

# MELB. GAY LIBERATION

## JUNE - JULY NEWSLETTER

TO KEEP RECEIVING THE  
NEWSLETTER

# COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW

*Otherwise we'll assume you don't  
want it, or have shifted*

The newsletter will be sent free, but donations help cover costs of postage & printing.  
ENCLOSED IS A DONATION FOR .....

I wish to be kept on the newsletter mailing list

NAME.....CURRENT ADDRESS.....

Have you notified us of any change of address?.....

To assist our application for a grant from Melbourne University Union please indicate appropriately:

- Presently a student or staff-member of Melbourne University
- An ex-student of Melbourne University
- Neither applicable

*Return to 259 Bruswick St, Fitzroy*

As you'll notice, we've decided to be ruthless about up-dating our mailing list (of over 550). We discussed it at a fairly well-attended June General Meeting, and the consensus was that it is fair to assume you don't want this newsheet unless you tell us otherwise, provided the notice saying just that was prominent enough. There are two main reasons: postage, next to rent, is our major expense; and the information on the mailing list is up to 3 years old. Apologies to those who've got onto the mailing list recently. We've started recording the date people enlist, but to be on the safe side you should return the slip.

The same general meeting decided also to (formally) affirm the existence of Melbourne Gay Liberation Front, for since February, there has officially only been a Gay Liberation Counselling Group. The feeling was that the name "Gay Liberation" plus the existence of the Centre, at least keeps alive the possibility of people organizing activities in the spirit and the name of Gay Liberation. This is so of the parties, social evenings, newsheet and speaking engagements at present, and projected activities include film-showings and an exhibition of paintings at the Centre in late September.

The financial situation is, as usual, precarious. Upon completion of the renovations the rent went up to \$30 per week and with the mid-year phone bill on us, the bank balance is looking sick. The last party was unfortunately timed (the night after the big dance at Collingwood Town Hall, and a long time after the publicity in the previous newsheet) - and brought in only about \$80 (c.f. \$150 last party). Still we don't measure its success just in dollars, and it was still a good night most of us felt. The partition in the Centre has made it possible to create an alternative atmosphere for those who want a break from music and dancing. We had a range of gay books from International Bookshop on sale which many people seemed to appreciate. Many thanks to the people from International.

If you think the newsheet (at least) is worth supporting we'd be glad to receive your donation. Also if you think this newsheet is print- and prose-heavy, we'd be glad to utilize the skills of any volunteering graphic artist or poet.

IF YOU CAN HELP DISTRIBUTE POSTERS FOR THE "PRE-CONFERENCE PARTY" (Aug. 9th) PLEASE CONTACT THE CENTRE.

#### REPORT FROM THE GAY LIB COUNSELLING GROUP

At present there is only one woman rostered on the Centre's phone (on alternate Thursdays), and we are getting 3 or 4 women callers per week. We generally refer them to the women who are available to assist with counselling, but who aren't actually rostered. They can be contacted by phone or mail, if not that night, then within a day or two. This works out OK when the caller's need is not urgent but is inadequate when, for instance, a woman is distressed over a specific incident (e.g. a traumatic break-up with a lover) and needs support there and then. Are there women who can help?

Since the last newsheet, we have met with Society Five's Advisory & Referral Group to discuss, among other things, our criteria for referral of people to Society Five, and Society Five's approach to the counselling of women. Jocelyn Clark spoke about the necessity to provide the opportunity of women counselling women, and provided leads to facilitate that.

In response to the request in the May newsheet for information about social "doings" in Melbourne, we were invited to talk with a representative of The Salon, a private social club for male homosexuals, "run on the lines of an established gentlemen's club". This meeting turned up much interesting information, not only about The Salon; but the whole network of private clubs for homosexuals in Melbourne. More about that in a future newsletter. We were also offered advice on planning Gay Lib social functions so as not to clash with "drawcards" on the Gay Social Calendar.

#### SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

In the last 2 months Gay Liberation representatives accepted speaking engagements with Warrigal Apex Club, the Royal Australian College of G.P.'s Family Medicine Programme, Flemington High, a forum organized by Melbourne University Medical Students, Warrnambool College of Advanced Education, Preston Institute of Technology, Caulfield Institute of Technology, a suburban women's group, and a YMCA youth Leadership training group.

If you would like to become involved in these activities, and would prefer a "gentle introduction", why not arrange to come along when there are 4 or 5 of us in force. You don't have to be a "good speaker" to be useful. The most useful sessions, we've mostly found, are those where the atmosphere is relaxed enough, and the group small enough, for people to discuss freely what's on their minds, rather than be talked at.

Anyone interested should contact the Centre.

# A.C.T. LAW REFORM

Dear Friends,

At the present time Kap Enderby, Member for A.C.T. is considering putting before the ACT Legislative Assembly a Homosexual Rights Bill.

As you all know, the Australian Government has passed a motion in favour of deleting homosexuality from the Criminal Code. This motion can only be practically applied in the Territories under direct Australian Government control. The effect therefore, of Enderby's Bill is to make law in the A.C.T. what is at the moment only an expression of the Parliament's opinion.

Due to the current political climate, Enderby is hesitant to put the Bill before the House unless he is convinced of wide community support for this move. Naturally opposition will come from such homophobic elements in the community, as the Festival of Light. These people are capable of an effective opposition.

It is up to us to give Enderby and the Bill the support it needs. Legislation in the A.C.T. could well lead to similar initiatives in the states.

Please write or telegraph your support as soon as possible to Parliament House, Canberra. Encourage your members to do the same on an individual basis. A concerted effort on our part may achieve something really concrete towards homosexual law reform.

Yours, in solidarity,

Laurie Bebbington,  
Women's Officer,  
A.U.S.  
13th June, 1975

SEE "POST SCRIPT ON A.C.T. LAW REFORM", PAGE 12.

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

### A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE

#### Relating to Sexual Behaviour by Persons of Eighteen Years of Age or More

#### LAW REFORM (SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR) ORDINANCE 1975

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the *Law Reform (Sexual Behaviour) Ordinance 1975*.
2. i) In this Ordinance -
  - "commits" includes attempts to commit, and "commission" has a corresponding meaning;
  - "Crimes Act" means the Crimes Act, 1900 of the State of New South Wales in its application to the Territory.
  - ii) For the purposes of this Ordinance, two persons are related to each other only if one is the mother, sister, daughter, granddaughter, father, brother, son or grandson of the other, whether the relationship is of th half-blood or the full-blood or is not traced through lawful wedlock.
3. i) Subject to this Ordinance, a person who, with the consent of another person (whether of the same or different sex), commits an act of a sexual nature upon or with that person is not, by reason only of the commission of that act, guilty of an offence.
  - ii) Sub-section i) does not apply where a person commits an act upon or with -
    - a) a person to whom he is related; or
    - b) a person who has not attained the age of 18 years.
4. i) The consent of a person is not effective for the purpose of section 3 if the consent is induced by means of a threat, by force, by means of a false pretence or representation or by the use of intoxicating liquor or a drug.
  - ii) The consent of a person of unsound mind is not effective for the purpose of section 3 if the person to whom it is given knows, or has reason to suspect, that the first-mentioned person is of unsound mind.

5. A person charged with an offence against section 79, 80 or 81 of the Crimes Act shall not be convicted of the offence unless it is proved that the person upon whom the alleged offence was committed -
    - a) did not consent to the commission of the offence;
    - b) had not attained the age of 18 years; or
    - c) was related to the defendant.
  6. Proceedings in respect of an offence against section 79, 80 or 81 of the Crimes Act shall not be instituted after the expiration of a period of 12 months after the date on which the offence was committed.
  7.
    - i) Subject to sub-section (2), this Ordinance has effect notwithstanding any other Ordinance, any regulations made under an Ordinance or any Act of the State of New South Wales in its application to the Territory.
    - ii) Nothing in this Ordinance affects the liability of a person to be prosecuted for, and convicted of, an offence against the Offences Ordinance 1930-1970.
- \* Notified in the Australian Government Gazette.

## August National Conference

All homosexuals are invited to participate in the National Homosexual Conference being held at Melbourne University Union on August 16, 17. The idea for the conference grew out of the need for homosexuals in Australia to come together in order to discuss our experiences of oppression and our possible actions toward liberation.

Homosexuals need to evolve a new perspective on our situation in 1975 and consider possible alternatives toward action. The conference is primarily for homosexuals, and it is hoped that homosexuals from all walks of life will attend.

There'll be small group workshops and plenary sessions, speakouts and special workshops - all designed, hopefully, to encourage homosexuals to contribute their experience and thoughts. Papers are now being invited and will be circulated to all people who register. Papers will also be on sale at a later date.

Registrations for the conference close on August 1st. Please contact Laurie Bebbington at the Australian Union of Students, 97 Drummond St, Carlton (347-7433) for further details and registration forms.

**BILLETING:** Many interstate registrants need somewhere to stay for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights of the Conference. Please contact Laurie (above) if you can accommodate delegates.

**CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:** The organizing collective plan to liven the conference with poster and graphic displays of past homosexual activities and works. Please contact Laurie (above) if you can loan or donate posters to the Conference.

Several performances by theatre groups and individuals are planned to take place during the Conference. Please contact Laurie (above) if you can assist with them or would like to arrange or stage a cultural activity. People interested in doing so are asked to come along to the next Collective meeting (Friday, July 25th at 7.30 p.m. Undergraduate Lounge, Melbourne University Union)

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Ron Thiele 347-7433

## Gay Fitzrot

An issue of the local poetry magazine, FITZROT, has been talked about and "planned" as a GAY issue. I had hoped that it be possible to publish it to coincide with the Gay Conference this August but so far I doubt it.

However, anybody wishing to contribute poetry, SHORT prose, black & white graphics (including photography), and in collating etc. please contact me at:

61 Coppin St,  
Richmond, 3121

(or phone me at 51-3661, ext. 25)

The contributions hopefully will deal with being Gay, the future of being Gay etc, although I do expect some to deal with being "camp". Other sexual "proscriptions" will also be considered and that may well be the title. "PROSCRIPTIONS?" Work will be accredited if so desired, if not, it will remain anonymous.

William Arnold

# OLDER WOMEN AND POOFTERS

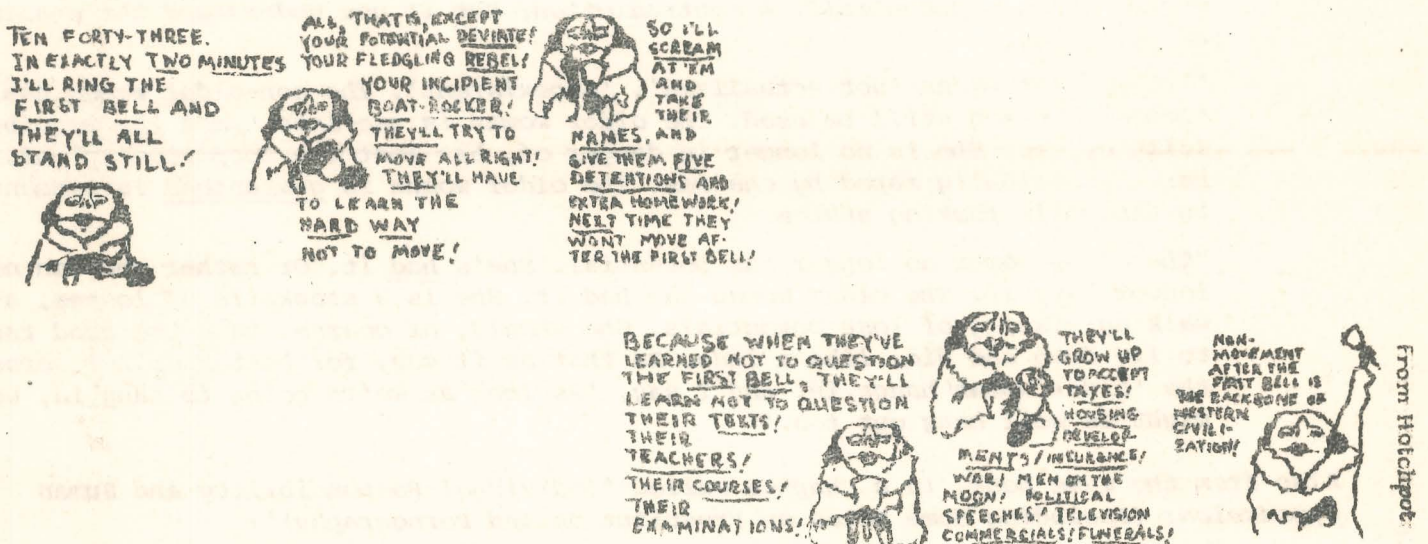
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Finally, if you are unfortunate enough to land in County Court, when empan-  
 elling your jury, it might be wise to take note of the lawyer's observation,  
 based on fairly considerable experience, about unsympathetic jurors. He thinks  
 that middle-aged women are particularly susceptible to believing the "every-  
 homosexual-is-a-child-molester" myth...and that if we want to direct our en-  
 ergies into one crucial aspect of public consciousness-raising, then that  
 may be it. If we can collate the research which shows the number of child-  
 molesters to be proportionately no greater among homosexuals than among het-  
 erosexuals, he thinks that barristers would readily use it as part of a de-  
 fence plea. Better still, if some of those ardent students of homosexuality  
 in Sociology Departments were to start writing research papers on the irrati-  
 onal phobias towards homosexuals of middle-aged women. <sup>22</sup> from May Newsletter

Dear Gay Liberation Newsletter,

I would like to draw your attention to this cartoon as a way of arguing with ideas  
 contained in the last paragraph of "Notes From the Discussion With the Lawyer Who  
 Represented the Two Men Recently Prosecuted for Private Homosexual Acts" by Gary  
 Jaynes (May issue).

## WHOSE FAULT IS IT?



As you will see, it is about the inflicting of the official utilitarian values of  
 this culture on children, in which the source of these values is portrayed as a middle  
 aged woman teacher. Now it is the class of men who define, legislate and control the  
 institutions of this culture, not the class of women. While it is unfortunately true  
 that women and other oppressed classes (but particularly women, for example as mothers)  
 are used to transmit and enforce cultural values that are not in their interests,  
 but they still do not define them, are nevertheless punished for deviating from  
 them and are therefore oppressed by them.

Why then is the responsibility for oppressive institutionalised ideas attributed  
 wrongly by the cartoonist? Perhaps:

- . carelessness, confusion, stupidity; inability to see the wood for the tree?
- . fear of attacking directly the real source and upholders of these ideas?
- . preference for blaming someone other than the source of the ideas?

It is not necessary to wait for "ardent students of homosexuality in Sociology Depart-  
 ments... to start writing research papers" to begin working out what you call the  
 "irrational phobias" of middle-aged women towards homosexuals. (Since the article  
 dealt with male homosexuals, and there is no indication that "homosexuals" in this  
 context includes women, I assume that you are talking only about attitudes of middle-  
 aged women to male homosexuals.)

Perhaps trying to answer some of these questions might help your analysis:

- Why, if middle-aged women tend to have "irrational phobias" about (male) homosexuals, do they have them? i.e. what objective circumstances might justify this subjectively?
- What might be the sources of these ideas, beliefs, intuitions, prejudices? Who else holds them? What authority backs them? Do middle-aged women hold them more firmly than other women and all men, and if so, why?
- What are the sources of homosexual oppression? What are the sources of the oppression of women, middle-aged or otherwise? What is particular to the oppression of middle-aged women? Does the oppression of homosexuals have anything in common with the oppression of (middle-aged) women? If so what?
- If middle-aged women express and act on ideas oppressive to male homosexuals where do these ideas come from and in whose interests are they? And do male homosexuals also express and act on ideas oppressive to women, and to middle-aged women specifically?

As a way of examining these questions I offer the following quote from Ti-Grace Atkinson's Female Offense. It's from a chapter called "The Older Woman: A Stockpile of Losses".

"The definition of 'older woman' is woman"...

"Woman" bluntly put, means 'garbage', waste. Woman is 'potential'. The older woman is 'past potential'. A contradiction? Not if you understand the meaning of potential.

"Potential" means 'not actualized', 'nonexistent'. The non-older woman has 'hope'. She may still be used. The older woman is use-less, past the possibility of use. She is no longer in danger of, has lost the 'opportunity' of, being politically raped by one man. The older woman is guaranteed ravagement by the whole fucking system.

"The older woman no longer has potential. She's had it. Or rather she can no longer have it. The older woman has had it. She is a stockpile of losses, a walking history of lost potentials. She should, of course, have the good taste to lie down and die, like a lady. Be that as it may, for better or for worse, the 'older woman' hangs in. And I say, 'As long as we're going to hang in, we might as well hang out too.'"

Also from the same book, in a chapter called 'Individual Responsibility and Human Oppression: (Including Some Notes on Prostitution and Pornography)':

"The male-female class division is generally agreed to be the first class division in society. Some group of individuals were assigned some artificial set of tasks - later to be designated as a 'role'. This assumption, that the male-female division was the first major class division, also suggests that the male-female division is the model for human oppression. Thus, the fact that our oppression has never been fundamentally changed is significant for all people. History bears this out..."

"Now, if as all feminist groups hold, women are oppressed as a class, then this class-oppression can only be broken in class terms.

"What follows from the assumption that women are a class, and that they are oppressed is that some other class is doing the oppressing. Since there is only one other class in that universe (the universe of sex classes) namely men, men must be oppressing women. This is not to say that men are intrinsically the enemies of women, anymore than when the Germans invaded France it was generally held that the Germans were the natural enemies of the French. It does mean however, that when the public policy of one group is to abridge the rights of another, it is prudent of the victim to take certain precaution-measures, such as keeping tabs on the agents and wearing bullet-proof vests while in their company. The alternative is death."

If you're going to fire, aim straight.

Virginia Fraser.

NEWS FROM "CAMPUS CAMP" MAY NEWSLETTER (ST. LUCIA UNI., QLD)

NONE DARE CALL IT HYPOCRISY

"John, one of our members, was asked to go home to bed the other day by a youngish professional gay who said he was secretary to a state Liberal MP. John takes an interest in politics and knew that the man's boss was one of the Libs' most notorious poofter-bashers. 'Why', said John innocently, 'your boss gave a virulent speech against homosexual law reform at the last Liberal Party State Conference'. 'Yes', said the secretary, 'so did I'."

The same issue of this newsletter contains a very interesting report of violence (verbal and physical) done to homosexuals and women at Brisbane's Labor Day March, with an open letter to Mr R.J. Hawke accusing the Trades and Labor Council of "categorically refusing" the Women's and Gay Liberation groups permission to take part in the march - and challenging Mr Hawke's public taunts; "...you've never had it so good.." A copy is available on the Centre noticeboard.

C.A.E. TO REPEAT "UNDERSTANDING HOMOSEXUALITY"

The 10 week discussion series, "UNDERSTANDING HOMOSEXUALITY", sponsored by the Council for Adult Education, was extremely well received. A letter from the participants recommending that the series be repeated has been successful. This time it will be at Monash University, starting in 3rd term.

The series attracted a range of homosexuals and nonhomosexuals (including a parent of a homosexual). The final session was built around role-playing some typically difficult situations for homosexuals e.g. coming out with parents - and was thought to be especially valuable.

Lesley Rogers is convening the Monash series and would like to hear from interested people as soon as possible. Phone Lesley at work: 541-2505 or at home: 754-5145.

MONASH GAY LIB

Monash University Gay Liberation has re-grouped and is in the process of planning political and social activities. Meetings are held fortnightly, usually Wednesday lunchtime, but check the Activities sheet and the Gay Lib board.

LESBIAN FEMINIST GROUP

About a month ago a group of women met at the Women's Centre and decided to form an open Lesbian Feminist group to cover various activities - e.g. political action, C.R., social activities, support groups, Lesbian theatre etc. Meetings are on THURSDAYS, 7.30 p.m. at the Women's Centre. For information contact Jen & Carol 347-5076, Ann & Jenni 347-4653, or Women's Centre 347-1564.

"SAPPHO SPORTS"

The reformed "Sappho Sports" - a group for young gay women - meets on Saturdays at 1.30 at Women's Centre, for discussion and counselling.

Contacts: Bev H: 783-2135 Sue T: 94-6656

HELP WITH WOMEN'S CENTRE CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS NEEDED

Women's Centre people desperately need child care for General Meetings (2-5, 1st Sat. and 3rd Sun. in the month) preferably somewhere away from the Centre. Any sympathetic capable people (men included) who could look after children or transport them to where there is someone who can, please contact the Co-ordinating Committee (347-1564). Regulars or casuals welcome.

WOMEN AND MADNESS CONFERENCE

Feminist Conference on women and madness on the 9th & 10th Aug. at Public Lecture Theatre, Melbourne University. Discussion, talks, films & poetry to cover:

What is women's "madness"?

How do women get into institutions and how can they get out?

What feminist alternatives are there to drugs, E.D.T., aversion therapy etc?

Sexuality & Sanity. Women & Drugs. Psychosurgery. Housewife neurosis and "the suburban concentration camp". Mad women in history etc.

ALL (& only) WOMEN WELCOME (one plenary session available for men on Sun. morning).

N.B. Discussion groups at the Health Collective, every 2nd Thursday, 8 p.m.

Contact Janet 484-556 or Virginia, 148 Gatehouse St, Parkville, 3052.

A POST SCRIPT ON THE A.C.T. LAW REFORM (see page 3)

Society Five's President has written to Mr Enderby drawing attention to the implications of subsection 3(2), relating to minors. This defines sex play between, say, 16 year olds of the same sex, as a criminal act. He recommends that a provision for "consenting minors" clause, as appears in the criminal statutes of Scandinavian countries and West Germany, be included. In view of some allegations we've heard recently at Gay Lib, about juveniles being confined to detention centres for nothing more than their indulgence in homosexual acts, this seems a particularly necessary amendment.

Further in this same letter he questions the validity of identical laws for homosexual and heterosexual acts e.g. with regard to the impossibility of pregnancy. It is clear that homosexual incest is being proscribed on entirely moral grounds (rather than the biological argument against in-breeding). So if we are opposed to the definition of homosexual acts as immoral, why then do we not support in principle homosexual incest between consenting adults?

REPLY TO VIRGINIA FRASER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

3. Homosexual men oppress women too If we appear more like Real Men to women than we actually are, and so elicit retaliation from them, then we've partly got ourselves to blame. In seeking social approval and affirmation of our "normality" - and a stake in male power - how often do male homosexuals strive to emulate the oppressor. One of the most convincing ways of appearing like a Real Man is, of course, to behave oppressively towards women. If this behaviour doesn't come altogether "naturally", that is if you have to "work" at it, the chances are you'll "overdo" it. Examples come to mind, and it seems that exaggerated behaviour of this kind is most often exhibited by homosexual men with power to gain or protect - power which is exercised according to men's rules, and that must mean put-down of women. This is perhaps what Phylis Chesler means when she says that male homosexuality in patriarchal society is an extreme form of misogyny; though I don't think it is as universally so as she apparently believes.

I've not taken up all the questions you raise - pertinent as they must be to a thorough-going analysis of the connections between the oppression of older women and male homosexuals. I only wish I was capable of it! Instead I've limited my response to (hopefully) correcting what now appears to me as an irresponsible remark.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Jaynes.

COMING EVENTSSaturday, July 19th

11 a.m. Lesbian Picnic at Wattle Park. Meet there.

8 p.m. General Meeting at Centre. Reports on "doings" of past month, and discussion of Conference plans. In particular if energy goes into writing a paper, what strikes people as being most important?

Friday, July 25th

8 p.m. Conference Planning Meeting, Undergraduate Lounge, Melbourne University Union. See article about Conference.

Sunday, July 27th

6 p.m. Counselling Group Meeting at Centre. People from Dep't of Labour's Vocational Guidance, and Employment Discrimination Sections will be along to talk

8 p.m. Laurie Bebbington will talk about the recent I.W.Y. Conference in Mexico, focussing on the issues relating to lesbianism.

Saturday, August 9th - 10th

Women and Madness Conference. See above.

Saturday, August 9th

Pre-conference PARTY (i.e. National Homosexual Conference) at Centre, 8 p.m. B.Y.O. \$1 donation. Books and Conference Propaganda on sale.

Saturday, August 16th-17th

NATIONAL HOMOSEXUAL CONFERENCE. See article within.

Saturday, August 23rd

8 p.m. Gay Liberation General Meeting at Centre.