DRAG QUEEN SEDUCES LIFEGUARD

The Drag Scene in Rochester was the main topic of discussion at the general meeting on Sunday, July 11. Among the forty or so women and men at the meeting, two people considered themselves transvestites.

We began by talking about who exactly falls under the category of transvestite. Since "transvestite" means "one who cross dresses, wears the clothes of the opposite sex," and since most women today wear pants (traditionally "men's" clothes), then wouldn't they be considered in drag? A gay sister pointed out that in our society, it's much more acceptable for a woman to make herself more "like a man" (wearing pants) than for a man to make himself more feminine (wearing a dress). Since masculinity is held up as desirable, it's considered reasonable for a woman to want to act and dress like a man, but for a man to want to show any feminine traits is considered absurd and degrading; men who dress like women are frowned upon in disgust.

The law typifies society's feelings toward cross dressing. Although the laws in Rochester say that a group of three or more people dressed in clothing of the opposite sex can be arrested, this law appears to be enforced in Rochester only with males who dress in female attire. A female walking down the street in a tuxedo probably runs a much lower risk of being arrested than a male in a dress.

The male and female transvestites at the meeting spoke from a personal perspective. One said he considers dressing up in drag an art, and proceeded to share with us a detailed account of an evening's preparation for a drag queen. He has personally been harassed by Rochester police. Among the gay community, however, he doesn't feel too oppressed—his finds the gay community pretty accepting. One of the evening's highlights was a juicy story of his adventures with a lifeguard on a Miami beach. Needless to say, the lifeguard was in for some surprises.

The woman in drag said she's hassled much more by the white community than she is by the Black community, and that straight men are the most persistent in harassment. They view her as a personal challenge. Straight women just stay away.

(over)
FEELINGS TOWARD DRAG FROM THE NON-TRANSVESTITES AT THE MEETING VARIED. SOME PEOPLE FELT THAT WEARING DRAG IS AN ACT OF SELF-PRIDE, AND TAKES COURAGE TO DEFY STRAIGHT SOCIETY'S RIGID ROLE-PLAYING. OTHERS POINTED OUT THAT DRAG IS OFTEN A MOCKERY OF MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY—ESPECIALLY A PARODY OF WOMEN. AT THE SAME TIME, SOME FELT THAT A DRAG QUEEN IS SAYING TO ALL WOMEN, "TO BE A REAL WOMAN, YOU MUST WEAR MAKEUP, TEASE YOUR HAIR, AND PUT ON NYLONS," ALL THESE BEING ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S OPPRESSION OF HAVING TO DRESS UP AND BE A SEX OBJECT.

THE OVERALL FEELINGS, THOUGH VARIED, WERE ONES OF SUPPORT FOR OUR GAY BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO HAVE THE COURAGE TO BE THEMSELVES AND WEAR WHAT THEY WANT, IN THE MIDST OF A HOSTILE, RIGID SOCIETY THAT CONDEMNS ANYONE WHO STEPS OUTSIDE HIS OR HER ASSIGNED RULES. IN THIS SENSE, DRAG IS REVOLUTIONARY: MEN AND WOMEN CASTING OFF THEIR ASSIGNED RULES AND JUST BEING THEMSELVES.

DANCE

ANY DANCE SPONSORED BY THE GAY COMMUNITY DOES NOT END UP JUST A USUAL DANCE. THIS WAS TRUE OF THE JULY 4TH GAY LIBERATION DANCE AT THE U OF R.

SISTERS WERE OPENLY LOVING EACH OTHER. BROTHERS WERE DANCING TOGETHER IN 2'S, 3'S, AND 4'S.

"GIVE ME A 'G'!" BEGAN THE FIRST GAY POWER CHANT OF THE NIGHT, AND SOON AFTER CAME AN UNPRECEDENTED BLACK POWER CHANT FROM THE BLACK BROTHERS AND SISTERS AT THE DANCE.

IT WASN'T SNOWING THAT EVENING.

IT WASN'T 10 DEGREES BELOW ZERO.

THE EVENING WAS COMFORTABLE AND PLEASANT.

OCCASIONALLY PEOPLE BROKE FROM THE DANCE AND WENT OUTSIDE FOR A BREATH OF COOL SUMMER-EVENING AIR, MILLING AROUND AND TALKING IN SMALL GROUPS.

IT WASN'T A BAR

THERE WERE PRETZELS AND CHIPS AND COKES AND PEOPLE TALKING TO EACH OTHER. IT WASN'T A HEAVY CRUISING SCENE, AND MOST OF US DIDN'T LEAVE FEELING LONELY.

LET'S HAVE MORE GAY DANCES.

LET'S CELEBRATE OUR RIGHT TO BE HERE.

LET'S LOVE EACH OTHER.

GAY LOVE

NOTICES

ON SUNDAY, JULY 11, THE OFFICE STAFF MET FOR ITS SECOND MONTHLY TRAINING SESSION, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A COUNSELOR AT RIT. A DISCUSSION OF COUNSELING TECHNIQUES AND PHILOSOPHY AND A BRAINSTORMING SESSION ON HOW BEST TO PUBLICIZE THE COUNSELING SERVICE WERE FOLLOWED BY A SUPPER.

THE DAY-TO-DAY WORK OF THE OFFICE STAFF CONSISTS OF PHONE AND OFFICE COUNSELING, REFERRING PEOPLE WHO REQUEST IT TO COMPETENT LEGAL, PSYCHIATRIC, AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL AID, KEEPING MEMBERS INFORMED OF UPCOMING EVENTS VIA OUR EXPANDED TELEPHONE NETWORK, KEEPING TRACK OF THE GROWING NUMBER OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS NOW AVAILABLE IN THE OFFICE, TAKING CARE OF ALL SORTS OF PAPERWORK, AND HELPING TO PREPARE THE NEWSLETTER, MAGAZINE, AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS FOR PRINTING, DISTRIBUTION, AND MAILING.

A TELEPHONE ANSWERING DEVICE NOW ANSWERS THE TELEPHONE WITH A RECORDED MESSAGE WHEN THE OFFICE IS CLOSED, ANNOUNCING MEETING TIMES AND EVENTS. DONATED BY JIM VANALLAN.
NEW CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING (C-R) GROUPS ARE CONTINUALLY FORMING. A C-R GROUP IS A GROUP OF SIX OR SO PEOPLE WHO MEET REGULARLY (USUALLY THREE HOURS EVERY WEEK) TO SHARE WITH EACH OTHER THEIR FEELINGS AND EXPERIENCES AS GAY PEOPLE AND TO COME TO A GREATER AWARENESS OF OUR OPPRESSION AND OUR POTENTIAL TO WORK TOGETHER FOR OUR LIBERATION. C-R GROUPS PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT PART IN GAY LIBERATION, FOR THEY ALLOW MEMBERS TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER IN A WAY WHICH IS IMPOSSIBLE IN LARGE GENERAL MEETINGS OR SOCIAL EVENTS. THE SEVERAL C-R GROUPS NOW IN EXISTENCE ARE LIKE "FAMILIES" TO MANY MEMBERS AND ARE THE CENTERS FOR MUCH GLF ACTIVITY. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN A C-R GROUP, CONTACT THE OFFICE OR SEE WALT.

A NEW COMMITTEE, COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION, IS BEING FORMED. IT WILL DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF PUBLICITY OF GLF SERVICES AND EVENTS, DISTRIBUTION OF THE NEWSLETTER AND MAGAZINE, AND PRINTING OF SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH THE WORK OF THIS COMMITTEE OR HAVE IDEAS WHICH THE COMMITTEE MIGHT FIND USEFUL, CONTACT THE OFFICE OR SEE LARRY.

ON JULY 18, THE MEETING TOPIC WILL BE "GAY MARRIAGE AND ROLE-PLAYING IN THE GAY COMMUNITY." THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE WROTE A QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY MARRIAGE WHICH MEMBERS FILLED OUT AT THE JULY 11 MEETING. THE QUESTIONNAIRE WILL FACILITATE DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING.

THE JULY 25 MEETING TOPIC WILL BE "EMOTIONAL SECURITY FOR THE GAY," A TOPIC WHICH LOGICALLY TIES IN WITH GAY MARRIAGE. THE CONTROVERSIAL QUESTION OF MONOGAMY VS. POLYGAMY WILL BE DISCUSSED HERE.

MEETINGS ARE SUNDAYS AT 7:30PM IN THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS BLDG. LOUNGE ON THE U OF R'S RIVER CAMPUS.

AT THE JULY 11 MEETING, MEMBERS TENTATIVELY DECIDED TO MAKE THE FALL ISSUE OF THE EMPTY CLOSET MAGAZINE A ALL LESBIAN ISSUE, WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED BY WOMEN. A FEW ARTICLES BY MALES MAY BE ALLOWED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE WOMEN.

THREE GLF MEMBERS ARE INVESTIGATING SOME RECENT ADS ON A LOCAL RADIO STATION. MANY OF US ARE OFFENDED BY THE NATURE OF THESE ADS, WHICH PERPETUATE THE STEREOTYPE OF GAY PEOPLE AS LISPING, SELF-HATING "FAGS."

AT THE JULY 11 GENERAL MEETING, THREE SPEAKERS WERE CHOSEN TO SPEAK ON CHANNEL 21'S TV SHOW "CALL 21." THE SPEAKERS ARE R.J. ALCALA, KAREN HAGBERG, AND JIM FISHMAN. THE PROGRAM IS BEING SHOWN LIVE ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 14 AT 7:30PM. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS MAY BE PHoned IN ON THE AIR. CALL 442-4640.