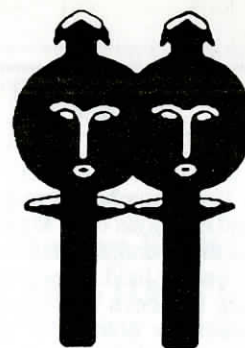


BLACK LESBIAN AND GAY CENTRE PROJECT

ANNEXE B
TOTTENHAM TOWN HALL
TOWN HALL APPROACH ROAD
LONDON N15 4RX TEL:081 885 3543

GAY'S THE WORD
£ 0.40



JUNE/JULY 1990 — INTERNATIONAL NEWS

GUATEMALA GAY CENTRE

The failure of the government to do anything about AIDS has led to the first organisation of gays in Guatemala.

Calling itself C'aslen, a native word for "life", the group has initiated a wide range of activities, including handing out condoms in massage parlours and hosting a consciousness-raising group called "Yo Soy Gay Y Que?" (I'm Gay and So What?).

"The Health Ministry has an AIDS prevention programme", said C'aslen executive director Carlos Serrano, "but it's in name only. They don't work with anyone at all. All they've done is set up an HIV laboratory."

At present C'aslen and its community centre are funded by the Guatemalan Association for Sexual Education. C'aslen has three full-time employees and 55 volunteers. The group serves 40 HIV positive people in Guatemalan City and has provided services for more than 500 people in its first 10 months of existence.

Future plans of the group are to provide regular workshops around condom use, eroticisation of safe sex and acceptance of HIV sero-positive status. Additional outreach programmes will provide condoms and safe sex information to bars, drag clubs and basic AIDS information to hospitals, universities and schools.

USA AIDS RACISM

More than 5,000 Haitian-Americans rallied outside offices of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in Miami in early March to protest at new FDA recommendations that all Haitians be barred from donating blood. Protesters, who slowed traffic around Miami International Airport, chanted "Racists", in response to the FDA's proposed regulations. The Rally was organised by the Haitian Coalition for Health.

The new policy, which is non-binding but is reportedly being complied with by local blood banks, eliminates a previous time limit restricting blood donations by Haitian emigrants. The previous ban included Haitians who has emigrated after 1977. The new recommendations were issued because "for Haitians the primary route for AIDS transmission is through heterosexual intercourse, making it more difficult to identify people at high risk of AIDS". Information from GCN.

MEXICAN STATE HOMOPHOBIA

City officials in Guadalajara, Mexico, have denounced the planned 1991 world conference of The International Lesbian and Gay Association, set to be hosted by the city's Gay Pride Liberation Group (GOHL).

Speaking to the daily newspaper Metropoli, Mayor Gabriel Covarrubias Ibarra stated, "An event of this nature cannot be authorised in any way because neither our customs, nor history, nor education, nor religion, nor anything will permit it."

Covarrubias acknowledged that "unfortunately" GOHL has the right under the constitution of Mexico to host the gathering, but promised that "we are not going to assist, aid or guard this event."

The conference has also come under attack from the State Families Association. Spokesman Fransisco Javier Macias Vasquez told reporters: "This cannot be tolerated because it attempts to commit a crime against our customs, our religion and our morals."

Macias stated that ILGA delegates will "go into the streets in order to propagate their ideas and customs which will provoke acts that violate the moral order, the honest manly existence of the Jalisco people." (Guadalajara is located in Jalisco state.) Macias threatened that ILGA delegates may find themselves in violation of a law known as "The Regulation of Cleanliness and Good Guidance". According to GOHL, arrest under this law leads to a \$40 fine "merely for being a homosexual."

The Jalisco Secretary of Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Palmeon Rodriguez Gomez, told Metropoli that no one can stop GOHL from hosting the conference, but said if anything endangers the physical or mental health of the population "we will have to intervene." GOHL spokesman Jorge Romero Mendoza says the conference "will be, without a doubt a singularly transcendent occurrence for the Latin American lesbian and gay liberation movement. With a commitment from the international lesbian and gay movement we can win a historic victory against homophobia."

GOHL is currently in desperate financial straits after a series of police raids on gay bars. The police have closed all of Guadalajara's gay bars within the last few

months, including "Boops", owned by GOHL and the group's sole source of income. The reason given for the closure of these venues was that they were "places of inconvenient meeting"!!!!

SAVE THE UPINGTON 14

May 26th was the first anniversary of the sentencing of the Upington 14 who are still on Death Row in South Africa.

In November 1985, the residents of the township of Pbellalo gathered on the local football pitch to protest against rent increases. The crowd was dispersed with tear gas and regrouped outside the house of a Municipal policeman who had shot dead a pregnant woman the previous week. On this occasion he shot and wounded a ten year old boy and, as he fled the house, was caught by the crowd and killed.

At the trial of the Upington 14, the judge admitted that thirteen of them could not possibly have been physically involved with the killing. However, South African law condemned the 14 under the "common purpose" doctrine. This states that when a crowd comes together, they have a common intention, thus if an incident arises any member of the crowd can be charged. The 14 were found guilty and are currently on Death Row in Pretoria Central Prison.

An appeal against the death sentence should be heard in August, although its exact date remains uncertain. For the time being, there is a moratorium on Death Row, but this may not apply to the 14 if theirs is ultimately judged to be a "criminal" rather than a "political" case.

Lydia Nompondwana, whose husband Enoch is one of the 14, will be in Britain to raise the political issue of the South African regime's use of the death penalty and the doctrine of "common purpose", as well as to raise material and financial support for the prisoners and their families. Lydia is quoted as saying "Some think that my coming to London at the same time as de Klerk may harm the case, but we can't afford to sit doing nothing."

For details of events where Lydia Nompondwana will be speaking check The Voice and City Limits or contact City of London Anti-Apartheid Group on 071 837 6050.

EALING BACKLASH

Labour lost a number of seats in the London local elections on 3 May, but retained many of the overall council majorities they had previously held. However, the change in Ealing has been a dramatic one. Conservatives now hold a 40/30 majority in the Council and for the past two weeks have been charging around like a bunch of vigilantes in a bid to axe posts connected with equalities issues.

In the lead-up to the local elections, Conservative campaigning in the borough was centred around attacking the Race and Women's Units, as well as the Lesbian and Gay Rights post, as symbols of the "loony left" Labour administration. They also pledged abolition of these units if elected.

But the backlash has a history that stretches back further than recent pre-electioneering.

For the past few years local Conservative MP Harry Greenway has been heading a campaign against the building of a mosque on a disused industrial estate in Northolt, on the grounds that it would potentially threaten the creation of local jobs. To date, three High Court injunctions against the granting of planning permission remain outstanding.

While Ealing's Tories deny that there is anything racist about their objections the campaign has provided an ideal breeding ground for an increase in racist graffiti, attacks and death threats.

It was against this backdrop that on the Friday after the election count, before any councillors had been officially sworn in or any new policy decisions put before a full Council meeting for a vote, porters, under the instruction of the new Tory leader, marched into the Race Unit and removed up to fifteen filing cabinets full of materials, including confidential case files and workers' personal possessions.

According to the Conservative Chief Whip, Robert Hetherington, the files were removed at the recommendation of the Council's chief legal advisor. "They contain a lot of very sensitive material that would otherwise have been left floating about in a public place." He went on to say that the Race Unit had "been getting up to some funny larks, inquiring about the activities of individuals. The documents have to be kept safe and sound." This begs the question, whose interests are the new Council safeguarding?

New Council leader Martin Mallam justifies the raid and subsequent decision to abolish the Unit. "The Race Unit should have ensured equal opportunities throughout the borough. Instead they picked on any race orientated group. In Southall they looked after Asians. In Acton they looked after Africans. They blinded themselves with race."

One Race Unit worker put it more succinctly, "Getting rid of us is just part of

the new Council's macho, racist act. They got in on an anti-equality ticket, and they're showing what's in store for Black people in this borough."

Ealing NALGO and local community groups are mounting a campaign to protest at the Council's proposed action in sacking nearly 200 staff connected with the Race and Women's Units, the Lesbian and Gay Rights worker and the Disability Unit.

For further information contact Ealing NALGO, tel 081 579 2424 X 42293.

OVER 2,000 CONVICTIONS FOR GAY SEX

There were 2,022 recorded offences of "indecent" between males in 1989. This is the highest figure since 1955 and probably the third highest this century.

Men suspected of having consensual sex in semi-public places may be charged with indecency. There is no heterosexual equivalent. They may be found guilty of common law or statute law offences, or under byelaws.

What is more, an unknown number of gay men were charged with obscure offences such as "attempted gross indecency". Calls for the repeal of discriminatory laws, and an end to police surveillance of public lavatories and the use of plainclothes "pretty" policemen, continue.

WOMEN'S HOSPITAL THREATENED

This year marks the centenary of the Elizabeth Garret Anderson Hospital (EGA). The hospital was established to provide high standards of health care (both preventive and curative) by women for women.

Since January 1989 the hospital's traditions have been under threat. Last year, male doctors were transferred from the recently closed Soho Hospital and subsequently the hospital has been subject to 20% cuts.

Now nursing and medical posts will be frozen, and an eight-bed ward opened in January last year will be closed.

Women attending the EGA who choose to see a female consultant are often faced by a male house officer. If a woman protests, a female junior doctor MAY be asked to see her on behalf of the male colleague, but often a female doctor is not available. During the night and at weekends, there is only one doctor on call. Also if a woman has been referred to a male consultant, she CANNOT choose to see a woman, as this is regarded as 'poaching' and therefore unethical.

So, for women to make the choice to see a

woman doctor relies on their ability to be able to complain, refuse appointments and generally kick up a fuss.

In 1979, the government stated that EGA would be saved because it catered for a need not being met elsewhere in the Health Service in London and as such it should be regarded as a supra-regional speciality providing services for women no matter where they lived.

That was the rhetoric; the practice means that women will wait longer for both outpatient and inpatient treatment, that operations will have to be cancelled and that women not resident in the area will be refused treatment.

So much for the government's commitment to maintain the NHS!!

Further information about the campaign to support the EGA can be obtained from: Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital Action Committee, c/o 26 Marryweather Court, Poyning Road, London N19 5LF.

HAZARD TO MANCHESTER LESBIANS AND GAYS

A plan to build a six-storey car park at the junction of Sackville St and Bloom St has been criticised by Manchester Gay Centre and other organisations. The car park, it is feared, will cause environmental pollution and turn a relatively safe area into a dark alleyway where lesbians and gay will be attacked.

The Council will decide on whether to accept the plan on 7 June. For further information contact the Centre on 061-274 3814.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The BLGC Newsletter is published bi-monthly and aims to provide information on international news, as well as events and campaigns nationally, of interest to Black lesbians and gay men. News items, articles, letters, (all written in simple language) or photographs and cartoons are always welcome.

In line with BLGC policy, we will not publish material that is racist, sexist, ageist, ableist or assumes that readers are without childcare responsibilities, or of a certain social class, cultural/religious/British-born background. Individual articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the BLGC. Volunteers are always welcome. Tel: 081 885 3543.

Note: deadline for August/September newsletter is 20th July.

BLGC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Would you like to find out what BLGC has been doing over the past couple of years, help plan its future work and take part in electing (perhaps even join) its new Management Committee? If so, come along to the **AGM at 6.30pm on Sunday 8 July in Room 2, Brixton Village, Brixton Hill, SW2 (wheelchair access, loop, creche)**. All full members are welcome. Membership is available on the door to any black lesbian or gay who agrees with the project's aims—but it will make life easier if as many people as possible join or renew their membership beforehand! If you would like to join the Management Committee, or have a resolution which you would like discussed and voted on, please contact the office as soon as possible. MC members do not need previous experience but should be willing to attend monthly meetings and put in some time and effort in between these. There are also plenty of opportunities for volunteering—no BLGC member need feel left out of the project's work!

LET'S GRAP

Also 24th JUNE and 8th JULY

BLACK GAY MEN
TALKING WITH
BLACK GAY MEN
SUNDAYS 3pm (prompt) - 6pm
EVERY FORTNIGHT

15th APRIL • 29th APRIL • 13th MAY
27th MAY • 10th JUNE

VENUE: LONDON LIGHTHOUSE
111 - 117 LANCASTER ROAD LONDON W11 1QT
PREMISES FULLY ACCESSIBLE
LADBROKE GROVE UNDERGROUND
FOR MORE DETAILS PHONE (071) 737 3881
SPONSORED BY BLGC



SEX AND SEXUALITY AND OTHER MATTERS!

BLGC is holding a series of meetings for black lesbians, where we will be able to talk about various issues affecting us and our sisters throughout the world. The first will be on Thursday 28 June at 7 pm at Brixton Village Centre (St Matthew's), Brixton Hill, SW2.

The topic will be sex and sexuality, and the facilitator will be Kris Black. It is likely to be quite a lively discussion! There will be food and soft drinks afterwards.

The centre is wheelchair-accessible from Effra Road, and there will be assistance available (ring BLGC for details). Portable looping will be installed. There will be a creche.

All lesbians of First Nation/Third World descent (through one or both parents) are welcome. Come along and tell your friends too.

Future meetings will be at 7 pm on 26 July, 23 August, 27 September, 25 October and 22 November, also at Brixton Village.

HIV/AIDS

COUNCILS: THEIR RESPONSE

INFORMATION

HIV and AIDS are affecting the lives of increasing numbers of people - gay, heterosexual and lesbian - in all areas. Some local authorities, though, do not seem to be aware of this. People who live, work or study in such places have to deal with ignorance and discrimination.

Increasingly, however, councils are trying to take account of the needs of local people who have HIV.

In the West London borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the Social Services department offers a variety of services to residents with HIV and AIDS.

They may get assistance with travel, telephones and equipment, holidays and courses to help them maintain their health. Support and counselling are offered to partners, carers and family members as well as people who have HIV.

There is a range of equipment and facilities to make life at home more comfortable. A flexible home care service is available (including at night where appropriate). Day services include physiotherapy/massage, art therapy and guidance on diet and nutrition.

There is special support for children whose lives are affected by HIV.

Housing advice and assistance, and advice on welfare benefits, are offered. There is continuing support in and out of hospital.

In addition, the council has links with other agencies which provide help of various kinds. Strict confidentiality is promised.

There are officers (some of them black) who coordinate services to local people affected by HIV and AIDS. Lois Pollock deals with the North of the borough (Westway

Social Services, 140 Ladbroke Grove, W10; Tel 071 969 2433); Tony White with the central part (282 Earls Court Road, SW5; Tel 071 373 7837); and Paramita Hiremath with the South (Neighbourhood Office, Worlds End Estate, SW10; Tel 071 351 3992). There are also social workers at the Kobler Centre and Body Positive Centre.

Further information is available from Geoff Hopping, Lesley Hicks or Langa Dhlomo at Kensington Town Hall (937 5464 X 2046).

Also Kensington and Chelsea provides training on issues related to HIV and AIDS for other council staff and voluntary organisations.

Several other boroughs have specialist workers on HIV and AIDS (you can find out the situation in your own area from the town hall or civic centre). Some local health authorities, too, have developed their services - though nowhere is there room for complacency. All councils should make an effort to behave responsibly to people affected by HIV.

AIDS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY



Black HIV/AIDS Forum
29 New Walk
Leicester
LE1 6TE
Tel (Leicester) 559995

The Black Communities AIDS Team Leeds
Leeds City Council
Health Unit
Selectapost 14
2nd Floor Annexe
Civic Hall
Leeds LS1 3AQ
Tel (Leeds) 462431

Black HIV/AIDS Network (BHAN)
c/o London Lighthouse
111-117 Lancaster Road
London W11 1QT
Tel 071 792 1200

Blackliners
PO Box 74
London SW12 9JY
Helpline 081 673 1695

South East Asian HIV/AIDS Support Group
Contact BHAN at above address or telephone
Sylvia 081 519 2259 (evenings)
Hong 071 486 6756 (evenings)
Andrew 081 746 8783 (day)
Support group meets at 7pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the London Lighthouse, 111-117 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QT (Ladbroke Grove Tube). All South East Asian people affected by HIV or those interested in understanding more about HIV and related issues are invited to attend.

SHARE (Shakti HIV/AIDS Response)
BM Box 3167
London WC1N 3XX
For information, advice, counselling and support for people with/affected by HIV/AIDS in the South Asian communities.

DIARY-JUNE/JULY

Wednesday 6th June

8pm-midnight

Young Lesbians' Strength and Pride disco, Holloway Neighbourhood Group, Old Fire Station, 64 Mayton St, N7 (071 607 8346). Wheelchair-accessible. With Pluto Young Women's Band, sounds by Benji. All lesbians under 25 welcome. Free.

Thursday 7th June

Someone to talk to, an exhibition about young lesbians and gays at school, at Central Library, High Rd, N22 (081 802 8981) until 30 June. Wheelchair-accessible.

Saturday 9th June

7.30-11pm

Lavender Ripple, Swiss Cottage Community Centre, 88 Avenue Rd, NW3 (081 586 5989). Wheelchair-accessible; sign language interpreter; facilities for hard of hearing; creche. Music and poetry by lesbians with disabilities for lesbians with disabilities and their friends - all women welcome. Bar with table service available. £2.50 (£1.50 conc).

Tuesday 12th June

7-9pm

HIV: raising awareness among lesbians, discussion, North London Line, Offord Rd, N1. Details from Sara Leaf, 071 226 1234 X 3053.

8pm-midnight

Young Gay Men's Strength and Pride disco, Holloway Neighbourhood Group (details above). Disco and live surprise for gay men under 25. Free.

Thursday 14th June

7pm

Black lesbian and gay people of any faith - meeting to discuss sharing experiences and supporting others who face problems. Bloomsbury Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Ave. Access not good. Details from Hong on 071 486 6756 or Savi on 081 885 3543.

7pm

Healing ourselves: remedies and treatments from our experience, Camden Black Lesbian Group, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, NW1. Wheelchair-accessible.

Friday 15th June

7pm

Black lesbian and gay social, Swiss Cottage Community Centre (details above). Sign language interpreter, creche. Dance, poetry, music; transport to Shakti disco at London Centre at 10.15pm. Food and drink available. Organised by BLGC with North London Pride. All lesbians and gays of First Nation/Third World descent (through one or both parents) welcome. £3.00 (£1.50 conc).

10pm-2am

SHAKTI 2nd birthday Bhangra disco at the LLGC, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London EC1, (Farringdon tube). Admission £2 (Shakti members/concs) £3 (non members). Wheel chair access.

Sun 17th June

2pm

Law of Desire (18), Looking for Langston (15) and poet Dirg Aaab-Richards, Rio Cinema, 107 Kingsland Rd, E8 (071 254 6677). Wheelchair-accessible; facilities for hard of hearing. All welcome. £3.50 (£2.50 conc).

3.30pm

International Lesbian and Gay People of Colour Conference planning committee, 40 Theobalds Rd, WC1. Wheelchair-accessible. Details from 081 885 3543. Volunteers urgently needed.

Thursday 21st June

Subah o Shaam (until 14 July), Derby Playhouse, Theatre Walk, Eagle Centre, Derby DE1 2NF (0332 363275). Tri-lingual play.

7.30pm

Lesbians in love and trouble: poetry by black lesbians, Central Library (details above). Sign-language interpreter. Women only. Free.

Friday 22nd June

7.30pm-1am

Radical Rave Up, Jackson's Lane Community Centre, Archway Rd, N6 (081 340 5226). Wheelchair-accessible; sign language interpreter; creche. Food and drink available. All lesbians welcome.

8-11pm

Hot Pepper and Masala: spicy lesbian entertainment with blues, bhangra, poetry, songs, Surrey Hall, Binfield Rd, SW4 (access and other info 071 978 8622 X 3078; box office 071 738 3801). Stockwell tube; buses 2, 2B, 45, 88, 145. Performers Carol Leeming, Storme Webber, Balgit Kaur, Ashe, Poulomi Desai, Margaret Mukama, DJ Ritu. Women only. £3.

Saturday 23rd June

10pm

Looking for Langston: performance, film and party, Hackney Downs, E5 (Rio at 11.15pm, details above). £2 (£3.50 Rio only).

Tuesday 26th June

9.30am-4pm

Safer sex for women who have sex with women: workshop. Details from Sara Leaf, HIV Unit, Environmental Services, Islington Council, 159-167 Upper St, N1 (071 226 1234 X 3053).

Thursday 28th June

9.30am-4pm

Women caring for people with HIV: workshop. Information from Sara Leaf (details above).

7pm

Sex and sexuality: discussion for black lesbians, Brixton Village Centre, Brixton Hill, SW2. Wheelchair-accessible; creche; refreshments. All black lesbians welcome. Free.

7pm

Social, Camden Black Lesbian Group, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, NW1. Wheelchair-accessible.

Friday 29th June

10am-5pm

Training day for unemployed lesbians and gay men, Swiss Cottage Community Centre (details above). Sign language interpreter; creche. Confidence building; assessing your skills; filling in application forms; CVs; interview techniques. Booking forms from Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights on 071 587 1636/1643. Free.

7.30-11pm

Pink Ripples, New River Sports Centre, White Hart Lane, N22 (081 802 8981). Wheelchair-accessible; sign language interpreter; facilities for hard of hearing; transport. An evening's entertainment by lesbians and gays with disabilities for lesbians and gays with disabilities and their friends. Bar and food with table service available. £2.50 (£1 conc).

Saturday 30th June

2pm

Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade. Assemble at Victoria Embankment under BLGC banner, visit BLGC and ILGPOCC stalls at Kennington Park from 4pm.

Sunday 8th July

6.30pm

BLGC AGM, Brixton Village Centre, Brixton Hill, SW2. Wheelchair-accessible; creche; refreshments.

Thursday 12th July

7pm

Creative writing: sharing things we write, Camden Black Lesbian Group, 54-56 Phoenix Rd, NW1. Wheelchair-accessible.

Thursday 26th July

7pm

Discussion for black lesbians, Brixton Village Centre, Brixton Hill, SW2. Wheelchair-accessible; creche; refreshments.

COURSES

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SENSIBLE DRINKING

Information and advice on topics such as alcohol and your body, relaxation, diet, drinking and menstrual cycle and how to deal with anger and anxiety.

All women are welcome to attend the group, which is held on Wednesday 1.30-2.30pm. For more information contact: **APAS, National Temperance Hospital, Hampstead Road, London, NW1 2LT. Tel 071 387 2620.**

WOMEN AND HEALTH is a centre for all women in Camden.

They run a variety of health related courses and services including: massage/aromatherapy, counselling, acupuncture, karate, yoga/massage, homeopathy, keep fit, holistic massage, nutritionalist and more. To find out more details then contact **WOMEN AND HEALTH, 4 Carol Street, London, NW1 OHU. Tel 071 482 2786. Nearest underground station: Camden Town (Northern Line). Disabled access.** Below are some of their current courses:

TAI CHI CHUAN for beginners. Tai Chi Chuan is really good for health and relaxation. It is suitable for women of all ages and no previous experience is required. All women are welcome. Prices are 50p per session waged and 5p per session unwaged. Sessions are held Tuesday 12-1.30pm at **WOMEN AND HEALTH** (see above for address).

MAKING OLD BONES YOUNGER... An exercise class for all women of menopause age to help prevent **OSTEOPOROSIS** ("brittle bones"). Every Monday 2-3pm for unwaged women £1.50 per class and Tuesday 6.30-7.30pm for waged women £2.50 per class. To be held at **WOMEN AND HEALTH** (see above for address).

There is also an **OSTEOPATH** available there every Wednesday 10am-3pm. Charges are £12 waged £5 unwaged for a 1/2 hour appointment. Reduced rates for children. Please call first for an appointment.

ASSERTIVENESS-Come along and discover how assertive you can be. Held Thursday 10.30am-12.00, 7th June to 5th July (6 sessions). **FREE.** Please give 2 weeks' notice if a creche is required. Held at **WOMEN AND HEALTH** (see above for address).

THERAPISTS' FUN DAY-Women only-Saturday 16th June 10am-5ish. Book now for places. Price £25 (£10 deposit). Limit 25 women. Contact **WOMEN AND HEALTH** (see above for address).

DID YOU SUFFER AS A CHILD WHEN YOUR PARENTS DRANK?-Workshops for adult children of drinking parents. Friday 22nd June 8pm-10pm and Saturday 23rd June 10am-5pm. Price £18 (limited concessions). For more details about how to register contact **WOMEN AND HEALTH** (see above for address) or Tel 071 485 4943.

WOMEN & HEALTH OPEN DAY-Come and find out what's on at Women and Health. Sunday 24th June, from 12 noon until 4pm. Children welcome. To be held at **WOMEN AND HEALTH** (see above for address).

CO-COUNSELLING FOR LESBIANS-6 sessions starting Monday 4th June 6.30-9pm. Fee: £35 waged £20 low waged £10 unemployed. To be held at **Women's Resource Centre, 1-3 Princeton Street, London WC1R 4BH (Holborn tube). Tel 071 242 6807.**

REGULAR GROUPS

SHAKTI-LONDON-South Asian lesbian and gay network. Meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at London Friend, 86 Caledonian Road, London N1. (Kings Cross Tube) from 3-6pm. Full disabled access. Separate women's meetings are also held. A Bhangra disco is held on the 3rd Friday of each month at the LLGC, 67-69 Cowcross Street, London EC1, from 10pm. For more information ring: Women 08) 885 3543 or 071 837 2782, Men 081 993 9001 or 071 837 2782. There is now a **SHAKTI** group in Leicester, call for details.

AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN BLACK LESBIAN GROUP Meets Tuesdays 7.30-9.30pm at Hackney Women's Centre, 20 Dalston Lane, London E8. Partial disabled access. Details on 071 254 2980.

LONDON LESBIAN AND BLACK GROUP Meet Fridays 8pm at 40 Theobalds Road, London WC1. Wheel chair accessible.

ONYX (for black lesbians) meets 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month, 6.30pm at London Friend, 86 Caledonian Road, London N1. (Kings Cross Tube). Access good.

YOUNG BLACK ZAMIS for lesbians 16-25 yrs, meet 6.30-9.30pm on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at the Camden Lesbian Centre, 52-54 Phoenix Road, London NW1. Access good.

CAMDEN BLACK LESBIAN GROUP Socials 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7-10pm at 52-54 Phoenix Road, London NW1. Access good.

LEICESTER BLACK LESBIAN & GAY GROUP Details on 0533-559995

CHINESE AND SE ASIAN LESBIAN AND GAY GROUP Meet at London Friend, 86 Caledonian Road, London N1. (Kings Cross Tube). Access good. Details on 071 837 2782.

BIRMINGHAM BLACK LESBIAN GROUP Details from Sandra on 021-773 6952.

PECKHAM BLACK LESBIAN GROUP Meetings will resume soon. Details from 071 358 1486.

LETTERS PAGE

HACKNEY WOMEN'S CENTRE, where the African and Caribbean Black Lesbian Group is based, received the following letter (addressed to the "Hackney Black Woman's Group") from the Pan-African Congress Movement:

The Pan African Congress Movement (PACM) would like to make you aware of our feelings towards homosexual persons/groups. We know that this particular type of activity is not conducive to the development of the African family and is therefore anti-African.

May we also point out that persons who are known homosexuals are not welcome at PACM's functions. The PACM would like to express our indignation at your group's audacity, when trying to obtain a copy of the Malcolm X tape. If our representative had followed the PACM policy, the meeting should not have commenced when she became aware of the type of woman's group you are.

Your actions have demonstrated to the PACM that you are capable of lying by not declaring your true identity and unscrupulous activities by attempting to make a copy of the Malcolm X tape whilst our member was present. You showed a gross disregard and disrespect for our organisation.

P.A.C.M.

P.S. Please come and collect your video tape.

The Women's Centre replied:

We are in receipt of your "note of indignation" dated 20 March 1990, received 17 April 1990.

Firstly, the term "homosexual" refers to "male sexual activity", which in itself does not take into account the total characteristics of such individuals, only their sexual orientation. In fact that specific terminology does not reflect identification with any group or individual using the facilities of this Centre.

Secondly, we have no group at this Centre bearing the title "Hackney

Black Woman's Group". However, we have used the same "title on your note" to enable you to identify the response.

Thirdly, the group in question, whom we have consulted, did not contact PACM. In fact, contact was made with Headstart Books and Crafts, who in expressing their indignation to something they clearly do not understand have chosen to write to Hackney Women's Centre surreptitiously under the banner of PACM. We therefore address this response to Headstart - without the cover.

In relation to the penultimate and ultimate paragraphs of your note, CABLE group asked the woman representative who attended whether they could obtain a copy of the Malcolm X video tape. The response was that she would have to take the request back to her group. This is clearly no form of unscrupulous behaviour - in fact quite the contrary. This meeting was not recorded visually or audibly.

A discussion took place prior to the meeting in which CABLE identified themselves and the aims of their group. If there was a policy of exclusion clearly your representative should have made this known and followed that policy.

We as a Women's organisation based on an anti-sexist, anti-racist perspective, catering for the needs of ALL women in Hackney, be they heterosexuals; lesbians; women suffering from physical and/or sexual abuse; women from various religious and/or cultural backgrounds needing an unthreatening environment in which to discuss, study and develop as women in their own right, find your arrogance and rudeness offensive and chauvinistic - which in essence are anti-African behavioural traits, in the traditional sense.

The nature of your note and the ignorance of women's views of themselves, not as perceived by men but shaped from varying cultures and experiences, show a total disregard and disrespect of women in general.

We thank you for your note and most of all, the opportunity of giving us an insight of the ignorance, male dominance and unequal relationship that women in your organisation have to tolerate.

P.S. It appears from your note that the request from CABLE for a copy of the video was made. We therefore take this opportunity to inform you that the Group decline the purchase of the video tape.

To find out more, contact Hackney Women's Centre on 071 254 2980.

SPERM DONOR SOUGHT

Black lesbian couple seeks a sperm donor for self insemination. He must be a healthy African/Caribbean or Asian man for unattached involvement. He should be willing to take a full medical. All expenses will be paid for the right person. Please write to the **BLGC, BM Box 4390, London WC1N 3XX**. All letters will be answered.

BLACK LESBIAN ANTHOLOGY seeking quality, unpublished **POETRY** (any length any form) and **FICTION** (including plays & experimental pieces). All topics and genres desired: work, family/community, friendship, parenting, religion/spirituality, aging, body image, food, TV, money & class, violence & fighting back, apartheid, being closeted/being out, health & illness, the armed forces, racism & sexism, rap, roles, education: humour and satire, horror, science fiction, mystery, period pieces, **AND MORE!**. All work must be authored by Black lesbians!

Send fiction to Stephanie Byrd, 705 E. Seneca, No. 7, Ithaca, NY 14850, USA.

Send poetry to Terri Jewell, 211 W. Saginaw, No. 2., Lansing, MI 48933. USA.

WHAT BLGC DOES

BLGC employs 4 part-time workers, volunteers also contribute to the work of the project.

- * **COUNSELLING** - someone to talk to over the phone or face-to-face.
- * **INFORMATION**
- * **HOUSING ADVICE AND REFERRALS**
- * **HELPLINE**
- * **LIBRARY** - large collection of books and publications relevant to Black lesbians and gays.
- * **NEWSHEET** - produced every 2 months lists events, news, courses, job ads, info etc
- * **SOCIAL & CULTURAL EVENTS ORGANISED**
- * **TALKS & ADVICE** on issues affecting Black lesbians and gays to community groups, local authorities etc.
- * **TRAINING** - on racism and heterosexism.

MEMBERSHIP

If you are a Black lesbian or gay group or individual you can become a full member. You will receive our newsheet and you can use our library and other resources. You can get free/cutprice entry to social, cultural and educational events and you will have a say in how BLGC is run through participating in general meetings. Annual cost; £2.50 (waged), £1.50 (unwaged), £6.00 (groups). Membership form on back.

Supporting membership is available to any groups or individuals who agree with the aims and principles of BLGC, supporting members regularly receive our newsheet and can make use of our library. Annual cost; £4 (individuals). £12 (groups).

The Black Lesbian and Gay Centre project welcomes all lesbians and gays of First Nation/Third World descent, i.e. lesbians and gays descended from Africa, Asia (i.e. the Middle East to China, including the Pacific nations) and Latin America; and lesbians and gays descended from the original inhabitants of Australasia and North America.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

I / we wish to become a full / supporting member of BLGC.

I am a Black lesbian / Black gay / other.

Name.....

Tel.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Contact person (if group).....

.....

I/we enclose a cheque/postal order for£.....

Date.....

Delete what does not apply.

(Full members) I can / cannot volunteer to help at present.

My/our skills include talking languages.....
.....stuffing envelopes/cooking/typing/
driving / drawing / counselling / other (please specify)

PLEASE NOTE:

WE MAY BE MOVING PREMISES IN THE NEW YEAR