

Lunch

Number 14/20p
November 1972

**Dr Norman Pittinger & Rev Troy Perry on
homosexual relationships
Drag at the Hilton**



Lunch

LUNCH is an independent monthly magazine associated with
the Campaign for Homosexual Equality.

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Editorial

At a fringe meeting at the Blackpool Tory Party Conference on "Tory Democracy and the Homosexual" courageously organised by Peter Bond and the GLYC, an attractive young man, perfectly sympathetic towards homosexuals asked whether we didn't agree that by splitting society into 'them' and 'us' we tended to create an artificial barrier? After all as people we all inter-relate. I'd just used an oversimplified argument and asked the audience to put themselves in our shoes, imagining a homosexual society which frowned upon heterosexual relationships. Of course it became patently obvious that ecologically it wouldn't be possible, and how stupid I was not to have thought it through sufficiently. I refrained from countering with the trite apologia for homosexuality, "Well what about overpopulation?" But it forced me to think. And there are a lot of sympathetic people, Tories and otherwise, who find that many homosexuals erect an impregnable barrier about themselves and are as much self-oppressed as affected by extraneous circumstances. If we could stop moaning and generalising and cut down on some of 'our' preconceptions about 'straight' society, we might begin making concrete progress in ending bigotry and prejudice, which, after all, cuts both ways.

I found myself floundering into deeper and deeper water while trying to define 'normality' and what is 'natural'. At which juncture Ian Harvey and Tony Ryde both stepped in opportunely and marvellously to bail me out. But it's a salutary experience having to address calmly and rationally a room full of strangers; even more valuable to listen to what they seriously think of 'us' and how some of them also abhor the present situation and had really considered their viewpoint on homosexuals and made a real effort to understand our position. I think we should occasionally stop and take this into account.

Maybe it's a human failing to want to project a homely, respectable, safe, ordinary (if there are such people) 'nice' homosexual image to a non-partisan audience. I know it's harder to be scrupulously honest. It will be pleasant when we all no longer have to preface ourselves to people, to excuse, justify or explain. Remember that the same applies to heterosexuals, only in reverse.

Inevitably afterwards there were the hangers on and drinks offered us by, apparently, at first hostile, Monday Club members? Or scarcely disguised policemen, possibly puzzled by our lack of strident histrionics and exhibitionism, which seem linked invariably to an outsider's view of homosexuals.

The trip to Blackpool and Manchester was heartwarming; to meet new, fresh interesting people, calmly getting on with life, makes London really seem frenetic and people to have lost their sense of proportion. Blackpool's illuminations gave the strong impression of being in America and disorientated one of us so much he opened the offside car door, instinctively convinced he was back in the U.S.

LUNCH is beginning to be widely sold in bookshops. If anyone feels LUNCH should be in their area and knows of any suitable shops to approach, we will willingly send you a few sample copies to try out. Thank you.

FORTHCOMING ISSUES of LUNCH will include interviews with Jimmy Savile, Alan Brien, Graham Collier, Antony Grey, Paul Temperton and David Lutyens, but not necessarily in that order.

ONE PLEA! Cartoons, please!

Interview

with the Reverend Troy Perry



TROY PERRY, PART CHEROKEE INDIAN, HAS AN IRRESISTIBLE LARGER-THAN-LIFE QUALITY AND PERSONAL MAGNETISM ABOUT HIM, HARD TO CONVEY IF YOU HAVEN'T MET HIM. CHARISMA? HE IS STRONG IN THE GAY CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN THE STATES, WHERE HE FORMED THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH, WHICH NOW HAS OVER 36 BRANCHES.

HE RECENTLY VISITED ENGLAND AND SPOKE TO A LARGE GATHERING AT A MEETING SPONSORED BY C.H.E. HIS INCREDIBLY FRANK AND MOVING AUTOBIOGRAPHY HAS JUST APPEARED.

KNOWING HIM, I CAN ONLY REJECT THE VIEW THAT HE IS A SUPER-SLICK CHURCH SALESMAN: HE SEEMED SIMPLY AND UTTERLY GOOD.

Q: Do you think there could be a Metropolitan Community Church in London too after your visit?

'Yes. If it's right to have an MCC - if there's a need for it - then there will be one. At the first service in London there were more people than at my first meeting when we started the church in Los Angeles. There were about forty people, I think.'

Q: But the British fear of emotional response is such that I would have thought your Pentecostal brand of evangelism was too peculiarly American to go down here. I'm an agnostic, and I know I was horrified at my unexpected emotional reaction.

'The British are said not to show their emotions, but I feel all emotions should be shown in church as well as in the home. If I'm upset I expect you to cry with me: if I'm happy I expect you to laugh.'

Q: Before I met you I wasn't sure what I thought about the MCC. I'd read Pete Goodwin's report written for LUNCH, and found it moving, and I understood his experience, but faith is an easy thing to send up. Trying to communicate to friends how moved I was by the experience, I found it difficult for them to grasp. Do you usually evoke that response or know that you will in advance?

(All the congregation had been moved to tears)

'No, I don't think you could intentionally. But if you honestly preach what you consider to be the truth, and have something to say, people will respond to that message.'

Q: You talk about Steve in your book. Do you think your 'marriage' to him will last?

'I certainly hope so, but I'm realistic too. If at any point in my relationship with my other half I felt we had reached an impasse where there was no love left, then I feel it would be time to separate. I hope it will last for ever. I'm in love with Steve but we both have problems. I'm away quite a bit of the time and that's awfully rough on any relationship, heterosexual or homosexual. In Los Angeles we live in a goldfish bowl: everyone knows us. We really can't do anything, even have a family squabble, without the whole community knowing, and that does make for a very difficult situation. In our relationship we don't play roles, although Steve cuts up once in a while and talks about being the 'pastor's wife!'

At the beginning, both coming from religious backgrounds, we wanted ours to exactly resemble the heterosexual pattern, but it just didn't work out. Ours is not a monogamous relationship, and hasn't been

so for the last year.'

Q: Won't this put undue pressure on you both, or do you think it's a more honest, realistic approach?

'I'm not sure. To have a monogamous relationship, I think, puts you, whoever you are, in the perfect will of God. I think you can still be in God's 'permissive' will without having it. It's a theological question with me. I wish we had a monogamous relationship, but we don't, and it works for us the way it is.'

Q: By mutual agreement?

'I'm not sure. I think it's typical of the male ego - maybe that's wrong - of our both being males. Yet one thing we decided in our relationship was not to lie to each other. If we were interested in knowing whether the other had been out, we would ask and receive an honest answer. If we didn't want to know, we shouldn't ask. And if we did, we shouldn't be upset with the answer. So I think that in that way our relationship is much more honest than many heterosexual relationships.'

Q: Can you envisage, if you did break up, ever striking rock bottom again as you did at the time when you cut your wrists?

'No, I could never go back to that period in my life. Any break-up must hurt, of course, if you love someone. Love's not something you cut off like a faucet. But there are times when the water can start running pretty low too! I think it would take quite a bit to come to a conclusion where I would honestly say: 'Steve, I don't love you any more', and if that did happen then it would just be a break-up. In so many people's lives you hit that time and then you get to know your emotions. If you really love God you learn to love yourself. You learn what your strengths and weaknesses are and you know just how far you can push yourself and when to stop, if you're smart at all. So you can say 'Okay, I'm weak in this area and had better stop right here and now because that could become a problem'. That's so even with a relationship.'

Q: But most people just don't have such self-knowledge so young.

'You learn. In my particular case God has let me pack so much into 32 years that in some ways I've matured.'

Q: Do you think bisexuals have a worse deal than transvestites or transsexuals? Having been married, you presumably see yourself as having been conditioned to a heterosexual way of life, rather than as a

true bisexual?

'Yes. First of all, I've yet to meet a true bisexual. I'm not sure there is such I think, but it's a good excuse. I've met individuals who say: 'I'm bisexual, but usually there's a preference for one or the other sex. Because of the stigma attached to being gay in America, you still sound half-normal if you say you're bisexual! But I'm not sure we've even worked out a definition of a homosexual yet; someone who spends 51% of his or her time with members of the same sex?'

Q: The American And English situations aren't exactly parallel. I know California really is an oppressive state, which is possibly why the MCC might not work over here, where we don't have life imprisonment any more and the church's attitude is growing increasingly sympathetic. What do you feel must still be done for gay people?

'Even if all the laws changed in America tomorrow, our struggle wouldn't finish. We should have an obligation to our brothers and sisters in Spain, where homosexuals can be put in concentration camps, in South Africa, in Central and South America, where the church is very powerful in an adverse way. Australian laws haven't changed either, and what about the areas where there are no laws, but oppression is still great, where you still can be fired from jobs...'

Q: That happens here.

'Right! In fact nothing much has changed in Great Britain. So I think our struggle is a universal one, for the right of each human being to exist in his or her own way, as long as they're not hurting someone. Consenting sex acts don't hurt anyone else and it's stupid even to suggest that they do. When they talk about our converting individuals to homosexuality, we don't. Nature takes care of that for us. But on the other hand I want to be there, letting young men and women know that we all exist; that there's CHE in London, MCC in the States, Orcadie in Paris. It's very important that we are concerned about them and that they should be able to contact such organisations.'

Q: Of the many countries you've visited on this trip, which places struck you particularly?

'Amsterdam is probably the most open as far as being able to do one's own thing, but there's still a lot of repression as far as individuals are concerned. Liberation hasn't taken place in so many minds.

I was very disappointed in COC, which claims not to be a gay organisation any more, so their national

president told me. I mentioned, as an idea for an International Conference that I'd like to see one with the leadership of organisations from all over the world. He told me COC could never participate in anything like that, as they were 'above that sort of thing! And that's horrible! Even if they feel their battle is finished they should be interested in an outreach to other brothers and sisters still struggling.

In France, the French cannot see certain films and cannot supposedly show their emotions openly. I don't mean that I'd want to see them having sex on the streets, or that even they would want that. But again it's this old game - "I'm straight and the family is wonderful" but only in a heterosexual context. I was very impressed with the people who came to hear me - around 500 showed up - it was just fantastic and I even had an interpreter! A beautiful friendly group of people. Here again Orcadie realised there's still a struggle to be fought and won.

On the surface everything in Switzerland looked great and groovy, but digging into things you find a lot of oppression. The organisation, SOH, chartered a bus for us, opened clubs specially, drove us into the mountains where they gave us a 42-course meal! I've never seen so much food, or so beautifully prepared. It was unbelievable how they went out of their way to make us feel at home.

Q: Do you feel the lack of hospitality over in England, as compared with American hospitality?

'Not at all. I've had a delightful time. My host, Pete Goodwin, has just done a fantastic job. I've been wined and dined all over the city and it's been great meeting all my gay brothers and sisters here. People told me how reserved the British are, but I haven't found this and that's the truth. Of course I speak with a Southern accent, but that's the only difference really.'

Q: But you can't judge it by people's response to you!

'Well I believe literally in that scripture from Proverbs, "If a man - or woman - is to have friends, then you must show yourself friendly!" You don't ever have to meet strangers.'

Q: I was disappointed that more clergy didn't come to hear you.

'Perhaps some stayed away because they felt if they came that would be adding validity to what we do.'

Q: But if we're all engaged in the same sort of work we should pool ideas. I know you paid for this trip

yourself because you felt it to be important. I wish more people over here from similar helping organisations (like FRIEND) had consulted you on how you do things in the States.

'Of course the work with the lonely or suicidal is vitally important. We have a 24-hour emergency service which was one of the first things set up after the church started, because I had a sixteen year old who had overdosed. His eighteen year old lover called me hysterically that they were rushing the boy to hospital. I met him there and had prayer with the unconscious boy while the doctors were working with him - as I didn't want to get in their way, I was only with him for about fifteen seconds. He was completely blue - his lips, everything - from lack of oxygen, and we took his friend home, Steve and I, got him to take a bath, fed him a good hot meal, and took him back to the hospital.

'These boys didn't have anybody to turn to; neither of their parents knew they were gay. In the meantime, the hospital was frantically trying to discover the patient's real name so as to contact his parents. I knew once that happened that it would be the end of our being effective at all, because the parents would move in and ensure his lover was not even permitted into the hospital.

Next morning we returned to the hospital and waited for hours. As the boy still hadn't come to, we went to the coffee shop. Getting off on the top floor, we heard the boy just screaming; he had come to and thought he was dead, which is a typical reaction, according to psychiatrists in the States. As it's against the law to attempt suicide, they had four big deputy sheriffs around him, strapping him to the bed, which can be a horrible experience, because they feared he might try hurting himself, so were doing it for his own protection. We calmed him down, told him: "Everything's okay, you're all right!"

It was that experience that started our crisis groups. I thought, 'My God, how often does this happen in Los Angeles!' I believe we've been responsible for saving a lot of lives, through just being able to listen. We've had to break down doors before now with the police to save someone who's overdosed or cut their throat.

We have a director of the centre. All the individuals who work in it are volunteers, concerned for other people, and who have empathy for them.

We have a director of the centre. All those who work in it are volunteers, concerned individuals with empathy for other people.

I'll carry my own scars for the rest of my life. I can relate to a person who feels so low that this has to be the way it's done. But I always tell them: "Look at me. What if that had been the end of my work. As far as I'm concerned God could never have used me. I believe God gets us into certain situations so that we can honestly learn.

People work on two very long twelve hour shifts and are there on the phones. We encourage couples and lovers to stay overnight. We don't expect them to sit for the whole stretch in a little room, because it can get very tedious. They have television. During the day there are people in and out of the centre counselling; psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists. We provide room for them to counsel in. They in turn train some lay counsellors to handle the light problems but if it's very deep we refer that person to a psychiatrist or whatever. It's a free service. The church pays for the telephone, furniture. We hope to gain a grant to study homosexuality shortly, so we can pay some of these people who devote so much of their good will and energy to us.

Q: You have young people too?

'Yes and they do all kinds of things. Not only do they have meetings, and social events, for youth only, but they throw dances where everybody's invited.

Q: You must often run into problems with their parents?

'Very honestly, no. Usually parents encourage their children to come to our church and our youth meetings. Their attitude is: "If my child is gay, I still want him or her to be a good citizen and productive member of society, not a dropout." The rational ones regard the church as a group actively doing something.'

Q: You mean they think you're safe and establishment enough?

'Yes. I'm for changing the existing order, but before I can do that I have to liberate myself. Most liberation takes place right up here, in the mind. Once I am liberated, know who I am and what I'm all about, there's no stopping me. Then I can move onto society and say to my heterosexual brothers and sisters: "You discriminate, you do these horrible things, and the only thing I want is every-right that you have. No more, no less, and I'm going to have it!"

Then you get sympathetic straights in this society too. I believe the American system, with our written constitution, is such that we honestly can afford change, and are seeing it. Three years ago if you talked about homosexuality, it would be after midnight and all parents would be asked to put the kiddies in bed as

"We're going to discuss that problem - homosexuality". No one would be permitted to even stay and watch it. Today it's discussed on talk shows in the afternoon, before a kiddies' show on Saturday and no one gives it a second thought. Gay Liberation is a household word.'

Q: Do you ever have problems with your volunteers wanting to join to get something out of it?

'Oh yes, once in a while, we meet individuals who want to 'trick', who want to join the crisis group because they'll meet people who are lonely and calling for help. The director assesses people and I rely on him. It has to be a pretty bad offence to dismiss a person for though, and we must know beyond a doubt that this honestly is the situation.'

Q: So you let all volunteers in?

Yes and no. Someone who's completely out of tune with things will not be allowed on those telephones, but if they're logical when you interview them and you feel they'll be okay, then you use them. We have a sign up in the crisis group centre for the workers which says: "No tripping (drugs), no sipping (alcohol), no talking (outside you don't discuss people's problems or divulge confidences), and no tricking (picking up of a sexual partner). The four noes!"

Q: And do you have heterosexuals helping, just as you do in the church?

'Oh yes. A heterosexual woman won the 'founders' award' last year. (We give away awards each year to individuals who have most exemplified the spirit of our church.) She's become the mother of so many kids whose parents have completely rejected them. Week in, week out, she says to those kids: "Come on, I'm just like your mother, I'm a heterosexual, yet here I am. Let's talk about this thing!" It's a good therapy and it really works!"



DR. NORMAN PITTINGER IS A MEMBER OF THE DIVINITY FACULTY OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, AND SENIOR RESIDENT OF KINGS COLLEGE.

HIS TWO MOST RECENT BOOKS ARE 'TRYING TO BE A CHRISTIAN TODAY' (UNITED CHURCH PRESS, PHILADELPHIA AUG. '72) AND 'THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH'S SOCIAL PROCESS' (EPWORTH PRESS '71)

WE ASKED FOR HIS COMMENTS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH SETTING UP A BRANCH IN ENGLAND, AND HIS VIEW OF HOMOSEXUAL 'MARRIAGES'.

ON THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

"There are doubtless numbers of people who feel themselves unaccepted by the more established churches, who can be enormously helped by something like the MCC, as I told Troy. But I think the temperament of the Englishman or woman is really against the multiplication of sects and also is a little suspicious of this kind of segregated religion.

It would be much more satisfactory if the work already going on for the established churches to accept homosexuals were pushed ahead as rapidly as possible; firstly, because these are churches that have some historical background and tradition and are most familiar to us, but secondly, because they bring many different kinds of people together. One thing that I find troublesome sometimes in homosexual groups, organisations, societies, is that so much time is spent on examining oneself, and one's condition, that the real situation in the world, of which this is not the ONLY part, does get forgotten.

I was asked some years ago to advise a group attempting to provide for homosexuals' needs. One point I didn't succeed in getting across was that it would be a very good thing if there were meetings where homosexuals' problems were discussed, where they could 'let down their hair', but that this should be in the setting of real concern for poor, underprivileged, needy people, who are the bigger issues of race and class, for all of the problems that we face, so that homosexuality is not taken as the one and only thing and made the whole point of reference for the organisation. I realise there have to be pressure groups, but I think one can focus too much on one issue and lose the whole picture.

ON HOMOSEXUAL MARRIAGES

I dislike very much the use of the term 'marriage' for homosexual unions, partly because I'm an academic, and I think you can't really undo the set of ideas marriage has become historically, with the legal sanctions, expectation of children, establishment of a cell where new life will be brought into existence and trained up to

maturity, and a lot of other factors, including the concept of lifelong monogamy as the ideal.

To try to make homosexual unions identical with marriage invites problems. Lacking the legal and social sanctions, the only thing that can hold such a union together is the love shared between the persons, which, in our human condition as finite people, who make mistakes, we are quite likely to have gone wrong. I like very much what Troy said in his book, discussing the way he performs these 'marriages' - "So long as you both shall love one another." I should say: "As long as ye both shall want to remain together", which, oddly enough, is becoming increasingly the case now in understanding heterosexual unions, called marriages, because after all even the new marriage law says there can be 'irretrievable breakdown'.

It is not necessarily of the nature of the homosexual, but rather of the nature of the human personality that when people are apart it's quite likely that one or other or both, might want the kind of thing which could be provided by a sporadic but affectionate sexual contact and I should not want to condemn this AT ALL. To use the term 'marriage' suggests the sort of fidelity which is perhaps even inappropriate in contemporary heterosexual unions, although it may very well be desirable. One would like the church to recognise genuine homosexual unions, with the intention of such permanency as can be managed by the parties in question, to see the church blessing such unions, rather than doing everything possible to impede them (which seems to me extraordinary), making allowances for the fact that despite the best intentions, people do make mistakes.

I think when girl meets boy they 'fall in love', one says to the other. 'I love you! Sotto voce that remark also says 'for ever'. Precisely the same thing happens when boy meets boy, girl meets girl, they say 'I love you' (for ever), but it may not work out in a world where circumstances and situations change. Then to think in heterosexual union that two cats tied together by the tail constitute an appropriate symbol of the mystical union of Christ and the Church is to me both blasphemous and absurd! That boy and boy, girl and girl MUST, although they've come to hate each other, or get on so badly that it's a misery for both of them, be forced to remain together when it's destructive of their personality to do so, seems to me again unrealistic and blasphemous of love, because then the relationship is no longer loving, but simply a convenience, which won't do.

Finally, people say: "Well with your remarks both about heterosexual and homosexual unions, you destroy

the fabric of society." Sheer rot. What one questions is the conventional pattern, a canonisation of Roman - not Christian - legal regulations in respect to marriage, which the church took over. Furthermore a good deal of it is nothing but what we call "Victorian patterns of morality". What's bound to happen is there will be a different mode of family life, maybe a different understanding of personal relationships in respect to unions. But I don't think it's going to destroy society. If society's going to be destroyed by that, then it deserves to be."

Communion Services

N.B. Following the recent visit of the Reverend Troy Perry, The Fellowship in Christ the Liberator has been formed and holds Communion Services in West Kensington on Sundays at 8.p.m.

For further details write to Secretary, FCL, c/o 61 Earls Court Square, London SW5.

Drag at the Hilton

with Leslie Russell



LEFT TO RIGHT: Mr Jean Fredericks, M. Pompidou, M. Laurence Daury (Parisian fire-eater) Miss Jean Harvey.
PHOTOS BY COURTESY OF T.V.PHOTOGRAPHIC.

The significant thing about the drag ball at the Hilton is that it was what it was where it was. A drag ball of all things! At the Hilton of all places!

But no-one batted an eye as the cars and taxis rolled up to the ballroom entrance and their exotic passengers swayed into the hotel in a swirl of Chanel No. 5. One svelte redhead, arriving by mistake at the main entrance, swept superbly through the foyer followed by the admiring eyes of every man she passed.

The ball was a smash hit from the start. More than a hundred applications for tickets had to be turned down and there wasn't room for one more set of false eyelashes in the ladies.

The ballroom, scene of so many mind-numbing company dinner dances, was an amazing sight. The Duchesses sailed like galleons from table to table, Carmen Miranda and Sophie Tucker still the most popular sources of inspiration though there was a touch of Humphrey Bogart here and there. The queens, themselves, ranged from regal top model to lustrous sex symbol, from deb-of-the-year to Shepherd's Market trollop, and presiding over it all was the Queen Mother of Drag, Mr Jean Fredericks, a vast figure in and Empire Line gown of purple chiffon, the bodice decorated with 25,000 beads all sewn on by hand.



Mr Fredericks was the genius behind the ball. He had organised it and now there he was in his element, jollying everyone along, gracefully accepting compliments, smoothing over little local difficulties and absolutely stopping the show in the cabaret. Mr Fredericks in purple chiffon Empire Line, marching round the ballroom floor playing 'Second Hand Rose' on the trombone is a sight not easily forgotten.

The elegant lady who compered the cabaret, on the other hand, did not have so smooth a ride. She had some bother with a Duchess on the ringside whose lady-like heckling made her completely lose her cool. "Shut yer face yer daft bitch," she snapped. We all enjoyed that bit too.

The drag queens paraded for a preliminary panel of judges, got whittled down to a select group of finalists who then, with a fanfare from the trumpets, presented themselves to the main judges led by Michael Denison and Dulcie Grey. Their task was to choose Miss Female Impersonator International, 1972, and they found it so difficult that the finalists all had to parade yet again.

Eventually the winner was announced - a pretty little thing called Leslie Porter. Runners up were Tony

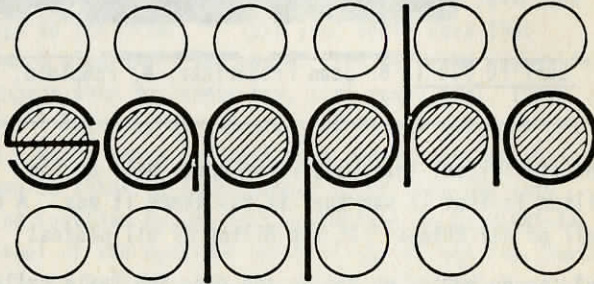
Munroe and Tillie Rothborough who tied for second place and Mark Artok, a tall blond boy in pink who wore his own hair and came third. Mr Porter won prizes worth £200. He looked quite overcome as other queens pecked his cheek and murmured congratulations.

Oh yes - there was a prize for the Duchesses too. This was won by a lady called Marlene who looked like an exhausted Miss Dietrich. This was presented by one of the preliminary judges, Miss Jean Harvey, editor of GAYSCENE, a large person in a dinner jacket, a cigar in her hands, automatically called 'sir' by the barmen and all the waiters.

The dancing warmed up. Conga lines wove out of the ballroom, into the bar and back again. Duchesses did vigorous charlestons, drag queens grooved and shook and rocked their way towards the last waltz. On the stairs a straight girl tearfully and loudly accused her dolly boyfriend of getting off with one of the drag queens. "We're finished, do you hear? Finished!" she cried. Barbara Stanwyck couldn't have played the scene better.

A few days later the Hilton wrote a letter to Mr Fredericks. They thanked him for the work he had done, complimented him on the success of the evening and looked forward to the next time...

So there will be another drag ball at the Hilton next year and one drag queen I know is already planning her costume. As for the Hilton Hotel, what a nice place that turns out to be...



all gay women should read

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Dr. Norman Pittinger

AUTHOR OF "TIME FOR CONSENT: A CHRISTIAN'S APPROACH TO HOMOSEXUALITY" HE KINDLY GAVE US PERMISSION TO PRINT HIS SPEECH GIVEN ON SEPT. 22 AT THE HOLBORN ASSEMBLY HALL.



"I have been asked to speak to you about the theological objections commonly advanced against homosexuality and homosexual acts, usually by representatives of the western Christian religious tradition; but I should warn you that I do not find these objections convincing. Many of you are aware that I speak as a known, if not notorious, defender of the goodness of the homosexual. I do not think that everyone ought to be 'gay', but I see no reason why anyone should not be if that is his sexual tendency. Nor do I consider homosexuals as deviant; they are not deviant but different -- different, that is, in respect to the kind of sexual interest and expression evidently preferred by the majority of men and women. That majority preference is an interesting and important fact, to be sure; but it is not determinative of 'normality' one way or the other -- truth is not found by counting noses, heterosexual or homosexual. So I believe that 'gay is good', but neither more nor less good than heterosexuality; although for the homosexual it is indeed so good that it is for him even more: it is better or best.

To turn to those theological objections. I believe they may be subsumed under five headings.

First, homosexuality is said to be condemned in the Bible. Certainly it is condemned there; but the question is why and how this occurs. That means that we need to understand what the Bible is and how we are to read it. If the Bible were dropped from heaven, as the absolute disclosure of God's will, that would be one thing -- and I reject that notion, along with the great majority of contemporary theologians. If the Bible is a most varied literature, including poetry, prophecy, history, the account of developing insight about God and man and their relationship, it is another thing -- and I accept that view. The Bible was produced by a people who believed that they were responding to an activity of God upon them and for them; their resp-

onse was inevitably in terms of their ways of seeing and interpreting -- all such response is ad modum recipientis, as the medievals put it: 'in the ways possible for those who receive' and hence respond.

Now in the Old Testament passages, notably in Leviticus, homosexuality is condemned because it (like masturbation and extra-vaginal male ejaculation) prevented the procreation of children. Why did that matter? It mattered because for the ancient Hebrews, who believed themselves to be 'the chosen people with a vocation of disclosing God to the world, the multiplication of their race was of primary importance. To 'spill the seed' would make such multiplication impossible. Further, when the Jews entered Canaan, their austere moral and religious outlook was shocked by the idolatry of Baal-worship and by the association, with that worship, of temple-prostitution, both male and female.

Homosexuality was linked with idolatry; inevitably, it was to be condemned. Thus in the Old Testament we have a combination of the sense of divine vocation and the feeling of horror at licentiousness in connection with worship; both were tied in with homosexuality and hence homosexuality was said to be 'sin'.

In the New Testament, St. Paul speaks strongly against homosexuality. It is to be noted, however, that he does not single it out (save possibly in a passage in Romans); he simply mentions it as being, in his view, 'sin', along with other 'sins'. Why? First, because he inherited the Old Testament view; second, because his moral sensitivity was disturbed by any and every use of sex which seemed to him unrestrained. In the Graeco-Roman world of his time, that was clearly the case. The Latin poet Juvenal in his Satires is even more vituperative than St. Paul about such lack of sexual restraint, including homosexual laxity. But it is absurd to assume that St. Paul -- or Juvenal, for that matter -- was necessarily expressing the divine will; they were both responding to a given historical situation in the way natural to them.

The Bible is not in its every word divine revelation or divine statement of moral principles or divine condemnation of this or that sexual activity. Its chief point in this matter is simply to urge that all sexual expression should be related to love, should reflect love, and thus should disclose God's own nature (which is Love) and man's intended nature (which also is love). The Bible is the story of how through their continuing experience a given people came to see that man is a 'lover in the making' under God who is the cosmic Lover of all men.

Second, there is much talk in theological circles about 'natural law.' This is taken to be a divinely-implanted set of moral principles which every man can know and should follow. Its summary statement is in St. Thomas Aquinas 'we are to avoid evil and do good.' But its detailed application is always a reflection of the particular culture in which such application is made; the specific content of so-called 'natural law' usually is a re-phrasing of what the conventional patterns of behaviour are taken to be at that time and place. 'Natural law' says that sex can be licit only under certain conditions and only with somebody of the other gender; it says this because it is simply assumed that this is right, on the grounds that this is how most people tend to think about it. But new times, new ideas, new knowledge, make a considerable difference -- in our day 'avoiding evil and doing good' will be seen in different applications.

It is strange that those who reduce sexuality to heterosexuality with the sole purpose of procreation do not recognize that they are putting men on the level of animals -- although not a few animals, by the way, are homosexual from time to time. But man has learned through experience that sexual activity is primarily instrumental, for him, in promoting union, mutual-ity, sharing, and love, through a kind of relationship which in itself is satisfying and pleasant; that makes sexuality in men a distinctive thing. Now that we know this, whilst we also have 'the pill' and other ways of regulating conception, it is absurd to restrict sex only to procreational purposes, despite Pope Paul's remarks in the encyclical Humanae Vitae.

The third objection is related to the second. It asserts that sexual acts can take place only within marriage. It is obvious that this is not the case, once we recognize that everything that we do has its sexual aspect, even if not its explicitly genital one. I cannot here develop the point; I can only say that human sexual drives and desires, with their physiological, psychological, emotional, and spiritual grounding, provide the basis for all human relationship. The creaturely equipment which makes all love possible is sexual in nature. The way we act upon it may differ from time to time, place to place, person to person; but only prejudice or blindness could forbid any and every non-marital sexual expression. To say that would be to make friendship impossible, for example, since we are now aware (thanks to expert evidence) that friendship has its sexual aspect too.

A fourth objection appeals to the 'moral sense of man' -- perhaps this is a variation of the 'natural law' argument. It is said that his 'moral sense' condemns and rejects homosexual activity. But that is simply false. There have been societies in which homosexuality is accepted without question; we are all familiar with ancient Greece, but there are many others also. Even within our western culture, the Latin countries have been fairly accepting and open. I can speak with considerable knowledge of these lands and say that in Italy, for example, the homosexual is 'taken for granted' by most people. In Scandinavia the same is increasingly true. The fact is that it is primarily in English-speaking (shall I say 'Anglo-Saxon'?) lands that a completely negative attitude has tended to prevail. But need it and should it? Perhaps 'new occasions' will teach 'new duties'; perhaps 'time' will 'make ancient good uncouth' -- this seems to be happening today, more particularly among younger people.

The final objection is that homosexual acts are damaging to society's ordered existence because they threaten the family-structure, whilst it is damaging to persons because it distorts the personality-structure. About the first of these one need only remark that it is odd to hear those who think of homosexuality as disgusting and damaging talk as if everybody would act homosexually if he got the chance! I doubt if the family-structure is in much

danger, even if what Dr. Edmund Leach calls the 'nuclear family' (the Victorian pattern is what he means) is on the way out and a new type of family is appearing. In regard to the supposed damage to personality-structure, surely we now know that it is only when it is interpreted as such that damage results. Here psychiatrists and psychoanalysts have much to answer for; their valuable work is too often accompanied by a feeling that men and women must be adjusted to things as they are. But why? Things as they are seem to me pretty sick; would it not be wiser to help people make the best of themselves, as they are and with what tendencies they manifestly possess? Three years ago I attended a small conference on the homosexual and his supposed 'problems.' A distinguished psychiatrist told us that every homosexual who consulted him was 'emotionally disturbed.' When I asked if the same was true of every heterosexual who consulted him, he hesitated for a minute or two and then said, 'Good Lord, you're right! I never thought of that before.' If there is no particular essential pattern of personality, revealed from on high or plainly shown through enquiry, one would think that the homosexual pattern is as good, or as bad, as any other. What we need is the right and adequate development of the selves we have or are becoming, not imposition of bourgeois ideas of health or sickness.

Let me conclude by saying some positive things about homosexuality.

First, man is a sexual being, with the physiological equipment, the psychological drive, the emotional response, and the spiritual capacity to give himself to another and receive from another. This is the basis for the human relationship in love, since love is giving-and-receiving, mutual-ity, sharing, union of lives. A consequence of this pervasive sexuality in man is his urgent desire to unite himself bodily with others; thus he can relieve loneliness, find and give pleasure, establish fellowship, provide affection, at the same time that he obtains sexual release in a genital sense. Man wants 'to make love'; and one way, basic to him, for doing this is by 'having sex.' Having sex is great fun; making love is unutterable joy. Having sex is good; being in love is the way man becomes a whole and fulfilled person. But the two are related intimately in human experience.

Second, where 'having sex' can go wrong -- and by this I mean fail to fulfil human life and its purposes, which (so far as I can see) is what 'sin'

should denote since God's will for men is that they be fulfilled and become instruments for loving -- where it can go wrong, then, is when it is (1) selfish, seeking gratification without regard for others; (2) cruel, intent on hurting or harming, rather than helping and healing; (3) lacking personal awareness and reduced to mere physical satisfaction -- splendid as that is in itself; (4) irresponsible, without concern for consequences in oneself or others; and (5) inordinate, or treated as the be-all and end-all of existence (which is absurd, since nobody can spend his entire life in bed with somebody else).

Why are these five distortions of sexuality? Because they deny love. Selfishness is the contradiction of love; cruelty is the opposite of love; lack of personal respect fails in 'personalizing', which love always seeks to do; irresponsibility cares nothing about love but wants only one's own pleasure; and inordination negatives love's requirement which has to do with whole selves, whole relationships, the fullness of life and not just one part of it, good as that is in and of itself. I remember a young man who talked with me last spring. He said this: 'I loved my friend with my whole self and wanted to be entirely united with him. But he wanted only to use our cocks to give him pleasure.' That was tragic, I thought. It was tragic because at the human level, those cocks can be instrumental for giving pleasure and also for establishing personal sharing at every level.

Finally, I must say that because I am a Christian I believe that however and wherever love is present, God is present. When a boy and a girl, a man and a woman, a boy and a boy, a man and a man, a girl and a girl, a woman and a woman, love one another and act upon it, God is disclosed, God is present, God is at work. Sometimes 'having sex' with somebody opens the door for love to enter in; perhaps this happens more often than 'nice' conventional people are prepared to think. For ninety per cent of the population, love and sex will be through heterosexual acts. I urge that God blesses them both, rejoices in them both, wants them both to be as beautiful and fulfilling as possible, and is revealed through them both as 'the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.' And despite continuing prejudice and fear, the Christian Churches are gradually coming to accept this."

Newsdesk

america

'SPARE RIB' OCT. 72

Lillian with love

New York

I asked a man the other day what his worst fantasies about women's liberation were. He said he felt a very real fantasy was that his wife would leave him not for another man but for another woman — and take the children with him.

(Others said they were just afraid that their wives would leave them, full stop.) In any case, the story of two unhappy married women meeting, comforting each other, falling in love and running off together with the children is apparently just common enough for something called the Gay Mothers' Union to come into being. The biggest problem is keeping the children. On woman here said she was allowed to keep the children but only after she agreed to ask her female lover to move out. She also had to agree to see an analyst and stay in analysis until she was 'cured'. If any woman who is reading is a gay parent who badly needs a cynical laugh, I recommend a new novel 'Shockproof Stanley Skate' (M. Meaker) about a 17-year-old boy who finds out his beautiful chic mother is having an affair with his beautiful chic girlfriend.



Gay protest

'VARSITY' 14.10.72

MR. BERNARD Greaves, St. John's architecture student and executive member of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, claimed this week that the Cambridge police are once again stepping up activities against local gays.

He told a Gay Cambridge meeting that all last week plainclothes men in plain cars were posted to observe several local public conveniences.

Twelve months ago VARSITY published pictures produced by Mr. Greaves which showed how air bricks had been removed and holes bored in toilet cubicles to enable closer surveillance.

He hopes that the present increased activity will not lead to the re-adoption of these "monstrous" methods, but claims that Cambridge is still lacking in facilities for homosexuals.

"There is nowhere they can go to relax in a friendly atmosphere and meet other homosexuals," he said. The result is that a large number use public lavatories as meeting places.

"This is clearly undesirable but until an adequate alternative is found it will be continue to be so." But the police remain unrepentant. I see no reason why we should seek the sympathy of Gay Cambridge," said Supt. Audley, commander of the Cambridge division.

Mr. Greaves feels that there are in fact four reasons; because the existing measures are "(1) losing the police the sympathy and support of homosexuals, (2) an appalling waste of manpower, (3) creating a great deal of fear and suffering, (4) not removing the problem, merely transferring it elsewhere."

Evelyn Home

'WOMAN' SEPT. 30 '72



SUNDAY PEOPLE,

WHY are the Scottish Minorities Group livid about a standard medical textbook on every doctor's shelf? BECAUSE it includes a chapter that suggests homosexuals are "sick" people. They've persuaded author Professor George Carstairs to think about changing it in the next edition. They didn't have far to look, for he's the Group's honorary vice-president.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1972

Needless anxiety,

I am a grandmother and so very worried about my daughter's family. Two of her children are dear little boys and I fear they may inherit my brother's dreadful affliction of homosexuality. Is this trouble hereditary?

Neither my husband nor my daughter knows about my worry and naturally I don't want to upset them.

As far as I know there is no evidence that homosexuality is hereditary; in fact one expert

I consulted on your behalf says that early childhood experience and environment are the most probable causes of the condition. And I would certainly not think of it as a dreadful affliction—only a variation from the norm which just has to be accepted like the colour of skin or eyes.

So stop worrying and enjoy your grandchildren without anxiety.

● "YOU CAN hold a conference—why can't we?"—anguished cry from the Campaign for Homosexual Equality to delegates at Blackpool. The CHE is complaining that Morecambe first encouraged a conference booking for next April but then its Publicity, Entertainment, and Baths Committee decided its facilities were inadequate. CHE claim that at one stage they were told the reason was not insufficient as the Fire Brigade's Union booked to hold its conference there a month later.

CHE is using the incident as an example of prejudice against homosexuals and last night called an open, anti-discrimination meeting at Blackpool on the strength of it. The campaign may yet have the last word; its executive thinks it may be able to arrange a conference in Morecambe privately, whether the Corporation likes it or not.

WEEKEND, October 11-17, 1972



DOUGLAS FAIREY

SEX CHANGE

APART from those working in the field of medical research, scientists tend to give this column an acute attack of the trots.

Which is why, if Professor Robert Francoeur should chance to knock back a noggin of carbollic acid in mistake for gin-and-tonic, no tears will be shed in this quarter.

Beaver away at Farleigh Dickinson University, New Jersey, the professor has produced a blueprint for life in 1992—and if someone will kindly purloin it and burn it, I would be very grateful.

He says that, by that time, scientists will be able to take a piece of human skin, cultivate it in an artificial womb and reproduce the person whose body the skin originally belonged to.

"Sex," he chortles gleefully, "will be totally unnecessary for human reproduction."

He also forecasts an increase in homosexual marriages, even "triangular marriages" for people who prefer to have more than one partner.

See what I mean about scientists? When they are not mucking about with methods of using nerve-gas and H-bombs to destroy mankind they are thinking up ways of turning men into monsters.

EVENING STANDARD

4.10.72

Murders blamed on sex pervert

FAIRFIELD, California.

A HOMOSEXUAL masochist, playing the part of a woman was responsible for the murder of 25 farm workers at Yuba City last year, defence counsel for the man accused of the killings told a court yesterday.

Juan Corona, 38, who is charged with murdering the men and burying them in shallow graves, is innocent, said Mr Richard Hawk, defending.

Many of the victims had their pants open or off, he said.

"We will establish that these were homosexual murders—with the 25 victims playing the part of the man" and the killer "playing the part of the woman."

He said witnesses will testify that the killer probably was a "homosexual masochist" who went into a "broiling, homicidal rage," and "destroyed and mutilated" his victims.

Killer unknown

He did not say who he thinks the killer may be, but said that medical witnesses would testify that Corona is not homosexual.

"Juan Corona is hopelessly heterosexual . . . and hopelessly in love with his wife," Mr Hawk told jurors. He would testify in his own defence.

Corona, a Mexican farm labour contractor and father of four, has pleaded innocent.

Mr Hawk described him as a hard-working and well-liked man, "the type of guy who taught his daughter how to ride a mini-bike." He had no motive for the killings.

Witnesses would testify that Corona was at home during the five hours during which one of the victims was hacked to death and buried. It was the only time span authorities have been able to pinpoint in any of the deaths. (AP).

OBSERVER

Homosexuals unaccepted

I, AS A HOMOSEXUAL, feel that certain points in Woodrow Wyatt's critique of Robin Maugham's "Escape from the Shadows" (Sunday Times, last week), call for comment.

Although Mr Wyatt seems not unsympathetic to homosexuality, he shows a striking ignorance of the state of homosexuals in present-day society.

He claims that "Homosexuality has long been acceptable." On the contrary, police harassment of homosexuals has, if anything, increased recently. I think one can scarcely talk of the social acceptability of homosexuality in a society which prosecutes homosexuals who go so far as to hold hands in public. Mr Wyatt asserts that "Homosexuality is legally protected." Although I grant that the words "legally protected" are open to many interpretations, the statement is still impertinent.

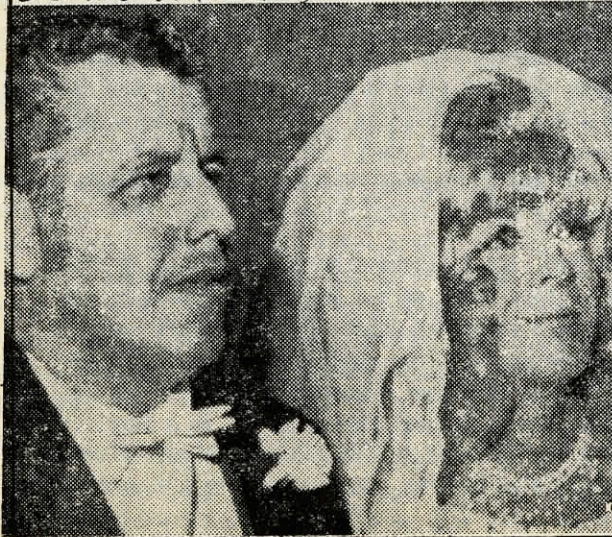
It would be better to say that the prejudiced public is legally protected from being obliged to regard homosexuals as normal human beings, with feelings as genuine as their own. The homosexual law looks fine (to heterosexuals), but it is repressive; you can marry and vote at 18 (or get shot in Ulster) but you cannot have sex with another man.

I like the thought that homosexuals are born and not made: Homosexuals would certainly benefit were the Freudians to take this view, and stop treating homosexuals as sick, unhappy individuals.

Finally, why must Wyatt contend that "Many gifted homosexuals are comic and charming . . ." as if he was referring to an unusual species of domestic pet?

J. A. Schlesinger
London NW11

EVENING STANDARD OCT. 6. 72



THEY are being married in the Harmony Chapel in Houston, Texas . . . Antonio Molina, a former high school football star (left) and William Ert, a female impersonator, wearing a blonde wig and a white gown.

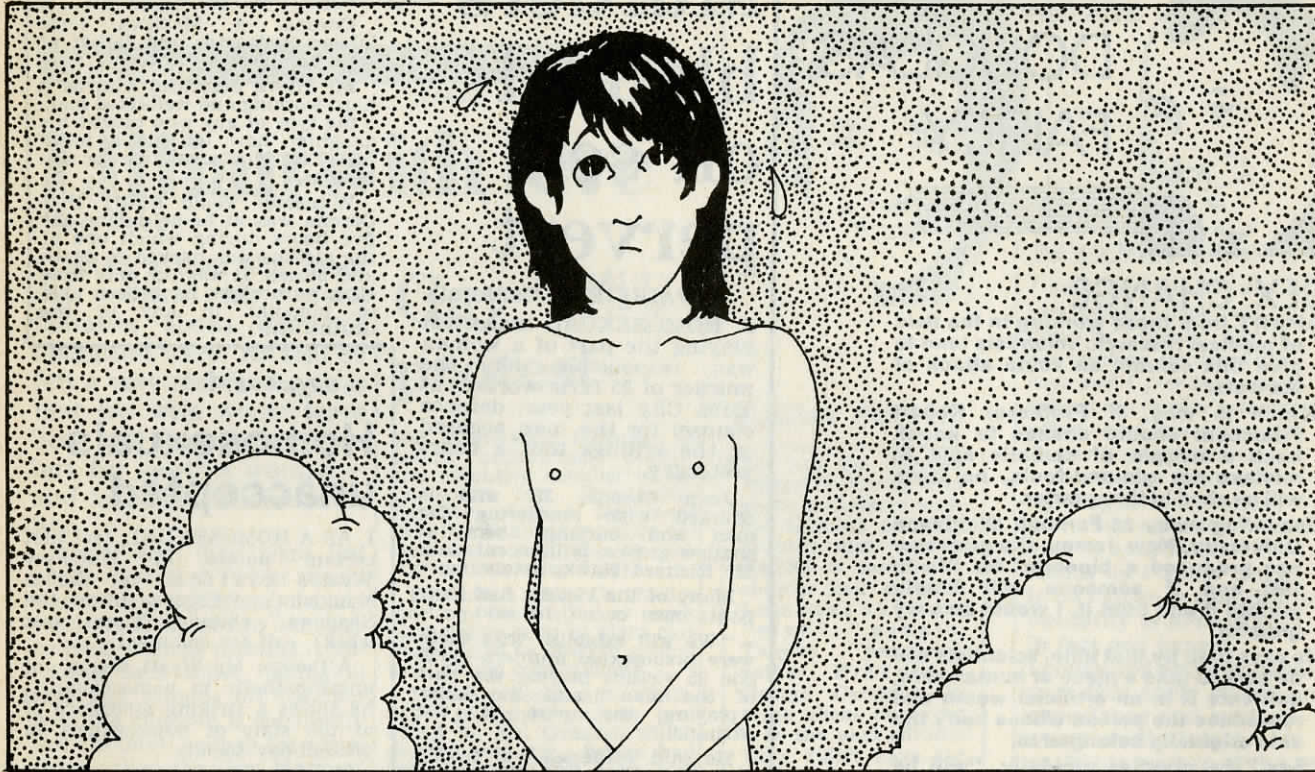
The two exchanged marriage vows yesterday in what they said was the first legal male homosexual wedding ceremony in American history.

They exchanged wedding rings, saying, "with this ring, I thee wed."

Ert lifted his wedding veil above his face and Molina kissed him ending the ceremony. He said he had no intention of a sex change operation.

"Why should I have anything removed or added when he's marrying me for what I've got. I'm just like I was when my mother brought me into this world, and I don't intend to change."

Innocent in the sauna by Peter Norman



I never had any contact with the gay 'scene' before getting involved with, first, the Albany Trust and its London-based discussion groups in pre-1967 days, and later CHE.

Of course, I believed our own propaganda about gay relationships being as stable as het ones, and was quite sure that 'cottaging' was something invented by policemen hungry for convictions. When I learned that some homosexual men actually do go cottaging, I assumed that once they joined CHE and made friends in our 'congenial' atmosphere, they'd be all right! In the early days of CHE, of course, few people were prepared to discuss their private lives in the ultra-respectable confines of the local group, and it was only comparatively recently I realised that people I knew and liked were themselves unashamedly promiscuous. This was something of a shock. Happily things are more open now, and I have been at meetings where promiscuous members have proudly defended their life style, and invited critics to say why they consider it immoral.

With that rather sheltered background I recently went for the first time to a gay sauna. I was overwhelmingly curious to find out what happens in such places, though a little frightened, because my image was of 'daisy-

chains' extending over a white-tiled area the size of an Olympic swimming pool - and I've never fancied group sex.

The actuality was rather less formidable. On entering, I was handed a towel, and a locker key on an elastic band. Having put my clothes in a locker, and the towel modestly round my waist, I hung the key on my left wrist. The slatted sauna room was dark. In the gloom I tripped over the step, which I suppose is one way of attracting attention. It was unbearably hot, the silence total, and as far as I could tell everyone was just sitting there sweating in the darkness, which was a relief because I didn't fancy being groped by someone I couldn't see. The steam room followed, but this, though lighter, was too dense with steam to be interesting.

I showered, and followed other customers to an upper floor, where there were a number of 'rest cubicles'. People were wandering about, wearing towels and keys, their ages ranging from about 18 to over 60. I was surprised to find that, except for the very fat, being dressed only in a towel turned out to be a levelling feature in the attractiveness stakes, though there are certainly more ways than one of wearing a towel! Conscious of being very bedraggled after my sweating and

showering, I was jealous of quite a few immaculate hairdos; obviously the regulars dispensed with the preliminaries and just came straight upstairs.

So there we all were, just towels and numbered keys jangling at our wrists, looking a bit like overfed refugees, (s)trolling about in the upper corridor. The cubicles were divided from the passageway by curtains, and a favourite sport was to lift a corner to observe the goings-on inside. A few lay alone, in whatever seductive pose they could manage, waiting for someone to take an interest. Others were enjoying sex in various ways, usually in pairs. I was cross that vanity had made me leave my glasses in the locker. Some couples relished an audience, and encouraged all comers to join in; others petulantly snapped the curtain shut against prying eyes. Fucking was easily the most popular spectator sport, with very little interest shown in other forms of activity. On the floor above, the scene was repeated, with the addition of a large, very dark room for public gropies, mainly patronised by those who looked their best in the dark.

I rapidly came to the conclusion that only 0.5 per cent of the male population is physically attractive; there were about six possibilities that afternoon, so I set about doing a bit of stalking.

The sauna bath was in Amsterdam, and, I'm told, associated with the COC - an association which many would offer as a model for CHE to follow. Yet here every participant was offering himself as a sex object not a person. No polite conversations here with the old, the ugly and the shy. What could be more male-dominated? More of a ghetto? More sexist?

I know of course that COC provides excellent club facilities at its own premises, and no doubt people do meet and make worthwhile friendships at the baths. But (assuming they were fully legal in England) I'm still not sure that I'd support the idea of CHE being associated with similar baths here.

I went away unsatisfied, my ego mildly bruised, but knowing I had someone to go home to. I wonder how many people don't make it, and I wonder whether actually watching others having it off makes their frustration far greater than an ordinary failure after an evening's drinking. And how many people become addicts - always believing next time will be the one?

If you're fed up with 'morality' in the abstract, let's discuss something concrete; what do others think about 'sex in the sauna'?

The next National Council

The 6th quarterly CHE National Council meeting will take place on Saturday, November 25th at the Holborn Assembly Hall, starting at 10.a.m. The last three were held in Liverpool, Bristol and Birmingham respectively, so it is now London's turn again.

This time, all CHE members are welcome, as spectators, provided they obtain admission tickets in advance, (obtainable on the tear-off form enclosed with the September BULLETIN, to reach the General Secretary by November 6th latest.) No one without a ticket will be admitted as a spectator. Since 120 delegates will be present it is unfortunately not possible to let spectators speak or vote, but they will be able to see something of the workings of CHE close to and have an opportunity to meet members from outside London (each local group may send one delegate and one observer), from the Executive Committee, the General Secretary, and any Vice-Presidents attending.

There has been much discussion lately about the best form of national constitution, but under existing arrangements it is the Executive Committee, elected by direct secret ballot by all members, which is responsible for overall policy. The National Council's function is to advise the Executive.

Following the meeting, there will be a dance in the same hall, with a live group and disco (see ad. elsewhere) ALL are welcome. Please bring your friends.

GEOFFREY BAGGOTT.

Lunch

Order your copy to arrive each month by post

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Full details on page 2

Travel with William Riffaugh



Each month I hope to let you know the latest on the travel scene which may be useful to you if you are going on holiday or business.

I am one who likes a little comfort but resents paying inflated prices. So when I experience real value for money I shall pass the information on to you and also warn you when to steer clear.

Musing over possible future topics for this column, I was alarmed to realise how much the travel business is dominated these days by flying.

Think of all those tempting Continental cities you can spend a weekend in for £25 to £30 - they all require you to fly, as do the chancy winter hops to catch some Mediterranean sun on a four/five-day package trip to places like Majorca or the Costa Brava.

With such an attraction as the instant ticket arrangement of British European Airways, and its 'pool' partners allowing you to fly at half price to Amsterdam, it's tempting to forget your fear of flying.

The journey by air takes an hour, compared with eight and a quarter hours on the night sea crossing from Harwich to the Hook of Holland. Therefore forget about flying nerves and book an air passage, as the cost of the crossing is almost identical, provided you use the instant ticket arrangements. Since they were introduced in April, I have been to Amsterdam twice. The fare was then £15.75 return (exactly half the usual excursion rate).

There are restrictions...You can only book on the day you want to fly, and you cannot return until at least the next Sunday. In addition, seats can only be obtained on certain flights, and alterations are not allowed.

On my April trip I went along to the West London air terminal and got a seat on the next flight due to leave Heathrow. In July, when I arrived in late morning, there were no seats available until the early afternoon. However, I was told to go to Heathrow to be a stand-by passenger, where I might get a cancelled seat on the next flight...which I did.

If you are a stand-by passenger, make sure not to hand over your baggage until you reach the aircraft, otherwise there may be difficulty in tracing it, as you are a late entry on the passenger list and your case will not have a luggage label with your flight number on it.

There is nothing stopping you flying off on a Saturday and returning the next day, or even using my favourite - the 7.25 am flight on a Monday from Schiphol, with all those wide-awake Dutch businessmen!

Similar arrangements apply to Paris (but you can book from 2pm on the day prior to travel) and Brussels (from November 1st) and other attractive offers are available for Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

For Germany the scheme comes in on November 1st and lasts until March 31st 1973. The price cuts are: £20.70 off the normal tourist return from London to Berlin (usually £69.10) or, for instance, £11.60 slashed off the London-Cologne fare. Discount fares are already available to Stuttgart and Munich. With Lufthansa, BEA has introduced these 30 per cent discount fares for winter weekends. You must return within a month, which puts off deciding to have too long a stay in Berlin, where 'Cabaret' is set.

I hope the following piece of advance information from a BEA press notice will not pass unchallenged by LUNCH readers.

'At the IATA Conference at Torremolinos on September 12th, BEA is to propose half-price fares for a businessman's wife (or for the husband of a businesswoman), with a maximum validity of five days.' Fares fair when it comes to fares! Perhaps here's a case for someone in CHE to take up against the International Air Transport Association. A letter appeared a few years ago in the staff newspaper of the British Overseas Airways Corporation about an airline worker who had no wife but wanted to take a male friend with him on a flight. The drastic reductions made for a spouse could not be enjoyed by this male worker, who wanted just a token reduction on his companion's fare.

For younger readers. Up to 26 years of age and still a full-time student, or between 12 and 21 if you aren't and BEA's Youth Fares may appeal to you. There is 25 per cent off the tourist fare. Liverpool and Manchester returns are cut by £4.05, while a Moscow round trip is down £40.55. Daytime scheduled flights are used.

Cheap fares are not restricted to London only.

These details apply to BEA flights, or those on airlines which operate a 'pool' arrangement. Other airlines are likely to have cheap fares, too, like Caledonian from Gatwick to Holland. When booking next time, make a special point of asking what reductions there are in addition to the 'excursion' or 'tourist' rates quoted in fare tables.

The amounts quoted are those most recently published, but additional surcharges may mean slight increases. Certain price cuts operate only with flights originating in Britain, eg the 'instant tickets' cannot be bought in Holland to fly to the United Kingdom.

With the possible loss of duty-free goods one is allowed to bring into Britain after we join the European Economic Community, it is vital that everyone should make sure they get the correct concessions while they can. There's nothing worse than arriving

at an airport and finding it has no duty-free shop, such as Rome's Fiumicino and Malta's Luqa airports (my experience when I was there last October).

BEA have produced a useful booklet, 'Guide to Tax and Duty-Free Shops in UK and Europe 1972'. Beside the country's flag are listed the airports, with the items on sale and the methods of paying for the goods. In Turkey, at Ankara's Esenboga airport and Istanbul's Yesilkoy airport, Turkish currency is not accepted; at Heathrow's Terminal One, the booklet states, 'most currencies (notes) except Finnish and Chinese are accepted, but only UK, Canadian and US coins. Sterling and US travellers' cheques are accepted.' Manchester's Ringway accepts all currencies but 'no Republic of Ireland coins'. Greek and Yugoslav currencies are not taken at Venice's Tessera airport, and Russian and Japanese currencies are refused at Helsinki.

On a route map there is a list of destinations served by BEA without duty-free shop facilities. When there is no duty-free shop the choice of items available on the aircraft is very limited: a very small range of half-bottles of spirits and, on Alitalia services, only quarter-bottles of wine!

CHE DANCE



**On Saturday November 25th 1972
at Holborn Assembly Hall**

LIVE MUSIC the EVERYONE INVOLVED - Remember that Radio London 'Gay Song'?!
DISCO by Peter and Matthew

Coffee and Snacks available but please bring your own drinks.

HOLBORN ASSEMBLY HALL is in John's Mews, off Northampton St. WC1 (At rear of Holborn Public Library.)
Nearest tube: Chancery Lane.

8pm to 11.30pm Admission 35p

What sex is God?



What was not discussed at the Holborn conference on gays and Christianity was the sexism of Christianity, except during the brief answer to one question. A gay woman asked the two male speakers on the platform, Rev. Troy Perry and Dr. Norman Pittenger, why Christians always refer to God as 'he'. Dr. Pittenger spoke, but not to the point, and Rev. Perry, who started the gay church in California, said only that there's a church run by a woman in the States, and she refers to God as 'she'.

Yet if gays want a reconciliation with Christianity, which the hundreds of gay men and handful of gay women at Holborn clearly did, this is the question they must suss out. If Christianity (and Judaism and Islam, as the other two faiths of the Book) are not thought of as 'revelations' but as part of the continuing effort by humanity to find explanations of why things are as they are, then the male-centred dynamism of these faiths, especially when they began, is a complete barrier.

What follows here may be faulty in its facts, since I'm not an anthropologist, but I've done my best to check them, and to discuss the guesswork with others.

First, the sexual politics of Genesis and the New Testament. The gaff about Genesis was blown about a century ago, when cuneiform was deciphered and the library of Nineveh uncovered. Many Far Eastern legends older in time than Genesis have been translated and they suggest that the authors of Genesis rearranged the familiar legends with the effect (if not the conscious purpose) of rescuing the male from a bad light.

A different, non-Biblical arrangement of the same legends can be found in a Penguin book, the 'Epic of Gilgamesh'. This was written down at much the same time as Genesis, but more or less faithfully copies far earlier legends dating back to 2,000 B.C. or more. Those earliest sources were kept in temples in Sumeria, and it was from Sumeria - specifically from Ur - that the authors of Genesis considered their ancestor Abraham to have migrated.

In the Gilgamesh poem, the ingredients of the Biblical Fall are used in a very different way. The snake stands for immortality (he sheds his skin, i.e. can renew his youth) and for the benefits of fertility. The woman does not 'tempt' the man, but through her sensuousness brings him out of barbarism into the pleasures of civilisation. It is man, not God, who curses woman, and God instructs the man to withdraw his curse, which he does.

The male is not cursed by God, merely told, somewhat wearily, that it is pointless to seek immortality (or, by analogy, fame and material security), and the best thing he can do is enjoy life while he has it.

It seems paradoxical, considering this background, that women should far outnumber men - at least, today - as practising Christians. The explanation lies in self-oppression, perhaps, and in the appeal of the women's religion that Christianity took over in its very early days.

As to self-oppression, there is comfort of a sort in submission. Christianity is a mythology that accurately reflects a real world of male dominance.

Pushed around by man at home and at work and at the Social Security and more or less everywhere, a woman in her self-oppression may turn to a male (the priest : God) for solace. Not only the woman: a gay male, also on the receiving end of male chauvinism (even if he is simultaneously handing out male chauvinism of his own) may turn to the protective masculinity of Christianity. There were hopeful questions at the Holborn conference, from men, about whether Christ may have been gay. No one thought to ask the 'frivolous' question whether Mary may have been a lesbian outraged at the immaculate conception by God. There is clearly no way for a gay woman (unless she chooses a very butch role) to identify with a male God, a saviour also male, twelve male disciples, and two women whose New Testament function is childbirth, submission, and mourning.

The women's religion taken over by Christianity was the Adonis ritual. Found all over the Mediterranean and Near East before the triumph of Christianity, and never a centralised faith, it provides the elements of what is gentle and hopeful in Christianity.

Developed by women (perhaps in response to the rising threat of male-supremacy in the thousands of years before Christianity) it was organisationally exclusive to women - Women's Liberation is perhaps the first effective such exclusive movement to appear in the post = A.D. western world. The Adonis rites brought women together emotionally and physically in a way impossible unless males (the sort of males produced under male supremacy) are excluded.

The Adonis rites included the idea of a god-child, Adonis, and his mother-lover the Mother Goddess, whose virginity was perhaps annually renewed. The god-child died each year and was resurrected. Though only the biologically female or culturally female (i.e. castrated males) could celebrate these rites, they were the myths of femme revolt: the child-god is a man who loves a dominant woman. Emotionally, this is and was in contrast to the actual condition of society, where men try to arrange the bodies and minds of women to their own male (butch) advantage. It contrasts also with a society where male children are trained to become repressed, and oppressive, towards women.

Modified to suit the male requirements of Christianity, the Adonis myths live on in Christianity, and are perhaps what is most appealing to women in the religion. But changes have been made. The Child Adonis becomes the Man Christ (removed from women's control, and obedient to his father). The Mother Goddess loses her dominance, and becomes the Virgin,

a human submissive to the needs of the male Father-Son. The women are deprived of their separate priesthood (which could be responsive to female mythic and actual needs), and induced to take all religious instruction and celebration at the hands of men.

At the Holborn conference, Rev. Perry was to be heard referring to 'our Father'. A member of the audience referred to 'our Master'. Dr. Pittenger referred to the love we 'owe' 'Him'. The gay woman's question was dismissed as rapidly as possible.

The heavily male, if gay, audience gave the impression of wanting to know if Christianity now finds male gays acceptable. The reverse question, whether Christianity is acceptable to male or female gays, was ignored, possibly on the wrong assumption that anyone who doesn't find Christianity acceptable would not have attended the meeting. Yet if its present and historical sexism is not abandoned, it can no more be reconciled with the 'femme' rights demanded by women and gays than can Judaism and Islam.

Could a Lesbian find Christianity acceptable? Women's Liberation in America has shown, in the few years of its existence, how lesbianism is a natural exploration for women who shake off their inter-dependence with menfolk. Any version of Christianity in which women were their own priesthood and kept out men (if such a thing is conceivable under the tradition of male mythologising in Christianity) would lead women into the happiness of lesbianism.

That probably wouldn't go down well. It was in political terror of just such control by women of their own bodies and minds that over one thousand years ago Christianity appears to have organised the destruction of almost all the lesbian Sappho's writings.

Here's a fragment of one of her religious poems, all that's left of it, translated by a male scholar in the 1920's :

'Oh, forest-maidens, smite on the breast,
Rend ye the delicate woven vest,
Let the wail ring wild and high
'Ah for Adonis' cry!
Ah, Sappho how canst thou chant the bliss ...

.... of people freed from the administration and myth-making of male chauvinism?

A G.L.F. BROTHER

Book Review

A Time and a Time

A TIME AND A TIME by Sarah Davys
Published by Calder and Boyars
£2.10p.

'A Friendly Power'

In his book *The Horse's Mouth* Joyce Carey describes the moment of creative insight as 'a kick from a horse'. This seems to me apt, (although - as a composer - one always wishes it would happen more often!) But I feel the phrase has almost as great a validity when applied to appreciation of art and to critical insight. Such moments as the ending of Peter Maxwell Davies' "Songs for a Mad King"; a Miles Davis concert at Hammersmith; the first sight of Rembrandt's "Night Watch" and Picasso's "Trois demoiselles d'Avignon" have all given me personally this particular 'kick' - the feeling that you have been given an insight directly into a man's soul - combined with a euphoric joie de vivre that can make you first want to be alone - go for a long walk and revel in the experience - then share the experience with someone, anyone. (I remember calling a friend at some ridiculous hour of the morning after hearing Britten's "War Requiem" for the first time!) It is out of such a shock and a desire to share a particular enthusiasm that I have written down these thoughts.

A TIME AND A TIME is by Sarah Davys (a pseudonym). It deals with the story of her life, via a series of flashbacks, and is written following her attempted suicide. The writing has great sensitivity and abounds with the sort of insight that brings you up short and makes you re-examine your own position. Take this statement: "I am a homosexual. There was a time when I thought this was very important, not only to myself but to others. Now I do not think so. It falls into place as one of those aspects of myself which has affected me, of course, but affected me no more and no less than, say, my reading. If I had proclaimed with as bold and belligerent an air: I am a devotee of Hardy's poetry, of Dowland's lute songs; their awareness of the dark side of life has influenced my attitude to the world around me - readers would have been puzzled at so categorical and challenging a statement, and been hard put to it to

perceive where the challenge lay. They might have wondered at the relevance and smiled at the emphasis I placed upon it, yet I am probably far more unusual in being a devotee of Thomas Hardy's poetry and Dowland's songs than I am in being a homosexual. Homosexuals are one in twenty.

Comparatively common. Does one in twenty people read Hardy or sing Dowland's songs? Not one in two hundred, or two thousand or even two hundred thousand."

Perhaps she is unfortunate (or fortunate?) in belonging to several minorities but probably she's right and we do make too much of our homosexuality. Of course it is important but it's the exclusivity of that importance that is worrying about gay movements. There are, happily, signs of change but it seems a mistake to gather people together in groups where the only connection is that they are all gay. Back to the ghetto. As Sarah Davys says "The women of Valerie's circle, however, felt an insecurity that made it imperative for them to wear a uniform, to feel themselves a regiment, speak a private language, adopt a ritual behaviour which gave them coherence and strength against the heterosexual world which they affected to despise. But I did not despise this world. I lived in it and loved my friends who were of it and who provided me with everything that is needful in human relationships, except sex."

As well as the 'gay' content (and it would be inaccurate to think of this merely as a gay book; it is, as she states, the story of a human being who just happens to be homosexual) the book contains many insights into creativity, loneliness and the problem of living with others - particularly with reference to the creative person. It also contains accounts of her two suicide attempts and some extracts from an ironic essay on suicide which some may find disturbing and depressing.

As a final quote, I would like to use a piece which impressed me greatly on first reading and which I sought permission to use as part of a long composition "Wheel of Dreams", which drew on a variety of words for use in a multi-media setting. It summed up what had been for me a staggering realisation and one which has helped me to come to terms with my own nature.

"When I ceased to fear my own solitude it became a friendly power. At last I found a value in my own company."

Like much of *A Time and a Time*, that statement has resonances which lead you to look at yourself and your life in a different light.

For that reason I feel the book deserves to be much better known and more widely read.

Graham Collier

(Graham Collier is well-known as a serious jazz musician. His poetry and jazz composition "Wheel of Dreams" was successfully mounted at the Camden Festival earlier this year. An interview with him will follow in a later edition.)

If you can get there, don't miss his concert on December 8. at 7.45 at Nettlefold Hall, West Norwood Library, Norwood, S.E.27. where "Children of Adam" (words by Walt Whitman) will be performed

Gay Germany?

For those captivated by the divine decadence of Christopher Isherwood's Weimar Germany, or stimulated in lonely north British industrial cities by Michael Davidson's outrageous account of the early thirties in Berlin, Germany must hold a peculiar fascination. There, indeed, 'everything went'. Liberty, it is true, was in process of becoming license and was to be followed by grim repression; it was nevertheless sweet.

One might wonder how far tolerance has been regained in a 'free' post-war Germany. Can it be re-created without the seeds of its own destruction growing up alongside it?

A recent visit to the Federal Republic promised a few days' exploration of the gay scene. With thoroughness appropriate to a Teutonic expedition, a well-known international 'gay guide' was consulted and provided details of plenty of bars and clubs. About ten of these in Cologne and Aachen were searched out. None appeared to exist (in fact it seems that 'gay guides', probably through no fault of their own, need to be treated with some scepticism).

Yet all was not lost for, after trudging wearily round Aachen vainly seeking the seventh and last place on his list, this traveller felt the need of refreshment. He entered a small, noisy, crowded bar crammed with 'antique' junk (foot operated sewing machines hanging from the ceiling!). Here he quaffed his beer and took in his surroundings; the other drinkers were students, probably similar in appearance to their ilk anywhere - beards, jeans,

the suspicion of pot. The music was Marlene Dietrich on what sounded like an original pre-war recording. The pilgrim's eye slowly focussed on a wall-poster carrying a word in big black type: HOMOSEXUELLE. No Goethe, not even an 'O' level German student, the seeker still felt that closer investigation might be repaid. It was, with the following message: NICHT DER HOMOSEXUELLE IST PERVERS, SONDERN DIE SITUATION IN DER ER LEBT. (It is not the homosexual who is perverse, but the situation in which he lives.) How true! Put it on a CHE poster, someone.

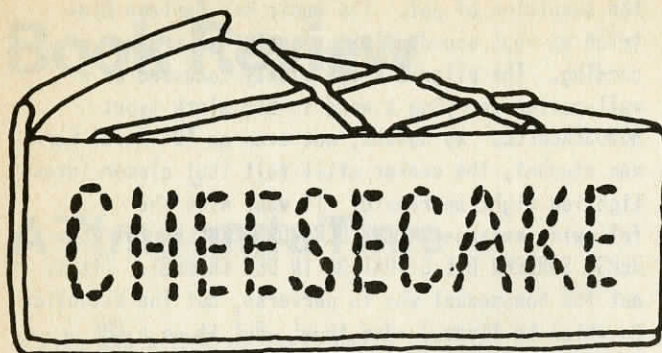
Conversation with his drinking companions showed that even in conformist Germany, things are happening as far as the struggle for gay civil rights are concerned. The situation has been quite repressive, probably because of a confused feeling that tolerance to homosexuals and 'decadence' were among the causes of the rise of Hitler and the ruin of Germany. My gay guide premises had doubtless been closed by the police as soon as they were published.

However, moves have been made to improve things recently and, as in this country, reformist and revolutionary gay organisations have become active. A couple of informative TV programmes were shown on the subject in January, and a film by Rosa von Praunheim (pseudonym?) was also scheduled. But pressure increased and the showing was cancelled. This, encouragingly, caused some commotion with murmurs about freedom of broadcasting, etc., but so far the censors have retained the upper hand. A campaign was launched and, in this context, the film was shown in towns all over Germany. The film's title? Yes, the message in bold black type on the poster. In fact there were several around and they advertised the local showing of the film. It is, perhaps, encouraging to know that in Germany, even if the golden, irresponsible days of Weimar are gone forever, homosexuals are beginning to organise and make their presence felt. What about an EFHO? We are all Europeans now!

Colin Codrum

Learning about homosexuals

A TEACH-IN on homosexuality is to be held at Edinburgh University next March to provide a forum for every shade of opinion on a subject about which public ignorance is still considerable," says the University's monthly bulletin. (Thanks Fred! Evening Standard Oct. 11).



Dear LUNCH,

I am a woman subscriber. After reading your advertisement for the Sappho Disco I decided to make that the object of a visit to London. I am also a great admirer of Maureen Duffy. Why didn't the ad. say what time she was to speak? I arrived at 8.30p.m. to find a crowd on the stairs and in the bar. Inside the lucky few heard Maureen. For the rest of us the door was guarded by a female dragon. (I even heard some girls say they had been in and got shut out after going to the loo or the bar).

When we were eventually allowed in we still had to pay 50p., which, though excellent, was a bit of a cheek for a cardboard plate of chili con carne. Drink was extra. The atmosphere was friendly to one who knew nobody. I imagine the few selfconscious men in polo necked sweaters (apart from one sporting a beard, looking like my idea of a sexologist) were what our yellow slip advertised as 'carefully vetted CHE MEN'. Imagine my horror when suddenly the music stopped and an aggressive voice announced "Will all those who have come a long way please come into the centre of the floor?" 'Help!' I thought, 'it's time to leave!' Is that the London Gay Scene? Thanks to LUNCH and SAPPHO but next time I'm in town, I'll stick to my old haunts.

A Newcastle subscriber.

ED. Some of us attended the disco, arrived on time, had an excellent evening and heard Maureen Duffy reading her poems - altogether very good value. But we think Maureen herself would have preferred to have had a short pause to enable the outsiders to be let in.

Will those of you who wonder where Cheesecake's gone, write for it - male, female. whatever!

Personal

Young teacher requires accommodation urgently. Large bedsitter or b/s plus kitchen, convenient for city. BOX NOV/1.

LARGE FURNISHED BEDROOM to let to gentleman, telephone, parking space, with or without meals. No other boarders. Two in family. Write BOX NOV/2.

FOR SALE. Morris Minor 1000, 1967. 85000 Miles. M.O.T. September. £300 Cash. Tel: Southampton 46425.

OWN ROOM WANTED, in friendly flat with other/s in mid-twenties to mid-thirties, Barnes, Kew, Richmond Area. Box NOV/3.

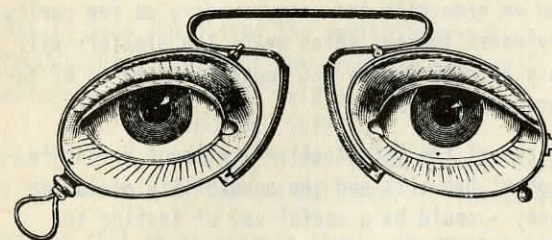
PAD SUIT TWO MATES (male), reasonable rent, also bedsitter available (West London) BOX NOV/4

OPPIDAN ADVISES THE LONELY GAY needing help, and has started its accommodation service, but desperately needs furnished/unfurnished rooms; beds, flats, or any kind of accommodation which is to-let. BOX OCT/2 or ring: 769-7965.

WANTED URGENTLY Large unfurnished self-contained flat London area for single male designer Box Oct 13.



Dear Sir...



THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE

The Killing of Sister George is a tragedy...for LUNCH. Many's the time you wept on my shoulder asking for some light relief, as a counter balance to the stodge of many weighty articles.

Now Sister George has gone...presumably under pressure from those who cannot bear a little fun to be made of homosexuality. More's the pity. Do, however, keep the name LUNCH. It is a charming, nonsensical name, and the menu inside offers a wide selection, even if souffles a la soeur Georges are now 'off'.

VIVIAN TOLAND
N.W.3.

Re. Homosexuals & Socialism

Dear Sir/Madam,

Some people appear to have a political bee in their bonnet when they talk about capitalism and socialism in regard to minority groups. There is no evidence as far as I can gather that Socialist States are any more liberal in their attitude towards homosexuals than are the Capitalist States. Replying to a letter sent to the USSR asking why they were not more tolerant towards homosexuals, they replied that homosexuality in the USSR was considered to be evil, corrupt, and degrading; they did not wish to discuss the subject further.

In this country, until just recently, homosexuality has been considered by the working class as something associated with the upper classes. The public schools for the wealthy have been considered to be the breeding ground of homosexuality. Even today, my guess is that the homosexual is more likely to be accepted without recrimination in a Conservative Club than in a working

man's club. In other words, ignorance, prejudice and discrimination against minority groups can be found in both the so-called ruling class or upper class, and the working class.

Acquiring knowledge, educating the public and eliminating prejudices is a very slow process, no matter what the subject.

It will be argued by some that it was under a Labour administration that the 1967 Act was passed, and that it would not have got through Parliament under a Tory Government. I think the 1967 Sexual Offences Act would have been passed no matter which Government had been in power, because the time was right.

It is often forgotten after all this time that the Wolfenden Report was a terrible shock to the great mass of ordinary people. The then Home Secretary was, I think, correct when he said in the House of Commons: 'The time is not yet right for changing the law.' A Labour Home Secretary would have said the same thing at that time. More time was needed so that the intellectuals could gather knowledge and facts about homosexuality, and it was to take ten years before enough sound evidence could be gathered together in such a way that it could be presented to the public.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to Antony Grey of the Albany Trust and a small band of others who took upon themselves the mammoth task of presenting those findings to Members of Parliament and the mass media.

There is another factor which must also be taken into account. There have been two great revolutions in this country in the last two hundred years. One was the industrial revolution, and the other, in our lifetime, the Beatles, who unwittingly ushered in what has today become known as the 'permissive society' and so created a climate in which the 1967 Act could be passed by Parliament. One could almost argue it was capitalism, by exploiting the Beatles, which brought about this climate, but this, I think, is not the answer. The real key is knowledge, not socialism or capitalism.

Knowledge disposes of fears and prejudices, and so leads to tolerance and understanding. There is still much to be learnt about homosexuality and homosexuals, even by those who are homosexual. We must learn to be tolerant, sympathetic, and understanding with each other if we are to expect these things from others.

I believe that we too must exploit to the best of our ability the mass media that brought fame to the Beatles, only not in quite the same way. The Beatles wanted fame and fortune, whereas we want acceptance and

equality in human relationships. I believe it is through the arts that we shall eventually reach the hearts of the people, and not through dreaming about political revolutions.

EDWARD JOHNSON,
HARRINGATE

Dear Ruan Bone,

I thought people were a bit bored with discussing the structure of CHE, but since Bill Mahon revives the subject (October LUNCH), may I make a few comments?

Since the National Council came into being, I have thought that it, rather than the Executive Committee, should be responsible for basic policy. However this view was endorsed by only the narrowest of margins when a vote was taken at the Bristol NC, and it is ludicrous to describe the EC as "culpably unmindful of the membership's wishes" because it decided not to implement such a decision for the time being.

The NC would need radical changes before it could assume the role (at the moment some London groups with perhaps twenty or so members have the same representation as groups in Manchester or Liverpool (for example), with about 150 members each), and such changes could perhaps reduce its value as an opportunity for group-chairmen etc. to meet each other informally. My other slight worry is that many groups do not actually discuss the issues to be raised at the NC, and their 'representative' therefore simply speaks and votes as he thinks fit; one could argue however that it is members' own responsibility to see that their local groups are democratically run.

An alternative improvement, which would not involve a vast upheaval, would be for members of the EC to be elected for a year at a time, and on a regional basis, so that people would have some chance of knowing the people asking for their votes.

Incidentally, if any member feels that I (as one of the 'unmindful or out of touch') should be put into touch with his or her views, my number is 589 6438.

PETER NORMAN
S.W.7.

Dummy-Run

How about a free dummy run of getting a CHE member into Parliament? In London next year the Greater London Council election will be held for the first time when candidates are sent to County Hall representing an area with the same boundary as the parliamentary constituency, which means the electors will for once be returning a GLC councillor and an MP for the same area.

A test run at the GLC election - without having to worry about deposits and the possibility of losing the money - could be a useful way of testing the reactions of all the homosexuals who have migrated to London to see if they would vote for 'their man'.

If there was support at GLC level it would then be worth considering where in the London area candidates could stand for election to Westminster.

Probably it is the success of Sam Green under the Gay Liberation Front banner being elected to Durham City Council that reminded me of next year's GLC election. CHE might consider the possibility of lining up with other minority groups just in case too many other reform bodies decided to put forward candidates for the GLC election, resulting in a split vote and a walk-over by the two major political parties again.

G. WILLIAMS
CHAIRMAN, LONDON CHE GROUP ONE
c/o LONDON INFORMATION CENTRE

Godfrey Winn's home for rent

THE late Godfrey Winn's country home, The Mill House at Falmer between Brighton and Lewes, is up for rent. writes property correspondent Kenneth Allen.

The 19th-century house has six bedrooms, three reception rooms and two bathrooms and the rent, for a 10-year lease, will be around £1,000 a year.

Agents Strutt and Parker say that the incoming tenant "should appreciate and care for the house."

CHE News

Educational Teach-In

PROBLEMS AND METHODS OF INTRODUCING INFORMATION ON HOMOSEXUALITY IN EDUCATION.

Just in case you missed the preliminary notice in the October issue about the proposed Teachers' Conference, it is to be held on Saturday
NOVEMBER 11, 1972

from 10.30 a.m. - 6.30p.m in the Conference Room of the Central Collegiate Building, 15 Gordon St. WC1.

Our aim will be to promote lively discussion and a springboard for further conferences and campaign efforts in the field of education, which are so vital.

I appeal to all teachers in secondary and further education to give us support and encourage your non-gay colleagues to come along and participate too.

The TEACH - IN will be divided into three parts, each prefaced by a short introductory talk before discussion takes place.

I am grateful to Robert Maynard and members of GAYSOC for their willing co-operation in the planning and promotion of the TEACH-IN.

WALLACE GREVATT

When does the ravishing begin?

As I contemplated my first CHE meeting I thought 'How exciting to be surrounded by lots of lovely homosexuals'. Then, in a panic, I rushed out to buy a chastity belt, and quickly rehearsed how to scream 'Rape!'

That was some six months ago. The chastity belt proved a sheer waste of money, and having rehearsed myself hoarse I could not scream no matter how hard I tried.

Oh, yes, some of the CHE members are certainly lovely, and they do surround me at gatherings. I make sure of that. I get into the centre of their groups. But as for the ravishing, perhaps they, too, wear chastity belts, and are well versed in the art of screaming.

If I were to tell this to my 'straight' friends they would undoubtedly question my integrity. Incredulous that one can get within a mile of queers without their fumbling for zips with trembling excited hands! 'Who is he kidding?' they would say.

Of course, it is my own fault for joining CHE. Its members are far too courteous and well-behaved. So disappointing to discover that they do not flap their limp hands, and speak in high-pitched voices. Why, no one has even called me 'Darling' or tried to scratch out my eyes with his jungle red fingernails. As for tight jeans - what a laugh. It seems that only the 'straights' have the courage to wear them, and they wouldn't let me within barge pole's distance of them.

But if I have not yet been ravished, and the prospect of this experience grows dimmer every day, it is wonderful to be in the company of folks of one's kind. Nice to be able to discuss serious or flippant matters without thinking 'I wonder if he knows about me?' Nice to be able to wear clothes at a social which are slightly - but only slightly - unconventional without wondering if someone is whispering 'I bet he's queer'.

Nice, too, to be able to invite people to one's home without having to pretend that, given half a chance, one is ready to jump into bed with anyone of the opposite sex. Nice to be able to join a group of CHE members on a visit to the theatre or cinema, or go on a country walk, just knowing that a bond of sympathy and understanding invades the atmosphere.

Why, even CHE Lesbians converse with me just as if I were an ordinary human being.

If I haven't found me a lover, and wasted money on that damned belt, I have at least bought me an investment in FRIENDS.

Apologies for my anonymity. The lock on my bedroom door is broken, and a sudden rush of 'ravishers' could prove slightly awkward.

Don't look now - giving birth!

S. HERTS CHE INVITES MEMBERS WITHIN REACH OF HITCHIN & WATFORD TO THE SOCIAL GROUPS WE ARE FORMING IN THESE AREAS.

WE WOULD ALSO BE DELIGHTED TO HEAR FROM PROSPECTIVE HOSTS IN HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, SINCE MEMBERS IN THAT AREA WOULD WELCOME A SIMILAR GROUP.

CAMPAIGNING WILL CONTINUE TO BE RUN FROM THE MAIN GROUP IN HATFIELD, (WITH MEETINGS IN BOTH RADLETT & HATFIELD AGAIN IN THE NEW YEAR) UNTIL OUR OFFSPRING FEEL LIKE SEEKING THEIR INDEPENDENCE AT A NATIONAL COUNCIL.

INFORMATION: JOHN KERNAGHAN, 21 PARK CLOSE, OLD HATFIELD, HERTS.

Message to music lovers

In answer to Roger Baker's plea in LUNCH some time ago for CHE members to offer hospitality to other lonely members either living in or visiting London, I make a point of staying at home every Saturday evening for this purpose. This is proving to be useful for those who live in furnished rooms, or outside London who find it difficult to contact members during the week. Potential members are also welcome and anyone can bring a friend - CHE member or not. As the result of being made welcome by a stranger, and attending the other musical evenings, people are joining CHE. This is also intended to be an opportunity for people to get to know one another through this social contact, thus giving them a basis for forming friendships.

Provided I am free during the week, I shall be pleased to have visitors who need not necessarily like music but wish to visit a member for conversation. I do ask all intending to come to phone first please. Bill Dalziel. Phone:- 743 9666.

CHE MUSIC GROUP is proud to announce that Peter Katin, the famous pianist, has accepted our invitation to become our President. We are approaching some other eminent musicians whom we hope will become Vice-Presidents.

SUBSCRIPTION SOIRÉES. Why not buy a Subscription Card (50p) and come to our Soirées. Besides regular record recitals and talks (free to CHE members) we have planned three Subscription Concerts for next year. Tickets 20p. for subscribers, 30p for each accompanying friend. Come to all three concerts and with wine thrown in you will enjoy excellent music and stimulating (?) company at 36½ p. per evening. Fantastic value! Feb 11, Mar 11, and April 8.

GUARANTORS. Our Subscription Soirees will cost £50 to promote. If we pack all our concerts so that you're all sitting on each other's laps, then we should break even. If not, we stand to lose heavily. Will any kind person, or CHE Group, who is prepared to guarantee us against a loss of up to £15 per concert please let us know. Three guarantors would cover our first season.

FUTURE EVENTS. A comprehensive list of future Music Group events from Dec. - May is now available from the Secretary: Bill Dalziel, 204 Hammersmith Grove, W6 7HG Tel: 01-743 9666.

RODNEY SLATFORD
CHAIRMAN, MUSIC GROUP.

Campaigning

'It's all right to be broad-minded about homosexuality, but one mustn't mention it, or do it.'

Bernard Greaves put this statement to a Fabian meeting in London on 27.9.72 on 'The homosexual in a changing society'.

Many members within CHE are aware that the campaign aspect is too much our Cinderella; so it's good to find individual members going out onto the highways - even to Hyde Park Corner - to bring our message to the rest of society. Some may argue that talking to the Fabians is preaching to the converted, but even within that élite one can encounter amazing ignorance of homosexuality, and the reasons for our demands for equality. No doubt Bernard is still leafing through his Old Testament and Greek philosophers to find the source of one Fabian's belief that anal intercourse 'speeds up' a homosexual, whereas vaginal intercourse doesn't!

Bernard presented his talk in simple statements, leading his listeners from homosexuality, via bisexuality, to heterosexuality. He argued the causes - whether hereditary or conditional, and even whether curable. The net was spread across the whole social and political spectrum, arriving at the family, the homosexual's fear of rejection, loss of friends and even job. The social prejudices, despite the 1967 Act, are still strong, and the thorny question of the age of consent even has a reactionary reception in Fabian circles. What CHE aims to do, and what FRIEND's counselling service does, was put across. Our problem of even finding a seaside venue for next year's conference raised many an eyebrow.

The questions put to Bernard were invariably sympathetic, and I came away chewing over his statement that, because most homosexuals reject the married life, they tend to become the people who question society's norms, and, often, its radicals. They tend also to be the pacesetters within the community, to which they can devote more time than heterosexuals loaded down with family commitments.

If indeed we are such pacesetters, why do we lag behind in putting forward our objectives? Our campaigners within CHE are still a tiny band, but we should bless every brother and sister amongst them.

VIVIAN TOLAND

Miscellaneous News

Jewish Liaison Group Think - In

The expanding 'Jewish Liaison Group' will be holding its first National THINK-IN on Sunday, November 19th from 2.00 - 10.00p m. at the West Central Jewish Club, 23 Hand Court, High Holborn, London WC1 (Central or Piccadilly line tube to Holborn)

We have a distinguished panel of speakers, among them: Dr. Alan Unterman, PHD. Student Chaplain to Manchester University, who, although an orthodox Jew, has been concerned at the conflict and condemnation facing the 'Jewish Gay', and has both studied and researched the problem from its religious and philosophical aspects; Mr. Antony Grey, of the Albany Trust, who will explain to us the many social problems facing homosexuals of all denominations. Mr. Grey is well-known in all organisations working for homosexuals and an excellent orator. Also speaking, Mr. Francis Treuherz a social worker with the Jewish Welfare Board who will give us case histories of Jewish Gays. We hope to have an eminent psychiatrist on the panel. There will be delegates from both CHE and GLF, besides many Jewish Gays.

Through LUNCH I appeal to as many Jewish homosexuals as possible to attend this National THINK-IN. Already people are travelling down specially from the provinces, as far afield as Liverpool. We also need as many Jewish Gays as possible to stand up publicly and declare themselves 'gay', so that at long last, we can prove our existence to the Jewish Community.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to thank LUNCH most sincerely for the constant publicity given the Jewish group, and inform readers that I've had a massive response from Jews among you. I do hope that we will continue to receive letters from more Jewish Gays, wherever you may live. If any readers can contact either any psychiatrists or put them in touch with me, to be on the speakers' panel (pro-gay of course), it would be very much appreciated. If possible, we want about three psychiatrists specialising in homosexuality. I will answer all correspondence personally. I rely on your constant support.

SIMON BENSON, JEWISH LIAISON GROUP, 21A DONNE PLACE,
LONDON SW3 2NH.

Gay film unit forming

A movement is underway to form a Gay Film Unit capable of producing its own gay-oriented movies from start to finish. Specific projects will await the formation of the group but they could include educational, informational, documentary and campaign subjects, experimental, abstract and narrative films, material aimed directly towards the television stations, and possibly films designed for theatrical release.

An initial meeting to discuss aims, structure, ideas and financing will be held in November. Right now any interested gay or sympathiser (and that especially includes brothers and sisters with professional or amateur film-making experience, and others with a real interest in film and its ancillary arts and crafts) are invited to establish contact.

There will be a need for writers, directors, actors, production and camera crew, designers, sound freaks, carpenters, electricians, editors, lab technicians, still photographers, accountants, 'show biz' and copyright lawyers, etc., etc. And without suggesting any sort of rip-off anyone with access to stock, equipment and facilities will be doubly welcome: financial angels trebly so.

With interest and support the Unit can become important and influential. If the idea appeals to you send a note to Roger Baker, c/o CHE, 22 Great Windmill Street, London W1.

Stepney Group

A new local Group is planned, to be based around Stepney, and to cover such areas near there as aren't already catered for. The first meeting will take place in mid-November: full details available from Michael Harth, 01.476.7980.

The Hour-Glass Group

The Hour-Glass Group, an informal lunchtime group for CHE members working in Holborn and Bloomsbury, now meets every Wednesday at 12.45, at Billy's Baked Potato, 316 High Holborn, WC1. All welcome.

Diary

November

- SAT 4 CHE AUTUMN FAIR. Conway Hall 11am-6pm.
Evening entertainment 7.30-9.30pm.
- SUN 5 CHE SPEAKERS CORNER
- TUE 7 CHE London 3. Graham Collier 'The Creative Minority'. 7.30pm T.B. RGA Reading 8pm
'Homosexuality and Gay Women'.
- WED 8 CHE Students London Roger Baker on 'Drag'.
- THU 9 CHE LONDON 12. Dr Neville 'The Attitude of the Media to Minority Groups'. All London Political Action Group 7.30pm. L.I.C.
- FRI 10 GLF Dance Fulham Town Hall 7.30pm 50p.
- SAT 11 CHE London Education Teach-in. (see ad. Lunch)
CHE Brighton Bonfire/Barbecue 7.30pm.
- SUN 12 CHE Music Group Roger Baker 'Great Singers' Details 743 9666. CHE Car Rally Martin 368 6124 Mon-Fri 6.-7.30pm
- MON 13 CHE London 10 Dr. Martin Cole & wife, Barbara Chilton on 'Homosexuality Taboo or not'. C.A.
- SUN 19 Jewish Liaison Think-in 2-10pm West Central Jewish Club.
- THU 23 CHE London 12 Peter Royston Ball 'Friend'.
- FRI 24 CHE 'Company of Nine'. War & Peace. Poetry.
- SAT 25 CHE National Council followed by Dance 8-11pm
Holborn Assembly Hall.

December

- SAT 2 GLF Disco Haverstock Hill Old Town Hall 7.30.
- SUN 3 CHE Speakers Corner. CHE Music Group
Harpsichord & its music. Details 722 4274.
- FRI 8 Graham Collier Concert Nettlefold Hall
Norwood Library S.E.27. 7.45pm.
- SUN 10 CHE Music Group Christmas music details 743 9666

REGULAR GLF DISCO'S

Mondays Crypt St Mathews Church. Opp Brixton Town Hall
Wednesdays Bull & Gate. 1 Highgate Rd. Kentish Town.
DRAG MOBILE DISCOTHEQUES

Tuesdays Drag Disco 'Royal Oak' Glenthorn Rd.
Hammersmith. W.6.

Wednesdays Drag Disco Go-Go Dancing. 'Pontefract
Castle'. 48 Chapel St. Edgware Rd. Tube.

CHE

The Campaign for Homosexual Equality has developed from the North-Western Homosexual Law Reform Society into a nationwide organisation. The 2700 members of the Campaign participate in its activities through 60 or so local groups, each of which sends representatives to a quarterly National Council. The character of a group depends on its members, but most have full social as well as campaigning programmes.

An Executive Committee, elected by all members in postal ballot, handles national matters, but the 'strength and weakness of CHE lies at grass-roots level.

Membership is open to anyone - male or female, homosexual or not - and costs only £1.50 annually, including a monthly information bulletin.

Write to Paul Temperton, CHE, 28 Kennedy St., Manchester, M2 4BG or ring 061-228 1985.

IN LONDON: There are over 700 CHE members in Greater London, and local groups are active in many areas. In addition, groups with widely scattered members hold their meetings in Central London. A wide variety of interest-groups and action-groups enable like-minded members to get together for anything from leafletting to poetry-reading. For London events, contact: CHE, 22 Great Windmill St. W.1. 01-437 6117/8 (Ask for C.H.E. by name) Until the rota is completed the office will be open daily, from Noon - 6 p.m. only.

Stop Press

Christmas Cards

MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT US DESIGNS. THESE WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT THE CHE AUTUMN FAIR. A SELECTION WILL BE ON SALE BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE ARTISTS. THE WINNER WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE DEC. LUNCH JUDGES BRENDA LUKEY AND MALCOLM BIRD.

Brighton CHE Bonfire & Barbecue

BRIGHTON BEACH. DELICIOUS HOT MEAL. BRING OWN DRINKS. PAPER CUPS PROVIDED. TICKETS ONLY 30p. Available with details from Lunch 16 Avon Court Keswick Rd. SW15. Please send s.a.e. ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR RAIN!

CHE Meetings

LONDON 22 Gt. Windmill St. 437 6118.
C.A. = Coachmakers Arms Marylebone Lane
T.B. = Two Brewers Monmouth St. WC2/ W.1
GROUP 1 1st Friday 7.30pm L.I.C.
Chairman G. Vaughan Williams 735 6602
GROUP 2 3rd Friday T.B. 7.30pm. Inf.
David Bell 739 8146. Martin 368 6124.
GROUP 3 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7.30pm T.B.
Details Mike Brown 485-7590
GROUP 4 2nd Wednesday C.A. Details
Sec. Robert Buggs. 609 2995. 7.30pm.
GROUP 5 YOUTH GROUP Membs. flats
Details Jim Haley 385-7246.
GROUP 6 3rd Tuesday Victoria Pub.
Buckingham Palace Rd. Inf. 402-8053.
GROUP 8 3rd Thursday 8pm.
Check Basil Ferron 876 1009.
GROUP 10 2nd & 4th Monday 7.30pm T.B.
Details 560 2739.
GROUP 11 1st Thursday T.B. 7.30pm
Chairman Peter Robins.
GROUP 12 2nd & 4th Thursday T.B.
7.30pm Details Barry Hill 603 5063.
GROUP 13 1st Wednesday C.A. 8pm
Details Gerard Norton 549 0695.

CROUCH END 2nd Sunday. Derek Brookfield 7 Briston Grove Crouch End N.8.
CROYDON Unitarian Church Hall Friends
Rd. Croydon. Inf Tony Naylor 693 1815.
EALING 2nd & 4th Tuesday 7.30pm Inf.
Jim Brown 14 Drayton Green Rd. W.13.
EAST LONDON 2nd Wednesday Friends
Meeting Ho. Bush Rd. Leytonstone.
HIGHBURY & ISLINGTON 1st Sunday 7.30pm

Jonathan Marks 107 Plimsoll Rd N.4.
KENSINGTON. 2nd Tuesday 7.30pm The
Rose Fulham Rd. Inf. Marie 748 9339.
KILBURN & HAMPSTEAD Sundays 7.30pm
Details Alan Louis 960 1591.

LEWISHAM Details Len Kelly 692 6397
1st Monday.
STEPNEY Details Michael 476 7980
WANDSWORTH/RICHMOND 2nd & 4th
Thursdays 7.30. 1 Hotham Rd SW15.
Inf. Fred Green 788 2758.

BATH Every Thursday 8pm. Inf. John
Bath 63168 Hugh B. 4738. Evenings.
BIRMINGHAM Carrs Lane Church Centre
B'ham 4. Con. Denis Platt 0902
752673. Inf Douglas 021 706 9818.
BRIGHTON Details John Gough 9 Quayfil
Ho. 24/25 Broad St Kemp Town Brighton
Tel: Robert Brighton 575096.
CARDIFF Mondays 7.30pm. Chapter
Arts Centre Cardiff.

CHILTERN 1st Monday 3rd Thursday 4th
Wednesday. Inf. Alan 01.864 5119.
EAST KENT 1st Friday Inf. R. Weller
54 Minster Drive Herne Bay Kent.
EAST LANCs Meetings etc Blackburn
area. Details CHE Manchester.
HUDDERSFIELD & HALIFAX Details CHE
Manchester.

KENT STUDENTS Details Brian Hart
1 Trinity Rd Folkestone 0303 54698
LEEDS Inf. David Morley 7686. Details
in Leeds Group Newsletter.
LIVERPOOL 1st & 3rd Wednesdays. Con.
Robin Bloxside 051 709 6104. Inf.
Gordon Gibb 120 Edinburgh Rd. Liv. 7.
SMG Every Monday 23 George Sq. Edin.
Sec Michael Coulson 9 Moray Place. 3.

Inf. National Office 214 Clyde St
Glasgow G14JK. Tel: 041 7717600.
SOUTH ESSEX 3rd Wednesday Basildon.
Inf. John Shaw Sth Benfleet 3706.
SOUTH HERTS 3rd Tuesday Inf. John
Kernaghan 21 Park Close Old Hatfield.
TEESIDE 2 15 Beaufort St. Middles-
brough. Inf. Eric Thompson.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS 4th Saturday. Conv.
Ross Burgess Tun, Wells. 33175.
WINDSOR Meetings Maidenhead/Sunning-
dale/Windsor. Con. Mike Harris 82
Dedworth Rd Windsor. Inf. Peter
Saunders Ascot 24138.
WOLVERHAMPTON Inf. Denis W. 752673.
YORK 2nd & 4th Thursdays. Details
Roger Depledge York 55508.

Other meetings

GAYSOC University meetings. Details
s.a.e. Gaysoc University of London
Union. Malet Street. W.C.1.
GAY RELIGIOUS Alt. Sundays. Details
Brian 278 1701.

JEWISH LIAISON Details Simon Benson
21a Donae Place S.W.3. 2NH.
RGA READING GAY ALLIANCE Details
Rm 7. 30 London Road Reading Berks.
GAY CAMBRIDGE CHE/GLF Group. Details
Bernard Greaves 29 John St. Cambridge
Cambridge 52661 or Pat Cam. 55772.

POLITICAL ACTION GROUP Details
Derek Brookfield 7 Briston Grove
Crouch End N.8.

Women's Groups

CHE WOMEN 4th Wednesday 7.30pm
22 Gt. Windmill St. W.1.
GAY WOMEN Mondays Crown & Woolpack
394 St. Johns St. N.1.
LESBIAN LIBERATION Wednesdays 8pm
Women's Centre 14 Radnor Terrace
SW8.
SAPPHO 1st Monday 7.30pm Museum
Tavern Museum St. W.C.2.
WOMEN'S LIBERATION Details of groups
3 Shavers Place S.W.1. 839 3918.

GLF Meetings

OFFICE 5. Caledonian Rd N.1. 837 7174.
MONDAYS Co-ordinating Cmte 6pm.
HARROW Gay Unity. Inf. Alex 422-7890
TUESDAYS T.V. & T.S. All Saints
Church Vestry Clydesdale Rd W.10.
THURSDAYS EAST LONDON Agitprop 248
Bethnal Green Rd. E.2. WEST LONDON
Cmte Rm. Fulham Town Hall. CAMDEN
Forresters Hall 5 Highgate Rd.
SOUTH LONDON Minet Library Knatch-
bull Rd. Brixton.
FRIDAYS S.E. LONDON details Max 837-
4473. ACTION GROUP 7.30pm Office



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Welcome '73

A New Year Gala - on Saturday December 30th.

Glitter and be Gay from 7.30 p.m. until half past midnight.

Theme: Miss Winter Wonderland.

Tickets: £1-50p. in advance, £1-75p. at the door.
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