexual. A lot are ordinary people and most of them are acutely lonely and we hope to help these people by showing them that there is nothing to be ashamed of in being a homosexual."



Gay Liberation demonstrators during their Canterbury march on Saturday.



CONTACTS AND ADDRESSES

ALBANY TRUST 32 Shaftsbury Avenue, London W1V 8EP
Tel. 74 5588.

BANGOR GLF contact Simon Del Nevo, Students Union
Deiniol Rd, Bangor.
Pub The Washington, Llandudno.

BATH GAY AWARENESS GROUP +GLF
contact Bob Morley, Lone pine, c/o Upper Farm, Langridge,
Bath. Meetings- Thursdays.
Pub- Regency . Club- Valentine's George St.

BEDFORDSHIRE LIBERATION MOVEMENT.
contact Nik Ferguson, Northridge, The Avenue, Ampthill,
Beds. Pubs- Barley Mow, Bromham rd; Anglers Inn(south of
the river); Bear, High st.

BELFAST GLF
contact John Austin, 41 Cooke St, Belfast, 7. Tel. Queen's
University Union, 0232 42124(no letters here please)

BETHNAL ROUGE BOOKSHOP
248 Bethnal Green Rd, London E2.
Bookstore open approx. 11-7 each day. Help + info given
where needed.

BIRMINGHAM CHE
contact Denis, 11 Church Hill rd, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton
WV6 9AT. Tel. Wolverhampton 752673 (this is not an 021
number) or Tel. June, at Coleshill 62339.

BIRMINGHAM GLF
Peace Centre, 18 Moor St, Queensway, B'ham B4 7UH; tel.
021 643 0996. Thurs 4pm -9pm GLF member at Peace Centre
Pubs- Trocadero, Temple St; Victoria, Station St;
Crown, Station St. Clubs: Nightingale, Camp Hill; Grovenor
Hagley Rd.
BIRMINGHAM GAY STUDENTS GROUP
contact Tim Greenwood, Student's union, University, B'ham
15.

BLACKBURN GLF
contact George Giles, 45, Whalley St, Blackburn; tel 53012
Also Kath Fraser, 104 Infirmary st, Blackburn; tel 52435.
Pubs- Merchant Hotel, Dun Horse(almost exclusively Les-
bian) Top Hat; Sun Hotel; Peel Barton st.

BLACK COUNTRY CHE
contact 5 Manlove st, Pennfields, Wolverhampton WV3 0HG
tel. 28379.

BRADFORD CHE
CHE(Bradford) P.O. Box 47, Bradford BDI 5YZ. Tel. Hector
at Shipley 51742.

BRADFORD GLF
....is in process of formation; contact Leeds for details.

BRIGHTON CHE
contact Malcolm at Brighton 778025 (evenings) or Yvonne at
Brighton 66856 (all day).

BRISTOL CHE
P.O. box 171, Bristol BS99 7ND. Tel. David, Bristol 36370

BRISTOL GAY AWARENESS GROUP
contact Tony Gover, 20d West Mall, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4BQ;
tel. 0272 32669.

BRISTOL GAY STUDENTS SOCIETY
c/o Bristol University Union, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1LN
(not in August, however--holidays!)

CAMBRIDGE GLF
c/o Cambridge students' union, 3, Round Church St., Cambridge.
Pub.- The Stable Bar in the Turk's Head, Green St. (off
Trinity St.)

GAY CAMBRIDGE
contact Bernard Greaves, 29, John St., Cambridge. Tel. 52661.
Meets on alternate Tuesdays, at 8pm. at 4, Glisson Road.
Active Women's Group, which meets fortnightly at 4, Glisson
Road, on alternate Thursdays at 8pm. Contact Jane, c/o 29,
John St., Cambridge.

CHE-NATIONAL OFFICE
28, Kennedy St., Manchester M2 4BG. Tel. 061 228 1985.

In addition to the groups listed here, CHE groups meet in
the following places and can be contacted by post c/o the
national office: Basildon, Blackburn, Bolton, Bournemouth,
(cont'd at top of page.)

Colchester, Darlington, Guernsey, Guildford, Leicester,
Newport (Mon.), Nottingham, Oxford, Preston, Sheffield,
Stoke-on-Trent, Windsor, York. The following contact
telephone numbers of local groups are not listed
separately; Canterbury-Thames 42059; London east-
01-500 6032. Four groups which are listed separately,
though do not include CHE in their names, are
affiliated to CHE nationally; Bath GAG, Gay Cambridge
Kent Gay Alliance, Reading Gay Alliance.

CANTERBURY GLF
contact address not known.

CARDIFF CHE
c/o CHE national office, 28, Kennedy St., M2 4BG.
Meets Chapter Arts Centre, Mondays at 8pm.
Cardiff Friend, c/o 58, Charles St., Cardiff.-provides
counselling/befriending service for gay people with
problems.
Bar; Roberts bar, Royal Hotel. Club; Show Biz Club.

CARDIFF GLF
c/o Rib, 58, Charles St., Cardiff.

CARLISLE & CUMBRIA GROUP see CUMBRIA CHE-SMG JOINT
GROUP.

CARMARTHEN/SWANSEA CHE
contact Arthur Smith, Angle House, Mile, Llandybie, Carmar,
SA18 3NJ.

GAY CHILTERN (formerly Chilterns group of CHE)
c/o CHE, 28, Kennedy St., Manchester M2 4BG.
Meets usually in the restaurant at the Beech Tree
pub, Maxwell Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks.
Details of dates and speakers from Hadyn at High
Wycombe 39321, after 6pm.
Meetings-8pm. on Wednesdays.

COLERAINE GLF see NORTH EAST IRELAND GLF.

CORNWALL SELF AWARENESS GROUP
c/o Bristol Gay Students Soc., c/o Bristol University
union, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1LN.

COVENTRY GAY STUDENTS
Lanchester Polytechnic Gay Soc., c/o Students' union,
Lanchester Polytechnic, Priory St., Coventry.
Meet lunch-times, every week during term.

CUMBRIA CHE SMG JOINT GROUP

contact : R.J. Webster, 2 Cowpasture Cottages, Newson
Rigg, Penrith, Cumberland.

DERBY G.L.F. contact: Lawrence Brady
63, Lexington Rd, Chadderton Rd, Derby, D2 6UY
Telephone: Derby 764194 after 6 pm.

DUNDEE SMG contact Tony Hughes
15 Bellefield Ave. Dundee. Tel 0382 25913

DUNDEE G.L.F. contact as above.

EDINBURGH GLF contact Elyth
Top Flat right, 141, Dundee St, Edinburgh.
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY GAY GROUP & MINORITY GROUPS
E.U.G.C., Societies Centre, 21, Hill Place, Edinburgh 8.
SMG, c/o V.O.C., 11 St Colme St, Edinburgh EH3 6AG.
Telephone: Mike 031-225-4395. & 667-7473 (Ian) 1:00-10:00

ESSEX GAY LIBERATION STUDENTS GROUP
University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex.
Friend, 44 Earls Court Rd, London W.8.

GAY MARXIST GROUP 329a West End Lane, London N.W.6. 1RS
GLASGOW & SCOTTISH WEST GLF Robin Brown & George McNamara
4, Eldon Place, Caird Drive, Partick, Glasgow G11 5LV
(please do NOT put G.L.F. on envelope... Thank you)

GUERNSEY GLF: Jane and Jenny, Hotel La Porte, Elm Grove,
St Peters Port, Guernsey.

HIGHAM FERRERS GLF: contact Phil Taylor,
21, Kings Avenue, Higham Ferrers, Northants.

HOLLY HOUSE GAY LIBERATION: Marion Kamp.
Holly House, Prant, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

KEELE GAY LIBERATION SOCIETY: Keele University,
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.

KENT UNIVERSITY GAY LIBERATION SOCIETY (KENT GAY ALLIAN)
contact Gill Irwin, Keynes College, Kent University,
Canterbury, Kent.

LANCASTER GLF 19, Vincent St, Lancaster S41 3BA
Telephone Carol & Margaret at LANCASTER 66904

LEEDS C.H.E. contact: David, Morley 7686 after 7 p.m.

LEEDS G.L.F. 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 9JT.
Tel: 0532 39071 ext 57

LEICESTER GAY AWARENESS GROUP contact John Page.

126 Nansen Rd, Leicester LE5 5NJ

LIVERPOOL GLF-CHE contact Robin Bloxidge

3, Princess Ave, Liverpool. L8 2AT. Tel 051-709-6104

LONDON AREA GROUPS

LONDON C.M.E. Information Centre, 22 Gt Windmill St.
(in basement) London W.C.1. 01-437 7363.

Central London G.L.F. Office.....

5, Callenderian Road, London N.1. 837-7174

Lavender Love Commune, 20 Medburn St, W.W.1.

EAST LONDON G.L.F. 103 Market St, E.6.

LSE G.L.F. Students' Union, LSE, Houghton St. WC2

South London G.L.F. (Contact via Office.

WEST London G.L.F. (Contact through Office.

Battersea College of Art GAY SOC.

Battersea Coll of Education, 58 North Side, Clapham

Com on, S.W.4.

FELLOWSHIP in CHRIST the LIBERATOR.

c/o 61, Earl's Court RM So. London SW5 9DG

GAY WOMENS GROUP. c/o Women's Lib workshop,

3, Shaver's Place, Piccadilly W.1. 839-3918

Marrow Gay Unity, c/o Dennis & John, 69 Cunningham

Park Harrow. 863 5717.

SOUTH LONDON LESBIAN LIBERATION South London Womens

Centre, 14 Radnor Terrace, SW8.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON GAY SOC. Gaysoc, U.L.U. Malet St.

WC1E 7HY tel: Jasper Howard 388-0063.

MANCHESTER C.H.E. (Town Branch) P.O. Box 427, Spring

Gardens, Manchester M13 0HU

MANCHESTER G.L.F. Contact Rex & Alan, flat 3.102,

Hathersage Road, Manchester M13 0HU. or Tel Gary

061-434-2091; or Women's Centre 273 2287.10-10.

MANCHESTER GAY WOMEN TOGETHER Liz & Glenys

061-881-3683... also contact for T.V.&T.S.

MANCHESTER WOMENS' CENTRE 218 upper Brook St,

Manchester 13. phone 273 2287, open from 10-10 daily.

Newcastle G.L.F. 258 Westgate Road, Newcastle on tyne 2

(for immediate action, Eric Wears, 10 Chester St, Sandyford

Newcastle on Tyne 2.

NORTHAMPTON/BEDFORD CHE tel Northampton 22861 (evenings)

North-east Ireland G.L.F. Colerain S.R.M. c/o New

University of Ulster, Colerain, Co Derry.

NORWICH CHE. Norwich 25596 (lunchtimes)

NOT INGHAM G.L.F. Chris Kirk, Flat 5, 8 Alexandra St,

Sherwood Rise, Nottingham.

NOTTINGHAM GAY STUDENTS' SOCIETY Students Union,

University Park, Nottingham 7.

OXFORD GAY ACTION GROUP c/o East Oxford Advertiser,

34 Cowley Rd, Oxford. Tel 0865 45301 7-8p.m. daily.

OXFORD GAY STUDENTS SOCIETY Mike Willis, Hertford College

Oxford, or Andrew Watt, 23 Negro St, Oxford 0865 66590.

PORTSMOUTH CHE Tel Horndean 2855 6-7p.m.

POTTERIES G.L.F. Lez Tebb, 11 Haynerz Grove, Western Coyney

Stoke on Trent, N. Staffs.

READING GAY ALLIANCE Room 7, 30, London Rd, Reading.

St Andrews S.M.G., 45a South St, St Andrews, Fife,

KY16 9QR phone St Andrews 3914.

SALFORD GAY STUDENTS SOCIETY, Contact Liz Stanley

061-881-2683.

SAPHO, BCM/Petrel, London WCIV 6XX EDITOR Jaqualine

Forster.

SCOTTISH MINORITIES GROUPS

Aberdeen: Rosemary Kemp, 16 Belmont Rd, Aberdeen AB2 3BR or

Dennis Wilson, 22 Ferryhill Place, ABI 2SE. 20576

Glasgow: 214 Clyde St, Glasgow GL 4J2

SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY GAYSOC Students Union, Western Bank,

Sheffield 1C.

SHROPSHIRE CHE Tel, George at Cressage 231 (5-7p.m.)

SLOUGH G.L.F. Trevor McCree, 290 Langley Rd, Slough,

Bucks, Tel: Slough 43396

SOUTHAMPTON CHE David Porter, Flat B, 56 Westwood Rd

Southampton SO2 1DP

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE CHE Tel: Hatfield 69172 after 7p.m

STRATHCLYDE G.L.F. Gay Students Society, University of

Strathclyde, 90 Lahn St, Glasgow CI.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY GAYSOC Students Union Offices,

University of Sussex, Falmer, Nr Brighton

SUNDERLAND G.L.F. Howard Llewellyn, 21 Chester Terr,

Sunderland Co Durham.

SUSSEX G.L.F. Doug Coupe, 40 Ashford Rd, Brighton.

Swansea GAYSOC c/o Union House, University College

of Wales, Singleton Pk, Swansea.

TEESIDE CHE 132, Borough Rd, Middlesbrough.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHE Ross Burgess, 12 Chenies Close

Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Tel T.W. 33175 or 33942 (Mike)

TYNESIDE CHE David Mitchell, 65 St Anslem Rd, North

shields. Tel 76454.

WARWICK UNIVERSITY G.L.F. University of Warwick

Coventry CV4 7AL.

WIRRAL CHE Jack Lees, 3 Meadow Close, Willaston,

Wirral Cheshire. 051-327-5178

WOLVERHAMPTON CHE Denis, 11 Church Hill Rd, Tettenhall

Wolverhampton WV6 9AT Tel 752673.

YORK G.L.F. Langwith College, University of York, York.

WILL ANY GROUPS NOT LISTED ABOVE PLEASE CONTACT :-

LEEDS, LONDON and or MANCHESTER G.L.F. AS SOON AS

POSS PLEASE. THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SUSSEX G.L.F. ARE HAVING A CONFERENCE ON 12-14th

OCTOBER and one of their themes will be WORK on

future COME TOGETHERS.

PLEASE CONTACT: Graham Phillips

24, Gladstone Place, Brighton. phone 0273-688301.

NEWS..REVIEWS.ARTICLES.STORIES.DRAWINGS.PEOMS.

ALL PLEASE TO:- London, Manchester, Brighton.

Thanks Folk. Next edition early October.

See you then. Love.

What does "Gay Liberation Mean to
You? Our office, at 5, Callenderian Road
Kings X London N.1. Has been going for
3 years, and is the Info Centre for Gays
throughout the world. The office is
£400 in the Red!! Can You help?
10p, 50p, £1, £5 anything at all
Save our Centre Now. TODAY!
So we can help You and ALL Gays.

No Manifesto!
No Badges!!
No Office!!!
No "Broads"

HELP!
I'm
GAY
not
a
gay!

Next 'Come Together'
in October

Then EVERY MONTH? 15
That is up to You!

gay is good

poems.

A FLIGHTY SONNET

This time the bird has flown.
When we were first together,
I thought our love could have
grown.
I should have known!

As sure as eagles fly with the dove
Ours was not a stable love.
I should have known!
At first it was as two flying in an
endless stream of fast wind.
I know now that my imagination sinned
I should have known!

We glided over stormy days to see our
journey fulfilled.
And still had time to play.
Never was there time to be killed.
Preoccupied with ourselves.
But it was I who longed to be
I should have known!

My love is deeper than the oiled
feather.
That can be plucked and gone
forever.
But I have no protective coat of
armour.
And so like the hedgehog uncoiled
must face the danger and suffer.
I should have known!

Stephanie

SURVIVAL

Wading through the deep, deep water
Never fearing muddy or weed strewn
mires.
But progressing onward, onward,
Towards our goal and distant shore.
It is rare the shore is gained.
Only occasionally may we find the raft
of life in mid water.
Here temporary reality may be sustained
It is the daughter of the wind,
rain and sea.
That makes one feel like an animal
at the slaughter.

S.P. Hart

Gay is Good! I'm Glad to be Gay!
Love is for real, at work and at play.
To kiss out of love is cool, good and sweet,
And to kiss and be kissed makes loving complete.

Love, with Pride, Dignity and Respect!
If your lover loves you, then you should expect
Embraces and Fondeling errogenous parts
And a blending of minds, bodies and hearts.

Be the lover a boy, a man or a child
A girl or a woman, love can't be defiled
As long as the love is real, and is shared
Gay, Straight or what have you, two lovers
have paired.

But Sex is not love, but a part of the whole
A sharing of bodies, not a share of the soul.
Sex too is good, if by both 'tis enjoyed
And no one at all is abused or annoyed.

So come you, my lover, and share love with me
Let no one destroy what really should be.
Come you my lover, and let Gay be Good
And Love equal beauty, as all loving should!

Rex A. Bennett

MY PREOCCUPATION

Through days of sunshine and coal
black nights.
Through television films with endlessly
flashing lights.
Through traffic three deep and fast
lane motorway plights.
Through weekends of endless countryside
sweet of smell and far from hell.
Through shops crowded - and even when
buying a single pair of tights!
I think of you!

Stephanie

ideas
are not things
and things
are not people
Ideas are not real
until people
act on them.
Ideas alone
are useless
and indulgent
serving only
the intellect
and the ego-pride
in ego.

TIM.

