State March of the Gay Unveiling

On March 14, 1971, the state capital city of Albany was privileged to view the stirring sight of about 2500 of our gay brothers and sisters crowding about the steps of the impressive State Capitol building, demanding the right to be. The Gay Liberation Front of the Tri-Cities (Albany-Troy-Schenectady) invited gay liberation activist groups from all over the state and elsewhere to rally, dance, march, and demonstrate still another event in the growth of that new political embryo, the movement for full equality of the gay and straight worlds. This time, that event was a demonstration to support the introduction of several bills into the State Legislature — bills to guarantee fair housing and employment for gays, and a bill to repeal that abominable and unspeakable crime against nature of a law, the sodomy statute. The groups that were there represented New York City, the tri-cities, Buffalo, Long Island, Binghamton, Ithaca, Syracuse, Rochester, Watertown, and other areas of New York State. Some out of state groups were there also, such as Amherst, Mass., Gay Liberation.

Beginning the evening before, there was a reception and dance in a church, where the anxious conveners danced off their hours spent cramped in cars on the way to Albany or rapped with their brothers and sisters, then were assigned places to stay. The next afternoon, as sort of a sign from Heaven, the snow of the night before was completely melted, and an absolutely cloudless sky and brilliant sun greeted the hundreds who gathered for a prayer-in. Speaking at the service were Laud Humphries, author of "Tearoom Trade," and Rev. Troy Perry, who has a gay congregation in Los Angeles. Humphries, who delivered the sermon, remarked that like Egypt of old, the U.S. is plagued with what we term "social evils," and said that the way to end them is to "Let my people go," a chant which was taken up later by marchers.

The march started near the State University campus and proceeded for about a mile, along the sidewalks, to the State Capitol, where speakers from nearly every group read inspiring messages of hope, courage, pride, and anger. Kate Millet also made a brief speech comparing this effort to the first Christopher Street march in New York City celebrating the first resistance of police harassment of gays and gay bars. At his march, however, not only wasn't there any police harassment, but there was even protection in a few small incidents, when groups of boys throwing eggs and beer cans were dispersed.

At the end of the march, the crowd broke up into small groups and scattered through the city, still in drag or arm in arm, searching for places to eat. It was as if the entire city had become gay, for whatever block you walked up, you were bound to see joyous gay groups celebrating this important step towards liberation.
The G.L.F. Speaker's Bureau has been kept busy answering invitations from schools and organizations in the Rochester area. The groups have differed in size from seminars of nine to twenty people to large classes of fifty people. Scope and content, as indicated in the class titles below, have been quite varied.

The previously misinformed curiosity of the audience makes itself felt by the barrage of questions directed to the members of GLF. We come to feel that we are answering a need which has, until now, gone largely ignored. In meeting a class our basic format has consisted of reading a short prepared statement. This we usually follow with a brief informal talk on gay liberation and the organization in Rochester, before we move on to questions and discussion.

Discussions have included a wide range of topics, depending upon the interests of the class (regardless of course titles) or of the individual involved. Naturally, some people appear more interested in personal and psychological ideas, while others seem more curious about sociological and political questions. Only once have we encountered open hostilities: "How do you know you wouldn't like heterosexuality if you haven't tried it?" To which we answered simply, "Did you try homosexuality before you chose to limit yourself to heterosexuality?" On the whole, however, these discussions have been quite fruitful, and they provide means other than meetings and dances for GLF to meet straight and gay people.

As an aid to people who would like to volunteer for the Speaker's Bureau, we have compiled some of the most typical questions asked. It would be a good preparation before taking on a speaking engagement to think about these questions and talk about them with other people in GLF.

1. Is homosexuality psychological, biological and/or sociological? Do you consider it a disorder? How should it be treated or cured?
2. What are the causes of homosexuality?
3. Are most homosexual relationships of short duration?
4. Would most homosexuals prefer to be a member of the opposite sex?
5. Would you prefer to be heterosexual?
6. If homosexual marriages are legalized, would most homosexuals then participate in the institution of marriage?
7. Can you easily identify homosexuals by mannerisms, speech, and clothing?
8. Why is there a separate organization for gay people? How does gay liberation relate to other liberation movements like women's liberation? Are most women in women's liberation also gay?
9. In a homosexual relationship does one person usually take on a masculine role ("butch"), and the other a feminine role ("femme")?
10. Do male homosexuals hate women and female homosexuals hate men?
11. What are the differences between male and female homosexuals?
12. How prevalent is sadomasochism in a homosexual relationship?
13. What do the following terms mean? Deviant sexual behavior, drag, drag queen, faggot, dyke, transvestite, transexual, bisexuality, lesbianism, fellatio, cunnilingus, in the closet, sixtynine.
14. Are there more male than female homosexuals?
15. What percentages of the population in the U.S. are gay? Men? Women?

To give representative responses to these questions would take several issues of the CLOSET, so we have presented only the questions. As part of GLF's public information program, we have speakers available to any group anytime. Contact the GLF office in Todd (375-6181) for details.
Marriage in the United States and in most of the western world is based on the sexist notion of male supremacy. In sexism, physiological differences are blown up and capitalized upon. Domineering men and passive women, rather than individuals, are the ideal. Marriage puts boundaries around people, on what they express, on how they express it, on how they act, and the function of its members is so rigidly defined that they cease to be people. They become instead meaningless types, trapped in a cage which our society and its history have built.

The motivation for two people to live together should not be a legal contract, but love, or at least an ability to coexist. We discover in examining the heterosexual marriages around us that many people remain together in concession to social and economic pressures — because the church and the law view divorce not as an answer to problems, but as a shirking of one’s responsibilities to the family in the capacity of parent, spouse, bread-winner, or household servant, as well as a shirking of one’s social responsibility* to conform to society’s smothering demands — rather than for the reasons they may have initially entered the contract. Even straight people don’t function smoothly in an institution which is based on the family and children, and which requires a great deal of subjugation and self-denial. The rising divorce rate, and the increase of common law marriages, the emergence of marriages of more than two persons, and communal living all indicate that people are feeling the shortcomings of unions which depend on role-playing.

In a past time, chivalry, monogamy, and the heterosexual marriage may have been institutions which afforded fulfillment for its members, but marriage as we know it today has become a tool of a male-chauvinistic, heterosexual society. The man is put on top, where he exploits, violates, and manipulates women. The woman is on the bottom — subservient and less than human. The male maintains his position by keeping the female down, and she is useless except in her capacity as an object which encourages male chauvinism. She is legitimized only in conjunction with the oppressing male, for whom she performs what New York’s Radicalesbians called in their article, “The Woman-Identified Woman,” society’s non-profit-making functions.*

Because heterosexual marriage-types require one party to be dependent on another, a complete surrender to the stereotype causes one personality to cease to exist. Fortunately, homosexual relationships can be as dependent or independent as we choose to make them. The degree of dependence is purely a personal matter, but we must beware of losing ourselves, which is what the straight pattern would have us do.

Role-playing is something which homosexuals must discard in their interpersonal relationships because roles stifle individuality. They force us to negate any part of ourselves which does not conform to the mold. Roles disregard completely the need, no matter how deep or how urgent, to go beyond the bounds of stereotypes. They make us anxious when we do not comply with their demands. Role-playing reduces us to empty, mindless, unfeeling subhuman characatures of human beings. We have enough of that

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directed toward us by the straight world which pushes us into a ghetto of gay bars, Johns, and bath houses. Let's not make it doubly hard on ourselves by a wilful dehumanization in our love relationships.

Our very coming out is a manifestation of our refusal to accept the niche into which society would place us, for in coming out we are going against the heterosexual-sexist relationship of inequality. To the minds of straights, only women, the underdogs of heterosexuality, are allowed to love men. For a man to be close to another man, for him to want and to love another man, is viewed as lowering oneself to a woman's subservient status. It is to be weak and on the bottom, which, in our society, is nowhere.

But we are not nowhere. We are human beings who can relate completely to each other if we will only free ourselves of the bonds which threaten to strangle us. We must examine our values and redefine our relationships so that we may allow room to live and to love. We can establish meaningful relationships if we face realistically the needs, desires and individuality of all concerned. We must comprehend the impossibility of the notion which expects two people to be everything to each other, autonomous of the rest of the world.

Because homosexuals do go against society's demands, we can reformulate lifestyles in which sexism does not form a part. Why should gay people with needs which differ from those of straight people, with a lifestyle which, although more suppressed, can be more free than that of straight people — attempt to make our relationships take on a pattern which is inadequate even for straights? When a relationship is not plagued with pre-conceived standards which require us to measure up to them, it is easier to come to grips with love and allow growth.

Unfortunately, many of us are tempted to try to show straights just how "normal" we are by attempting to formulate a marriage which is just like theirs. The truth is that in many respects we aren't just like them. Although some of our needs are human needs which we have in common with straight people, many of our needs are also different because we are starting out with people of the same sex. We cannot expect their formulae to fulfill our needs. We are cursing ourselves twice over if we do.

In rejecting the heterosexual marriage of inequality we can also discard puritanical myths which require us to approach THE RELATIONSHIP with a solemn awe. We do not expect our happiness to come to us gift-wrapped and twice life-size in cinerama and multiple channeled stereo. Freedom from this will allow us all to realize that love is not a phenomenon which is felt by a member of one sex exclusively for one member of the opposite sex, but that it is present in a gamut of degrees towards everyone whom we encounter in the course of our lives.

One of the biggest fallacies we must surmount is the Myth of the Monogamous Relationship. No relationship is ever entirely monogamous. Certain our social and emotional lives are never monogamous. We do not expect one person to be everything to us in the social and emotional realms. We hope to have many acquaintances and more than one close friend. No one expects our sexual fantasies to be monogamous. But when it comes to sexual reality, we are spontaneously supposed to limit our relations to one person and not need anyone else.

The fact that sexual polygamy exists alongside monogamous socio-political, and emotional relations points out that humans feel a need for it. If we had not been reared in a heterosexual world which expected us to deny this capacity within ourselves, we would not feel threatened. Many of us seem to think that if our friends want to communicate with someone else, we must be inadequate. Not so at all! For example, at a party, we are not expected to spend all evening talking to just one person. Society places no limitations on our verbal communication and expression. Why then should our sexuality be so limited? Attempts to comply with this requirement cause more difficulties than they cure. We are anxious if we don't comply, because promiscuity has such a negative attitude attached to it. If we do comply, we feel quite guilty when we recognize that we would rather not be monogamous.

Either way, we lose. If we try to adapt society's values to our relationships, we can only fuck ourselves up. We should rather accept the fact that at some time we may want to go trapezing off to bed with a perfect stranger or a good friend. Further, we must understand that our ability to relate sexually, if briefly with someone does not obliterate any pre-existing relationship, that the new person does not necessarily replace anyone else in our lives, nor are either of the initial people failures. Our ability to communicate sexually in an uninhibited manner may be one of our superior assets. We must not smother it!

Recognition of the thwarting effects which role-playing has on interpersonal relationships constitutes the first step towards forming viable unions. If we refuse to be hemmed in by society's devastating mandates, we can free ourselves to incorporate our complete unbridled selves in a meaningful and fulfilling way. To accomplish this, we must be aware of ourselves as individuals, and we must recognize, for our own benefit, the tyranny of inflexible systems.

GAY LIBERATION ON RADIO

On Sunday evening, April 18, three members of Rochester Gay Liberation appeared on the WROC radio show "Night Call," hosted by Rev. Tom Fassett. The GLF members were Bob Osborn, Sue Minor, and Patricia Evans. "Night Call" is a program which centers on controversial issues, and the public can call in comments and questions right on the air. The switchboard was jammed with calls during most of the 2½ hour show, and the comments ran the entire gamut from Bible preaching to pronouncements of "sick" to "right-ons." The panel members stood their ground very well, and numerous congratulatory calls and letters have been received.
CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING

If two heads are better than one, then six or eight must be at least thrice-blessed. On that premise Gay Liberation Front chapters throughout the country are experimenting with Consciousness-Raising groups in an effort to clear our members' mental cobwebs and strengthen our understanding of living "proud" and public.

Rochester's G.L.F. is joining the movement this month by forming several C-R groups. Anyone interested in aligning with a group, can phone in to the G.L.F. office (275-6181) and be added to the list. You'll be asked to commit yourself to attend at least three formation meetings, and then decide if C-R is for you or not. Once formed, groups will be closed to further membership. Newcomers desiring admittance will be brought together in fresh clusters.

Basically Consciousness-Raising involves getting to know five or seven other people on a deep enough level so that trust and sharing can develop. In the weekly or bi-weekly sessions, the groups will rap for a minimum of 90 minutes, and share insights, problems and challenges.

As each group develops, it will develop unique ways of meeting members' needs. Some may take the study session trek, doing suggested readings and then discussing their findings. Others may choose to discuss past and present experiences, and work towards guidelines for a better tomorrow. Some groups may abort shortly after formation, and free members to join new clusters or drop out of C-R entirely.

If any problems are uncovered in the course of C-R sessions that are beyond the power of the group to aid, troubled members will be referred to competent, understanding professional aid.

At this point, there seems to be strong sentiment for forming clusters on a gender base, with the gals in one group or two, and the guys in groups of their own. A proposal has been made that perhaps a group of sisters might meet with their brothers for a joint meeting every third session, and thereby widen insights and common understandings.

Should lovers be in the same group? Should clusters be made up of friends or strangers? How might groups share and gain insights with the outside community of straights and bi's? Where will groups meet? How social should they become? These and dozens of other questions remain to be worked out by each autonomous C-R group. The only thing certain at this point is that Consciousness-Raising has come to Rochester's G.L.F. Will you be part of it?

SUMMER TRAVEL NEWS

For those of you who will be traveling this summer, we have up-to-date listings of gay organizations, bars, clubs, and cruising places in hundreds of cities in the U.S., Canada, and abroad. Call or visit the G.L.F. office for information.

GAY COMMUNITY CENTER

Do you want a gay community center, coffeehouse, library, dance hall? We do too. Help us find a building and raise money to staff it. Call 275-6181 and come to Saturday meetings.

The Rochester Gay Liberation Front has opened an office in room 202-D of Todd Union (on the UR river campus) with telephone 275-6181. It features a library, copies of gay literature for sale, and a staff of people to rap with you about gay problems. Call or come in.

MOVEMENT NEWS

MAY 1: Rochester anti-war demonstration.
MAY 5: National moratorium on business. Massive disruption in Washington to coincide with strikes and demonstrations around the country.
MAY 15: Rochester People's Coalition Forum at city budget hearings.
MAY 16: Armed Forces Day actions in support of G.L. organizers at military bases.

EUPHORIA

208 COURT ST.
RECORDS & STUFF
Underground Rock; Blues, Folk, Jazz
Open 10 AM to 9 PM Monday thru Saturday
THINGS FOR YOUR HEAD ON WASHINGTON SQUARE
I've been aware of my homosexual feelings since the age of 12. Why am I gay? That's not a difficult question for me to answer. My life experiences lead directly to a pattern of homosexual development. For I am the "textbook" case psychologists have often cited. I can point to such causitive factors as a broken home, a motherless childhood, a sexual attack by an adult male during adolescence, an over-idealistic view of sex instilled in me by a convent upbringing, and an over-sensitivity which led me to overreact to these and other experiences.

Of the people I have met in the gay world, experience can be divided as the causitive factor of homosexuality. These experiences are not always negative, though. I'll try to cite a few examples. There are those who have become homosexual after being introduced to it by a friend whom they loved and respected. After a favorable experience with a member of the same sex they could see no reason for turning to the opposite sex in their later experiences. The converse of this is the heterosexual who finds his experiences satisfying and excludes homosexual involvements. I have met others who have chosen homosexuality because they were raised by a homosexual parent and were exposed to homosexuality as a natural phenomenon. Many others I have met turn to homosexuality because it is a releasing experience. They overcome their socialization and allow themselves the expression of their previously repressed homosexual feelings.

For these people, homosexuality is not a guilt-ridden anxiety-provoking expression but a growing experience.

I agree with the psychological view that homosexuality is a deviant behavior. But I have several qualifications to add to this statement. First of all we are all deviant because we respond differently from the societally sanctioned mode of sexual response. I will not, however, accept the label of abnormal as part of this deviant status.

A human being is the product of his environment. As the earth has developed sediment upon sediment a human being develops his behavior patterns by reacting to his experiences one upon another. In this society through the socialization process the average person is taught and caught in the heterosexual adjustment. An individual reacting to his experiences either negative or positive may reject socialization and take a different path—the homosexual path. He is a sexual being. If he does not accept the sexual orientation conditioned by society it is a perfectly normal, natural, and rational alternative to become a homosexual. His adjustment to his homosexuality is what can be abnormal—and oftentimes is, thanks to the great influence of psychology (more on this later). But his adjustment can be normal, rendering him a perfectly happy, healthy, and whole individual.

Going back to the analogy I made earlier between the earth and a human being I would like to add that to change someone who has been exclusively homosexual since his early life into an exclusively heterosexual being is in the long run detrimental to the mental health of the individual.

As an example let's take my case of an exclusive homosexuality. It is not a good reason for believing let's say hypothetically that I am experiencing anxiety because I am homosexual. It is not a good reason that person who has not yet discovered a supportive group such as G.L.F., or had the experience of a beautiful love relationship with a person of the same sex, will experience some anxiety when his external environment condemns his behavior and his internal environment consists only of gay bars and the relationships of short duration that usually follow from participation in the gay bar scene. I myself found it very insecure, although inexplicably exciting, life-style. An even more anxiety provoking situation is the one a gay person faces before he "comes out." He is aware of his attraction for members of the same sex but cannot identify with the term homosexuality because of the negative stereotyped associations society has given the term. So he plays it "straight" while inside he grows lonelier and more confused. I know the feeling. I played the game for six long miserable years... At any point during those six years I might have been receptive to psychotherapy if for no other reason than to have a release, in talking to the psychologist, for the pent-up emotions and frustrations. Consider the process an analyst would have had to go through to uncover all the causitive factors for my homosexuality. I could uncover for him causitive factors in the very environment I was born into. Then I could trace the pattern through adolescence up until the age of 12 when deep inside I knew I was gay. Then on through puberty into adulthood I could reveal to him the experiences which served to reinforce my homosexuality. Now with this information, what would he do? The average psychologist today would try to change me.

I'm not saying he couldn't change me, but I'm asking whether or not this change would be for the better. He would have to go back to my childhood and work his way up, reinterpreting my every experience from a different frame of reference. By doing so he would be attempting to give me a new reality. But only if he were successful in reaching all the sediments or layers of my homosexual growth would this reality be concrete enough to make me a strong, new heterosexual, human being. If he is incomplete in his investigation he leaves me a changed but crippled (if not completely shattered) human being. I would be dependent upon the psychologist for the reinforcement of a shaky set of values.

Had he not discouraged my homosexual feelings and instead helped me to see that the guilt and anxiety resulting from these feelings was societally imposed he might have been a genuine help to me. He might even encourage me to make a bisexual adjustment to lessen these anxieties. So rather than destroying me he would be broadening my scope. He wouldn't be asking me to completely reject my value system but only to incorporate his into mine.

There was a case of a male homosexual that comes to mind right now. The individual was terribly ashamed of his homosexual feelings and almost completely successful in his attempts to repress them. He came to the psychiatrist for reasons that seemed completely unrelated to homosexuality. Upon testing, it was his overdefensiveness that gave his secret away. With the enthusiastic cooperation of the patient the psychiatrist chose the abominable method of shock therapy to bring about a "cure."
THOUGHTS ON HOMOSEXUALITY
by Patricia Evans

I've been aware of my homosexual feelings since the age of 12. Why am I gay? That's not a difficult question for me to answer. My life experiences lead directly to a pattern of homosexual development. For me the "textbook" case psychologists have often cited, I can point to such causitive factors as a broken home, a motherless childhood, a sexual attack by an adult male during adolescence, an over-idealist view of sex instilled in me by a devout upbringing, and an over-sensitivity which led me to overreact to these and other experiences.

In most of the people I have met in the gay world, experience can be cited as the causitive factor of homosexuality. These experiences are not always negative, though. I'll try to cite a few examples. There are those who have become homosexual after being introduced to it by a friend whom they loved and respected. After a beautiful experience with a member of the same sex they could see no reason for turning to the opposite sex in their later experiences. The converse of this is the heterosexual who finds his experiences satisfying and excludes homosexual involvements. I have met others who chose homosexuality because they were raised by a homosexual parent and were exposed to homosexuality as a natural phenomenon. Many others have come to homosexuality because it is a liberating experience. They overcome their socialization and allow themselves the expression of their previously repressed homosexual feelings.

I agree with the psychological view that homosexuality is a deviant behavior. But I have several qualifications to add to this statement. First of all we are all deviant because we respond differently from the societally sanctioned mode of sexual response. I will not, however, accept the label of abnormal as part of this deviant status. A human being is the product of his environment. As the earth has developed sediment upon sediment a human being develops his behavior patterns by reacting to his experiences one upon another. In society the socialization process the average person is taught and caught in the heterosexual adjustment. An individual reacting to his experiences (either negative or positive) may reject socialization and take a different path-the homosexual path. He is a sexual being. If he does not accept the sexual orientation conformed by society it is a perfectly normal, natural, and rational alternative to become a homosexual. His adjustment to his homosexuality is what can be abnormal-and often is, thanks to the great influence of psychology (more on this later). But his adjustment can be normal, rendering him a perfectly happy, healthy, and whole individual.

Going back to the analogy I made earlier between the earth and a human being I would like to add that to change someone who has been exclusively homosexual since his early life into an exclusively heterosexual being is in the long run detrimental to the mental health of the individual.

As an example let's use my case of an exclusive heterosexual who took good reason for being. Let's say hypothetically that I am experiencing anxiety because I am a homosexual. It is not unlikely that this person who has not yet discovered a support group such as G.I.F., or has had the experience of a beautiful love relationship with a person of the same sex, will experience some anxiety when his external environment condemns his behavior and his internal environment consists only of gay bars and the relationships of short duration that usually follow from participation in the gay bar scene. I myself found it a very insecure, although inexplicably exciting, life-style. An even more anxiety provoking situation is the one a gay person faces before he "comes out." He is aware of his attraction for members of the same sex but cannot identify with the term homosexuality because of the negative stereotyped associations society has given the term. So he plays it "straight," while inside he grows lonelier and more confused. I know the feeling. I played the game for six long miserable years... At any point during those six years I might have been receptive to psychotherapy if for no other reason than to have a release, in talking to the psychologist, for the pent up emotions and frustrations.

Consider the process an analyst would have had to go through to uncover all the causitive factors for my homosexuality. I could uncover for him causitive factors in the very environment I was born into. Then I could trace the pattern through adolescence up until the age of 12 when deep inside I knew I was gay. Then on through puberty into adulthood I could recount for him the experiences which served to reinforce my homosexuality. If armed with this information, what would he do? The average psychologist today would try to change me.

I'm not saying he couldn't change me, but I'm asking whether or not this change would be for the better. He would have to go back to my childhood and work his way up, reinterpreting my every experience from a different frame of reference. By doing so he would be attempting to give me a new reality. But only if he were successful. He must be able to help me achieve my goal with the strength, determination, and support that it would take to make me a strong, now heterosexual, human being. If he is not completely in his investigation he leaves me a changed but crippled (if not completely shattered) human being, forever dependent upon the psychologist for the reinforcement of a shaky set of values.

Had he not discouraged my homosexual feelings and instead helped me to see that the guilt and anxiety resulting from these feelings was societally imposed he might have been a genuine help to me. He might even encourage me to make a bisexual adjustment to lessen these anxieties. So rather than destroying me he would be broadening my scope. He wouldn't be asking me to completely reject my value system but only to incorporate his into mine.

There was a case of a male homosexual that comes to mind right now. The individual was terribly ashamed of his homosexual feelings and had almost been completely unsuccessful in his attempts to repress them. He came to the psychiatrist for reasons that seemed completely unrelated to homosexuality. Upon testing, it was his overdefensiveness that gave his secret away. With the enthusiastic cooperation of the patient the psychiatrist chose the abominable method of shock therapy to bring about a "cure."

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The description of this therapy in all its sadistic detail can be found in the book "The Tortured Sex," by Yankowski and Wolff, but essentially it consisted of accompanying pictures of the male organ with an electric shock while pictures of the female genitalia were accompanied by soft music and other positive reinforcers. Eventually the patient was conditioned to respond only to the female body.

But conditioning does wear off and the man began to feel attraction for men once again. He was teaching drama at a college and found himself uncontrollably attracted to one of his students. In an attempt to find out the student's attitudes toward homosexuality he drew him into a conversation about homosexuality in the theater. He told him that often to get a break one would have to submit to homosexual advances. The student responded "If they want me they have to take me like I am." The homosexual echoed his response and repeated it several times. "If they want me they have to take me like I am." He bade the student good-bye and drove away in his car. The next morning he was found in that same car - dead - at the bottom of a cliff.

Why couldn't the psychiatrist have seen that his patient's guilt and anxieties over homosexuality needed to be extinguished not reinforced. He took apart a man and put him back together again using his own value system for glue. Well it didn't work. Because as glue loses its adhesiveness brainwashing loses its effectiveness. Once a human being has experienced a homosexual love, even if his external environment causes him to feel anxieties as a result of this love, he cannot put the tag of abnormal on this part of himself for long without experiencing psychic conflict.

I pity that poor, confused man and more so the poor confused society that produces such a man. If this society were to realize that homosexuality, though different from heterosexuality, is just as natural and human, it would save the destruction of many worthwhile people and though our society doesn't realize it now, it would be doing a favor to all people.

To those of you who are gay I appeal to you, if you don't already, to take pride in your total selves. Your sexual orientation should be no source for shame or sorrow. One can be "Gay and Proud" as surely as one can be "Black and Proud." Thinking it and acting it is what makes it a reality. To those of you who are straight, I ask for a show of your humanity when we ask for understanding and support. My temptation is to throw this slogan at you. "Hey, hey, what do you say, try it once the other way." but I am aware that the human mind for all its capacity is an incredibly narrow mind when it comes to reorganizing its thoughts on matters it has closed itself to. So then, to those who are so closed-minded my final is, in the words of Bob Dylan, "Don't criticize what you can't understand."

Love In Peace---

---

My mind is pushed by your love
Back into the litter-terror of my souls' past
Broken pebbles on the sand
Once known as,
Dans, Deans
Bobs & Russes
Endless Neals
Once lost on a
Raging turf as that of the present

Your eyes search for a love
I dare not "tell" you of
I cannot see it
Lost among the Pebbles?
Lost in Fire?
Flickering occasionally?
Only imagined?
Once here? once there?
Never regarded in future tenses

Lost in the dark, no light of my own
Like an insect, I'm attracted
But my size overshadows your light
And I crawl to another
Only to
Reproduce
The darkness
I try to build a heart of clay
So I can feel the pain of failure

You should protect your flame
Or my storm may snuff it
You must protect your love
From the tempest of my soul
Rain & Wind
Fire & Rock
False loves
Spare yourself the pain
Of my orange-juice squeezer brain.

Social-Emotion-Machine-
Please don't push the button,
I'll crush you mind & all.
UnderFoot
No matter if you are gay
>Show your pride.

No matter if you are gay.
Get out of the damned suffered years.

No hypocrisy around you.
Show yourself as gay.

Chant, Chant, Chant,
Say Gay Power!

by Karen Kingrey

NOW SHE IS GONE
by FRANCESCA RIVA

For in those days we did many holy and beautiful things; and now that you are leaving the city, longing grows at my soul with piercing tooth.

--Sappho

Now she is gone.
Now a weary wind stirs slowly
The dead leaves.
All birds are still
And now, amid the crumpled whispers
And the chill
Of only evening.
Only words will stay.
There was a time
When girls at play, all brown
Among the violets, in white dress
By a silver shore, danced warm with beauty.
But no more.
Now words are only echoes of that time.
Tired echoes, empty rhyme.
Now she is gone.
And with the words I would
Had she been Sappho
And I a brown maid by a silver shore
But no, no more.
For she is gone.
And I, and Sappho,
Sleep alone.

TO F.C.C.
by JANET COOPER

Would that I could be
As cock sturdingly
Confident
As your husband is.

Would that my flesh
Attract the women I want.

Only a morsel, say,
He's just discarded.

The wife who lies in bed
Alone
As the moon goes down.

"welcome"
Riverview Restaurant and Bar
242 South Avenue
RUN OF THE MILL
Harrison
Everyone has choice, when to and not to raise their voices: it's you that decides; which way you will turn, while feeling that our love's not your concern; it's you that decides.
No one around you, will carry the blame for you
No one around you, will love you to day and throw it all away tomorrow when you rise
Another day for you to realize me; or send me down again; As the days stand up on end, you've got me wondering how I lost your friendship, but I see it in your eyes. Though I'm beside you I can't carry the lame for you; I may decide to get out with your blessing, where I'll carry on guessing; How high will you leap? will you make enough for you to reap it? only you'll arrive at your own made end, with no one but yourself to be offended: it's you that decides.
THE LEGISLATIVE PICTURE IN ALBANY

by Bob Osborn

The following is a summary of the legislation now being introduced into the New York State legislature to reduce discrimination against homosexuals. This seems to be a "hot" issue among the civil rights buffs, and certainly represents a changed picture from last year.

During the first week of this session, Assemblyman Passannante introduced (without hearing or fanfare) two bills to repeal the consensual sodomy statute and eliminate discrimination in employment. Introducing the bills in the Senate were Goodman (the only Republican herein mentioned) and Galiber. The job discrimination bill (A3407) was referred to the Government Operations Committee (Assemblyman Walkley, chairman) and that committee held public hearings February 25 lasting 1 1/2 hours, hearing testimony from Tri-Cities GLF and New York City Gay Activist Alliance. The bill was referred to the Assembly for vote on March 27, but voting has been delayed by its sponsor in order to build up support.

On January 7, an ad hoc committee consisting of Leichter, Stephen Solarz and Tony Olivieri held a day of public hearings (in New York City, to capitalize on news coverage) and introduced three separate bills, all of which were introduced into the Senate by Sen. Orenstein on Feb. 10. The chronology and disposition of these are as follows:

- Leichter's bill repeals the consensual sodomy statute, was introduced Feb. 10 and referred to the Codes Committee. The same bill, introduced by the same person, died in the same committee last year.
- Olivieri's bill prohibits discrimination in employment. It was also introduced February 10 and referred to the Finance Committee.
- Solarz's bill prohibits discrimination in housing, and was introduced Feb. 23. It presumably was referred to the Committee on Housing.

In addition, Al Blumenthal, the Deputy Minority Leader, introduced legislation regarding the expungement of arrest records.

The above information is quite incomplete, and readers are encouraged to do their own research into the picture, reporting all changes to the GLF OFFICE. Bear in mind that news coverage through the established media will be nonexistent for quite a while yet.

The following is a list of our local New York legislators. Why not pay them a visit?

D. C. Shoemaker (130 Assembly Dist.), R. J. Lill (131 A.D.), S. W. Rosenberg (132 A.D.), Frank A. Carroll (133 A.D.), W. M. Steinfeldt (134 A.D.), Dan W. Cook (135 A.D.), James Emory (Geneseo), Joe Finley (Newark), Frederick Warder (Geneva). Local Senators are Tom Laverne (50 S.D.), J. E. Powers (51 S.D.).

For your information, here is the text of two of the bills:

A 3409: Feb. 1, 1971 — Introduced by Mr. Passannante, AN ACT to repeal section 130.38 of the penal law relating to consensual sodomy: "The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows: 1. This act shall take effect immediately."

S 2860-A: Jan. 28, 1971 — Introduced by Messrs. Goodman, Galiber, AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to outlawing discrimination because of sexual orientation: Section 1. Subdivision one of section 291 of the executive law, as amended by chapter 291 of the laws of 1970, is hereby amended to read as follows: 1. The opportunity to obtain employment without discrimination because of race, creed, sex, color, sexual orientation or national origin is hereby recognized and declared to be a civil right. Sec. 2. Section 292 of such law is hereby amended by adding thereto a new subdivision, to be subdivision 20, to read as follows: 20. The term "sexual orientation" means a homosexual tendency." Sec. 3. Subdivision 9 of section 295 of such law, as amended by chapter 292 of the laws of 1970, is hereby amended to read as follows: 9. To develop human rights, plans and policies for the state and assist in their execution and to make investigations and studies appropriate to effectuate this article and to issue such publications and such results of investigations and research as in its judgment will tend to inform persons of the rights assured and remedies provided under this article, to promote good will and minimize or eliminate discrimination because of age, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation or national origin." Section 4. Sec. 296 of such law is hereby amended by adding thereto a new subdivision, to be subdivision 13, to read as follows: 13. It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice to discriminate against any person because of his sexual orientation. The provisions heretofore set forth in this section shall be construed to include a person regardless of his sexual orientation." Section 5. This act shall take effect on the first day of June next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.

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THE ELECTRIC WALRUS I & II

10% discount on non-sale items with this ad
(Offer expires June 30, 1971)

"Strange things for strange people"
CLEARING MY HEAD

by Christine Diachishin
(Reprinted with permission from COME OUT)

Although I have been in Women's Liberation for over a year now, my first reaction to Gay Liberation was not very liberated at all. I'm embarrassed to admit that my first response to learning that a good friend of mine had come out was a very "proper", culturally conditioned one, "Oh well, I know she's slept with men, so she's really only bisexual...maybe this is just a passing phase..."

My first panicky thoughts were cut off abruptly once and for all by the second response. This was the firm conviction, strengthened by many years of liberalism and most recently by radicalism, that every person has the right to conduct his or her sexual life the way he or she wants to.

Having decided what I thought of my friend's gayness, I could have generalized this attitude to cover all other gay people and neatly dismissed Gay Lib from my thoughts. Gay Lib could have become something touching other people, but never involving me. But the more I read and thought about it, the more I realized that Gay Lib speaks to all women who work closely together, have affection for each other and enjoy each other's company. Which means, of course, that Gay Lib speaks directly to Women's Lib.

Gay Lib is reassuring because it tells me not to be uptight about feelings of love I have for my sisters. It's a relief to admit, without shame or fear, that I am physically attracted to women I know and love in other ways. Even if I never actually enter a sexual relationship with another woman, Gay Lib has helped clear my mind of old worries and doubts. Those feelings of love are a natural and beautiful outcome of working, planning, sharing, and struggling together for our liberation.

Women's Lib already has a radical analysis of our political situation. Let us be equally fearless and radical when examining our own personal feelings and lives.

LISTEN STRAIGHT
(Reprinted from Vancouver "Gay Liberation")

Even now I sometimes catch myself laughing at your jokes. "What did the faggot say...?" "Two dykes were walking..." And then I stop short and look at you — my friend, my father, my mother, my enemy.

I'm not laughing at your fag jokes any more, straight. Yes, I've got a sense of humour. I laugh at my crazy cat and with Dennis, my lover. But those jokes are an attack on me and the person I love. They are not funny. They are...Continued
Feeling Gay

by Larry Fine

(Reprinted from the UR Journal, the weekly magazine of the University of Rochester)

Feeling gay is feeling lonely...

When I was around eleven or twelve, I first became aware that my sexual feelings were not the same as those that my friends talked about. It was about that time that parents started actively encouraging all the little boys to be interested in all the little girls, and I, to my horror and dismay, was only interested in all the beautiful little boys. Naturally I didn’t dare tell anyone that my feelings weren’t the required ones, and I started to feel pretty uptight about it all. For a while I tried faking conversations, talking about girls, but felt quite guilty doing that. I even went to quite a few boy-girl parties and hosted a few myself, but my motivation for such activities waned after awhile. I never was much of a boy.

Gradually I dropped out of the social circle I had been in and mostly kept to myself. I poured all my efforts into music and schoolwork and excelled at both, but remained very lonely.

It’s amazing how much trouble can be caused by bad feelings about one aspect of a person’s personality, his sexuality. What I felt seemed different from what others felt because nobody ever spoke of homosexual feelings except, occasionally, in a derogatory way. (Oh, all those faggot jokes I’ve had to sit through with my mouth shut!) This made me feel that there was something wrong with me, and, combined with the feeling of alienation from my friends and the loneliness of not being able to talk to anyone about it, my life was really messed up.

To my surprise, I fell in love with a girl when I was sixteen. I thought that my salvation had come! But when that episode ended a year or so later, I realized that my sexual feelings for guys were still there as strong as ever. During my last year in high school and my first two years in college, I dated girls occasionally, but totally without enthusiasm. The loneliness, the frustration of being unable to share my thoughts completely with someone, was extremely painful. How I managed to endure ten years of it is beyond me.

Last year, on the last day of Passover, I met, for the first time, a person who was openly gay. Somehow he communicated to me a self-respect and an enthusiasm for life which I had never before experienced. As I look back on it, I realize how suddenly, in the space of a few hours, the entire course of my life changed. As the sun set on that Jewish holiday of freedom, I set down a ten year burden and was set free.

Continued
Feeling gay is feeling angry... The other day I told my parents that I was homosexual and was involved in gay liberation. My God, you would have thought I was dying of cancer from the way they reacted. "An incapacitating illness,* my father said. Funny, I didn't feel ill.

"Why didn't you tell us when you first discovered it? We would have done anything to help you get over this!*

At this point he started crying, the first time in my life I have ever seen him cry.

"I go around all day at the office with tears in my eyes. You bring up a son and love him and look what happens. All our hopes for you down the drain. If only you had the motivation to change - it's not too late, you know, you're only twenty - we would send you to a good psychiatrist." And between sobs: "The only thing worse would be if... if you were a criminal or an addict."

If I hadn't felt ill at the beginning, by that time I was starting to feel pretty sick. It's highly questionable for whom this supposed illness is incapacitating. Certainly not for me... possibly for my parents.

He continued: "Don't ever tell me where you're going or who you're seeing. And don't ever bring home male friends... I'll think they're lovers. Just come home from time to time to see us... by yourself."

"I'll be damned if I'm going to want to come home to a funeral parlor."

"And don't tell your brother. At age thirteen, it will crush him. If his friends ever find out, they will taunt him something awful. I'll have to keep a careful watch on him to make sure this doesn't happen to him."

Oh, no! I hope this doesn't mean that my father will tighten his belt. I'm angry that society has distorted a simple fact of my life, with which I am happy and content, into a tragedy affecting me, my family, and friends.

Feeling gay is feeling proud...

On March 14, 2500 New York gay people gathered in Albany for a mile-long march to the State Capitol. The march was in support of some bills, currently before the State legislature, which would guarantee people their civil rights regardless of sexual orientation. 2500 of us out in the open! I couldn't believe my eyes. We all carried banners and signs and chanted such phrases as "Say it loud: gay and proud,* "2-4-6-8-gays is just as good as straight," "2-4-6-9-lesbians are mighty fine," and "Hey, hey, what do you say, try it once the other way." People had their arms around each other and there was a lot of love in the air.

The people of Albany must have been totally freaked out! After the march everyone went looking for places to eat. Every block you'd go down, you would see two guys or two girls holding hands. It was as if all of Albany had turned gay. What a sight to behold!

Feeling gay is feeling beautiful...

While I was in Albany I met a guy named John who was on his way back to Chicago where he and his lover lived. A few of us offered to give him a ride as far as Rochester and to put him up for the night. John and I got to talking, and, in fact, talked for a few hours in Albany as well as for the whole 4 1/2 hour ride back to Rochester. We really got along well together. All during that ride I felt very close to him and wanted to touch him, but for some reason I didn't. "How does he feel about me?" and "He already has a lover" were some of the thoughts that went through my head. Very happily, I was delegated to give John a place to sleep since I had an extra bed in my room. Back in my room, John put his arms around me and said, "All during the trip back I wanted to touch you, but for some reason I didn't. I'm really glad I'm staying with you tonight." We made beautiful love that night.

It had been a lonely winter since Michael went back to California in December. During those three months we had spent together, I had gotten very used to having a warm, beautiful, friendly body to sleep with. Michael with the long, brown hair; the upturned nose; the long, bushy sideburns I loved to pull; the flesh so soft and sweet - oh how he hated it when people told him he was "soft and sweet." Michael with the beautiful ass I loved to squeeze. Michael, so childlike and free. For all the problems we had relating to each other, I loved you so, Michael.

Yes, it had been a lonely winter, but John had made me feel the beginning of spring. How like a man sentenced to die at dawn did I feel knowing that, after breakfast, when John continued on to Chicago, I might never see him again. In the morning I told him my feelings. Putting on a James Taylor record to help me cry, I curled up in his arms, and he held me tightly and completely accepted my feelings and tears. After breakfast we stroiled around campus a little, hand in hand. Then we walked out to River Blvd.; I pointed out the direction of downtown, we kissed, and parted.

The ides of March was a beautiful day and I felt at one with it.

So, you see, we are real people, with real human feelings (even some schmatz!). Surprise! We are not just the old man in the bus station who tried to pick you up or the man in the john who wanted to blow you. We are capable of loving in the deepest sense members of our own sex, and our love is beautiful.
Right from the beginning we're told that men don't cry, men don't love men, men don't show tenderness, people don't touch each other, people don't talk to strangers, women should be submissive and soft spoken, a man fucks his woman, a woman exists to give pleasure to the man. Light from the beginning we're too confused about sex and too concerned with looking right before our peers to even question our roles. I find it refreshing to meet a strong woman or a gentle man. So much of what seems to many to be unnatural or effeminate would be common if we weren't taught right from the beginning to "walk, talk, and fuck like John Wayne."

We have been beaten and arrested. I feel scorned by the church, totally ignored by the schools, and reared by parents. We are constantly told we are sick and are made to lose our self-respect. "Shhhh...don't let the neighbors hear" we are told. Well, fuck the neighbors! I'm tired of this silence of self-contempt. I let them hear it: I like guys! I like to look at them, smell them, taste them, touch them, and make love to them. And I refuse to get screwed up by those who would call my way of loving unnatural, evil, sick, or ugly. I may not be able to change the world in my lifetime, but at least I can put my own head in the right place.

How many people are gay? What does "gay" mean anyway? Kinsey's figures for adult males (figures for adult females are lower but sizable) report that 4% of them admitted to an interviewer to being exclusively homosexual throughout their lives (measured in terms of overt experience), about 10% admitted to being predominantly homosexual for at least a three-year period, 37% admitted to having had at least one other homosexual experience leading to orgasm as an adult, and somewhere around 50% admitted to having any homosexual thoughts, feelings, or fantasies. What does all this mean? Very little, except to say that most people are bisexual to some degree and do a very good job of hiding it, trying as hard as possible to express only half of their sexuality while repressing the other half. People, it seems, are extremely well versed at stuffing themselves and everyone else into little boxes.

Many people discover that heterosexual experiences do not completely satisfy their need for sexual expression. To be "gay" means that one has realized that homosexual experiences, either alone or in addition to heterosexual experiences, are necessary to satisfy that need. Red Butterfly (gay socialist commune) comments that one way to find out whether you're gay is to see whether there are any people of the same sex in your fantasies when you masturbate (if you're not having sex with another person, it's likely that you're masturbating). Masturbation is great, but at some point you have to decide whether you want to have contact with another person or if you just want to keep on masturbating about him. It's your choice; you're the one who's got to live with it. I suppose you could work out a good life just masturbating about people you desire and doing nothing else.

A lot of people are into revolutionary causes these days. It seems to me that openly expressing affection to someone of the same sex is more revolutionary and definitely more constructive than burning a building or a draft card. Wars that murder millions are a horror, but equally barbarous are the often subtle forces that quietly stifle the lives of millions of people. And not just people in some other part of the world, but right here at URI. Quite a number of students have come in to the Gay Liberation office in Upper Todd to talk with someone about their homosexual feelings, usually for the first time. Some have said that it took them months to get up the guts to approach the office. I can't help but remember one freshman who, not finding anyone in the office, came to my room. No sooner did I open the door than he frantically blurted out, "I'm homosexual and I've never told anyone and I'm all messed up and I've just got to talk to someone about it!" One person is now a lot more at ease with himself.

Not only students, but also some married men in their twenties and thirties have come in or called on the telephone. Most of these people married out of social pressure and now feel the need for homosexual relationships. In order to protect their families and jobs, they have to resort to impersonal, anonymous, "quickie" sex. A 38-year-old man with a wife and two children recently told me the following story, which seems to be fairly typical in many ways:

"I went to a small midwestern college and was in a fraternity. I dated girls constantly although I had little interest in them; it was expected of you - everyone did it. In my junior year I roomed with a guy whom I became very attached to and with whom I wanted very much to make love. I couldn't possibly tell him how I felt - one just didn't talk about such things in those days. It was so frustrating not to be able to express my feelings to him! I became so depressed as a result of that frustration that I couldn't keep my mind on my schoolwork. Instead I poured all my feelings into fraternity work. Two semesters in a row I was put on probation, and, although I won the fraternity's award for the most active member, I was kicked out of school. A few years later I got married. I knew I never should have gone through with it, but society just doesn't offer any alternative way to live. Now I'm leading a double life. Once I tried to tell my wife about my homosexual feelings, and she completely turned off to me."

The moral of this story is that there are now alternatives open to you. You can be heterosexual and, perhaps, one day settle down with a member or members of the opposite sex. Or you can be homosexual and perhaps one day settle down with a member or members of the same sex. You may be both in whatever mixture you like. And there are people around who are open about themselves who will support you when you try to feel beautiful about whatever you feel. And that can be quite a struggle when all sorts of shit is being thrown at you from all sides and a lot of pressure is being put on you to feel bad about yourself and your feelings. For those of you
who are worried about children, just a reminder that sexuality and reproduction are not the same thing. All you pill, rubber, IUD, etc. users know that a love that doesn't produce children is no less valid a love. Those that are into heterosexuality will produce more than enough children for all of us, and, if family structure were altered to conform with patterns of love (rather than vice-versa), then those of us who aren't into reproduction could benefit from those children too.

So guys (women - make appropriate changes in wording). . . .

when you're people-watching out on the quad or in Todd or in the Reserve Reading Room (pretending to be studying or watching TV), and that gorgeous man of your dreams goes waltzing by or lies half nude in the sun, don't look at him out of the corner of your eye while you secretly drool, as you're used to doing. Instead, look at him head on, smile, and say to yourself (or out loud if you're bold), "You're beautiful, and I'm beautiful for feeling that."

Spring is the gayest season of the year; don't keep all those fine feelings bottled up inside of you.

ON THE MARCH MARCH

by Patricia Evans

On March 14th, 2,500 people paid a visit to the state capital at Albany. Their cause was a plea for an end to the oppressive laws against homosexuals in New York state. From the State University at Albany we marched gayly forward to the capital building chanting such slogans as "Two, four, sixty-nine. Lesbians are mighty fine.", "Hey, hey what do you say, try it twice the other way.", and "Two, four, six, eight, we don't overpopulate." Once at the Capital building we listened to many a moving and insightful speech. Then we dispersed and went about our gay ways.

It was a good consciousness raising experience. I was quite surprised to find out that there were so many brothers and sisters in New York interested in their liberation; or at least interested enough to stand up and be counted.

Other than being good for one's head, though, the march served little purpose. The efforts of 2,500 people were reduced to 2 or 3 lines in the newspapers with many newspapers abstaining from even acknowledging the march.

The proposed bills amending or repealing laws have not yet come out of committee and probably won't. What eventually happens will in large part depend on our own continued efforts.

What can we do?

continue to bombard local representatives and newspapers with gay mail
continue to spread the word so that more brothers and sisters openly acknowledge and live their homosexuality
continue our own open life-style for our own liberation

So that our pride in our beauty and our love will destroy the divisions of hatred and mistrust between gay and straight and show the world that gay is good for us all.
THE DRAGS AND FEMS

by DAVID CLARK

From past experience I have seen much discrimination against so-called "drag queens" and "swishy fems," mostly from other gays. Why the prejudice? There are probably lots of reasons. It's probably that many gay guys still want to hold onto their society-oriented "masculinity," and some are afraid to be marked out by these feminine creatures. I do not believe we should hold their likings and personal doings against them, no matter how "swishy" they are. They are still our brothers and/or sisters, therefore we should support them and uphold their lifestyle.

Had someone seen me, before knowing me, he might have called me "another dizzy drag queen." But it is the personality that counts, not looks, and he should know me for myself.

There are many "fems" who feel more comfortable in drag and look better that way than "straight." If they feel more comfortable, why not dress that way? Looking at it from another point of view, masquerading is a performance that takes a rare talent.

Many of the "fems" or "queens" are very self-conscious about going in drag because of the other gays that look down on them for doing it, and they need their gay friends as much as anyone else -- perhaps more.

So let's forget our differences and instead of pushing someone down the stairs of life, take their hand and help them up. They're still our brothers and sisters and we need them.

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Gay Power

by Jonathan Black

Gay Power Hits Back

(The following is an article reprinted from the July 31, 1969 VILLAGE VOICE, describing the first "Christopher Street" march for gay rights. The final words of the article proved prophetic, and a year later thousands of gay people marched in commemoration of the event. The third "Christopher Street" march will be this June 27. Contact the Rochester Gay Liberation office for details.)

They marched under a lavender banner, 500 strong, from Washington Square to the Stonewall Inn. The young man in pin-striped caramel hip-huggers and an apricot halter suddenly boomed out, "Give me a G! Give me an A! Give me a Y! Give me a P!... an R! What does it spell?"

And from the purple column echoed the resounding cry: "Gay Power!" Then in repeating choruses: "Gay, gay power to the gay, gay people. Gay, gay power to the gay, gay people." A man's head peered out from a Sunday afternoon tourist bus. "What are they saying, Henry?" came the rasp from behind a Kodak Zoom E. "Play power," muttered Henry. "It's a demonstration."

It started in Washington Square with the distribution of lavender ribbons and arm bands. "Brothers and sisters," began Martha Shelley from the Daughters of Bilitis, standing on the fountain's rim, "welcome to this city's first gay-power vigil. We're tired of being harassed and persecuted. If a straight couple can hold hands in Washington Square, why can't we?" Eruptions of applause, a delirium of screams and giggles. "Sock it to 'em! Sock it to 'em!" and "Long live the queen!"

Marty Robinson from the Mattachine Society, one of the demonstration's co-sponsors, took over: "Gay power is here. Gay power is no laugh. There are one million homosexuals in New York City. If we wanted to, we could boycott Bloominglee's, and that store would be closed in two weeks!" Cries of "Close it down!" and "Tell 'em sweetie!"

"We will not permit another reign of terror," urged Robinson. "Let me tell you, homosexuals, we've got to get organized. We've got to stand up. This is our chance!"

When things were beginning to get a bit slack, Sister Marlene was introduced. "I'm Sister Marlene, and I'm running for mayor on the Salvation Party," said the buxom beauty. "I'm not homoegenized, I'm still heterosexual. But when I'm elected mayor there's going to be a Universal Erogenous Zone, and everyone's invited." She eventually concluded, "The government is a pimp. Bless you all. Everyone here is now married."

"We're tired of straight people who are hung up on sex," she continued. "Tired of flashlights and peeping-tom vigilantes. Tired of marriage laws that punish you for lifting your head off the pillow. Socrates was a homosexual. Michelangelo was a homosexual. Walt Whitman and Richard the Lion-Hearted were homosexuals."

The march to Sheridan Square began then, an orderly four-by-four column, with cadenced clapping and gay-power cheers. No one could quite believe it. Even 4th Street's resident gypsies unearthed an Instamatic from the bowels of their trailer and snapped away.

As the traffic up Sixth Avenue ground to a halt, the marchers gathered confidence. The chants and the cheers rang out more defiantly. Maybe it wasn't just a joke. Maybe there really was a gay power. In the park outside the Stonewall Inn, scene of the bust two weeks before, the rally re-convened. Appeals for money, organization, and the start of a newspaper from Robinson. A suggested march on the Sixth Precinct. And finally, a curiously moving "We Shall Overcome," punctuated by an occasional pulsing falsetto, somewhere in the crowd.

Gay power had surfaced. Sick and tired of police harassment, of prehistoric sodomy laws, of "park protection" in Queens (Queens!), and of vicious busts in the underground haunts where public decency had driven them, homosexuals struck back. A mild protest, to be sure, but apparently only the beginning.

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"Gay Power!"
THE BIG SHOUT

by Bob Osbom

One day, about a thousand years ago (actually it was in July 1969) the gay world shouted a big shout. And then it stood back looking at itself in amazement. Did that really happen? Did WE do such a thing? Lots of us were shouting — funny though, there wasn’t much of an echo.

And a year later we took a big breath and shouted again. A really big shout. And then we stood back in amazement at ourselves again and looked around to see how many walls had come tumbling down. None? Funny, it sounded like a big shout to us. A whole lot of people were shouting this time.

Maybe we can all get together and shout even louder the next year. And maybe the walls won’t fall down so easy as that but maybe some people will hear us this time — and maybe they’ll listen, if we say anything in our shouting. And maybe we need to spend some spring evenings drilling strategic holes in the walls so our shouts will send them tumbling to the ground.

Such is the psychology of shouting. The gay world has gone and joined the Movement. In June of 1969 we were tired of being treated like animals and fought back when police raided a gay bar on Christopher Street, and surprised ourselves two weeks later by openly marching down Manhattan streets to let people know we were proud to have kicked our oppressors in the teeth. It was the Greensboro lunch counter sit-ins all over again for a different minority, one that is ten years older than the college kids in 1960.

A few weeks ago Frank Kameny, president of the Washington, D.C. Mattachine Society, ran for U.S. Congress as the D.C. Nonvoting Delegate. He ran on a powerful, rational, decent, human platform. And he lost, badly. He lost for all the usual reasons — that the voters thought he would probably lose and even those who liked what he stood for they didn’t want their vote to be "wasted". He lost mostly because the homosexual population of the District was too afraid to work with him on his campaign. It was too afraid of the repression that might come if Kameny won. It was too afraid to take the power that somebody was finally handing them on a silver platter.

My thoughts are forced back to the sandy roads of South Carolina and all the poor Blacks who would peer mistrustfully out the door at the man who was telling them that their two hundred years of fear was over and they had to get out and register to vote. Most of them never did. And most gay people, living segregated lives in a self-constructed ghetto never will either.

But the power that controls this society is not in the hands of the people who drag themselves once a year to the poll booths. The power that controls this society is in the hands of all those who assume that power is theirs and use it. That means the Tammany Hall bureaucrats and the bulge-wallet capitalists. Up to now that is. In New York City and San Francisco and Chicago on June 27 a quarter of a million people are going to take some power into their own hands for a few hours. Maybe this time they will realize what they have and won’t let go. We want gay power. Political, social and economic power — and we’re gonna get it.

Let’s COME OUT on June 27 to New York City. Free housing is available. There will be conferences and meetings and parties and dances. And mostly there will be a hundred thousand gay people marching down New York’s Sixth Avenue. Don’t try to imagine it. COME. You’ll never forget it.

Gay people are going to be shouting in April and May for an end to U.S. oppression in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world, for decent official treatment of our citizens and our environment. And in June they will be shouting for gay rights. Come help us shout. We’re not hoping for too much. The walls probably aren’t going to fall. But if we shout a really BIG shout, with all of our oppressed brothers and sisters, gay and straight, something might happen — we might hear ourselves! And then at least WE will know they can’t stop us from turning this world into a decent place for all of us.

ROCHESTER GAY LIBERATION FRONT SCHEDULE

The Rochester Gay Liberation Front meets WEEKLY. Starting June 20, the meetings have been changed from Saturday to Sunday night. Meetings are at 7:30 pm on the campus of the University of Rochester, in the Frederick Douglas Building lounge.

Normally alternate weeks are given to outside speakers and discussion of topics of general interest, and alternate weeks to planning activities of interest to the Rochester Gay Community.

Below is a partial list of events for June and July. Call 275-6181 to find out about additions to this list:

May 15: PSYCHOLOGY II, an in-depth discussion, led by a psychologist, of human sexuality, including bisexuality.

June 5: LESBIANS AND MOVIES, comments on the female scene in movies, and on lesbian films in particular.

June 12: Laud Humphries—from the faculty of the School of Criminal Justice, SUNY Albany. Author of Tearoom Trade.

June 20: VENEREAL DISEASE—a film and talk on venereal disease by a doctor. We’ll have a temporary clinic for free blood tests at the meeting.

June 26-27: THE CHRISTOPHER STREET MARCH—join the charter bus to New York City for a weekend of gay liberation. There will be a discussion meeting here for those who can’t make it to New York.

July 4: "Washington Died for US Too"—activities to be planned.

NOTE: WE ARE MEETING SUNDAYS (instead of Saturdays) STARTING JUNE 20. ALSO WE WILL HAVE A NEW OFFICE (Todd 201) AT THAT TIME. SAME PHONE NUMBER.
THE FIVE FREEDOMS

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION

FREEDOM OF EVERY PERSON TO WORSHIP GOD IN HIS OWN WAY

FREEDOM FROM WANT

FREEDOM FROM FEAR

FREEDOM TO LOVE