

Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

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celebrating the lives and times of rainbow folk in Grand River country

Gemini II

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GEMINI II

Waterloo Universities' Gay Liberation Movement: volume 1, issue 4

ISLANDS

Once again
you and I
steer past each other
hurring to nowhere
in the dark.

Like passing planets
we feel each other's pull
but hurtle on
regardless
(our routes a little changed)...

and on the face of the void
a sad smile
because
somehow
even we islands
have bridges.

Pat Young

EDITORIAL

handbook

The current issue of GEMINI II, as you by now will have noticed, is a two month issue. We apologize to those of you who enjoy reading GEMINI II each month for shortchanging you an issue. However, considering the support given there cannot be too many disappointed.

GEMINI II, as well as the Gay Liberation Movement is reorganizing in the hope to create a situation where individuals' talents can be used. Certainly everyone cannot write a poem, do a drawing or write articles but everyone could help in some way. It takes no special talents to complete tasks, especially under someone else's direction. But few have even offered.

There is not a lack of human resource, attendance at dances proves this. However, there seems to be a real strong feeling to shy away from real active participation. Could it be that people are afraid to come forward for fear of exposure, are they unsure of what will be expected of them or do they just not give a damn? The first two ways can be changed but the latter makes for a less effective paper. If people sit back quietly and let others do the work, then eventually the workers too will say why bother and quit.

Oppression still exists. Look around and it is not hard to recognize. Unless we do the changing ourselves no one will hand it to us on a platter.

Cover Design Bob Williams

Gemini II is published by the Waterloo Universities' Gay Liberation Movement, c/o Federation of Students, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

Deadline for contributions or letters is the 19th of the month preceding publication and should be sent to the above address.

Staff: Ed, Dennis, John, Bob and Bryan.

Everything you wanted to know about homosexuality but were afraid to ask. No that's not in this handbook but if you care for a few personal narratives and a couple of odd character drawings, then you'll want a copy of our handbook. If you're interested, curious, confused, or concerned, get your copy at the Gay Liberation office, Room 217C, Campus Centre at the University of Waterloo. Such groups as Social Service Agencies, hospitals, and high schools will be receiving theirs soon. So be the first on your block ...

gays

OTTAWA (CP) - Gay Liberation groups across the country have decided to make their presence felt in the next federal election.

At a meeting here during the weekend, they formed a national gay election coalition which a news release said was intended to make federal candidates in the next election aware of the "discrimination and oppression facing Canadian homosexuals and discover the candidates' positions" on the matter.

They hope to do this by questioning candidates at campaign meetings, by issuing pamphlets and by circulating questionnaires.

The meeting also decided to hold a Gay Pride Week across the country Aug. 19-26.

WHAT'S UP

June 2, 8:30 pm. GLM dance, Campus Centre, University of Waterloo. Admission \$1.50; \$1.00 with any Gay Lib membership card.

June 9, 8:30 pm. UWOWA dance, the University Community Centre, London. Admission \$1.00.

June 16, Tentative; another GLM dance at the Campus Centre. Contact the office for further details.

June 19, Deadline for submissions to the July issue of GEMINI II.

DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU SICK

Reprinted from THE TORONTO STAR

by JEAN SPRAIN WILSON

"You've made a terrible mistake," the woman screamed into the telephone. "My Tom is a decent husband and father!"

"I truly wish I was mistaken, ma'am," the desk sergeant answered sympathetically. It was not the first time he had informed an unsuspecting wife that her husband had been arrested on a perversion charge.

Indeed, a surprising number of middle-aged men like Tom, men with reputations for integrity, intelligence and high morality, have shocked wives, business associates and the community at large by choosing, not another woman, but another man.

The names of many highly placed and hitherto untarnished people in politics, business and entertaining have erupted into ugly scandals involving blackmail and, on at least one occasion, murder.

Dredging up these names again would do no good. You know the stories anyway, no doubt.

What you don't know is the real tragedy behind these stories - that most of these men would never have behaved as they did, had they understood themselves, had they realized that a lessening sexual drive in the middle years is a very ordinary thing.

Unfortunately, men don't exchange such information because they have been conditioned by our sex-oriented society to be ashamed of less than the peak in sexual activity.

Thus, the early 40s are especially critical for a man who attaches exaggerated importance to how often he desires a woman.

In his book, The Sexually Active Man Past 40, Stanley Frank says: "It is alarming how often mature men who have never before shown a predisposition for sexual deviations suddenly succumb to them rather than face the reality of physiological changes in middle age."

Tom was such a man.

He had developed a strong masculine ego about his ability to make it with the ladies.

His ego was shattered the first time he couldn't. That failure triggered a fear of future failures and virtually assured them. These nurtured a wholly unfounded suspicion that he was slipping into impotency, or worse yet, homosexuality.

"I'd joke with other guys about women and sex, all the while thinking to myself, 'You're a lousy fraud, Tom. You like boys.' Then I'd get sick to my stomach, but somehow the thought would creep back into my head again.

"Eventually the queer world became a hideous curiosity to me.

"Somehow I got to the stage of thinking that I had better accept what is, that maybe it isn't so bad, or that I ought to find out.

"I got myself drunk one night and went to a gay bar. But the first fellow who approached me sobered me up instantly. I went home in a cold sweat.

"I didn't trust myself to leave the house without my wife or the kids for about three months. But then on a pleasant spring evening something - I can't explain it - drove me to go by a roadside park notorious for its homos, and some young fellow and I ... well, that's where the police picked me up."

Add to the Toms of the middle years an even larger number of men who are never openly homosexual but manage to express their feelings in indirect ways and you will begin to perceive the need for honesty among men (and women too) about the mysteries of sex after 40.

Psychiatrist Hyman Spotnitz says that men who attend conventions and then go out together to have sex with a prostitute or call girls are in effect enjoying homosexual pleasures.

"They are stimulated by being with a lot of men all seeking sex," writes Dr. Spotnitz in his book Wandering Husband. "Their thrill comes as one arouses the other, urging him on to sexual delight with a woman.

"This holds true for the induced excitement at burlesque shows where the men stimulate each other by looking at a naked woman. Such false sexual desire on the part of a man is not a wish for sexual pleasure ... but a homosexual craving expressed through a heterosexual attraction."

The inheritors of the dying burlesque shows are the "skin" movie houses featuring films with thin plots used as excuses to show the various themes of the sex act.

"I'd say three-fourths of our audience are men over 40," says one ticket cashier. "Some are bums but some are really well-dressed men. Sometimes they bring their wives ... or maybe they are their girlfriends, I wouldn't know."

Anything to stir the libido. This is as it is now and how it has always

been. Syrians, Hebrews and Romans drank the blood of youths, hopeful that the stuff coursing in their veins would replenish their sexual vigor.

Meanwhile a group of scientists and charlatans which author Patrick Grady calls the Erector Set have had a go at stimulating the libido.

In recent years some physicians have come to swear by testosterone and vitamin E without satisfactorily validating their claims.

Gimmicks aimed at the gullible and the desperate confiscated by the U.S. Federal Drug Administration include: potions, creams, jellies, specially constructed apparel, mild

electric shocks, ultra-violet rays, massage machines and even a gadget which supposedly stimulates positive thinking.

The man with the positive thinking machine might have been on the right track.

"Impotence is a devastating blow to a man's ego," says author Frank. "But the salient point is that it can be cured in an overwhelming majority of the cases - and not by psychiatric treatment. Fully 98 percent of the situations originate in the mind."

In other words, change your mind and you change what's the matter.

COMMENT

You've made a terrible mistake 'Jean'. I screamed at the newspaper that lay in front of me. I read on. Again I read it. I laughed. I laughed again, gave it to a friend and then broke into hysterics.

It was not the first time I had informed an unsuspecting reader that their paper, the one they had lived with for so many years was filled with such disgusting drivel.

He looked at me in amazement, incredulous about the fact that someone could print such tripe.

Indeed, a surprising number of well paid writers like Jean, with reputations (for what?) have shocked their readers with such a blind, perverse, disgustingly uninformed display of quackery.

'Hitherto untarnished' Jean sinks into

the mire of her unthinking heterosexual mythologies. Bubbling a cauldron of misinformation reeking with the putrefaction of a once fresh inquiring mind gone mouldy. (yech!)

And Poor Tom bears the brunt of all this.

But what is the real tragedy behind this story? The real tragedy is that Jean Sprain Wilson is SICK and very few will be able to recognize this fact. Look carefully, friends, slander, melodrama, and tarnished journalism again wear the cloak of human interest.

Jean manages to drop us further golden gems when she says 'In other words change your mind and you change what's the matter.'

What a mind!

I can't wait for her next article.

Read it and break out in a cold sweat!

THE PRESS

in Toronto

During the last few months, THE BODY POLITIC a Toronto gay liberation journal, has waged battle against THE TORONTO STAR regarding the placing of an advertisement. THE TORONTO STAR has refused to print any ads which "would identify or tend to identify a person as a homosexual or to carry advertisements relating to homosexual activity". In relation to the STAR's refusal THE BODY POLITIC took their case to the Ontario Press Council. It stated that although a publisher has the final

say in what is to be printed nothing objectionable could be cited with regard to BODY POLITIC's ad. Two subsequent demonstrations have raised positive comments but no concrete action.

So the STAR, whose straight sex ads glare out from the pages, runs for cover at the sight of:

THE BODY POLITIC: Gay Liberation Journal. \$ 2 for 6 issues.
4 Kensington Avenue Toronto
M5T 2J7.

in Waterloo

The action of THE TORONTO STAR and THE GLOBE AND MAIL in refusing to print the BODY POLITIC ad prompted GEMINI II to contact THE KITCHENER-WATERLOO RECORD. When asked what their view would be on an ad in the RECORD about the Gay Liberation Movement office and services, their answer was very clear.

First, they would like a clear definition of the word "gay". Assuming

that it had homosexual content, the RECORD advertising manager said that they could not print either the word "homosexual" or "gay" unless it was contained in an advertisement answering "a plea for help", namely psychiatric help. They would not print under any other circumstances either words or ads referring to them.

In the eyes of the directors of the RECORD we assume a liability to society and can only advertise in order to increase the psychiatric clientel.

Nice to see the freedom of the press is so consistent across the province.

BOOK REVIEW

On the surface, Numbers seems to be a simple enough story. It is perhaps an unusual one, because of its subject matter and the bold approach taken to present it. It deals with a male hustler, a very desirable 'youngman' named Johnny Rio, who returns to Los Angeles after a self-imposed absence of three years. He has left his home in Texas for ten days (he is very definite about the time limit) to prove to himself ... something. It is all very vague, but at the same time very clear: he needs to be assured of his desirability, he needs to be hungrily sought after by the 'sexhunters' of the parks, beaches, and theaters, to be desired - but only on his one-way terms. It develops into a mad game, a collage of 'numbers' chalked one after another in his memory, and a struggle against the seductive lure of The Park. And as in the so many games of which life is composed, he tastes victory, only to lose it a moment later.

In what appears to be a sequel to City of Night, Rechy offers his reader a glimpse into the world of those phantoms who frequent the timeless region where hustlers ply their trade. Men like Johnny are not homosexuals, according to their Myth of the Streets; they are merely making a quick buck, and of course, they do not reciprocate. Interestingly enough, Johnny accepts no money during this stay in Los Angeles. The hustlers look down on their 'marks', who are depicted in a frantic, endless search for quick, no-involvement sex and a momentary realization of their fantasies. The encounters are absurdly brief, one 'number' after another, and the madness goes on and on. The whole thing is rather sordid and unsettling, but presented in such brutally clear episodes that it becomes fascinating.

Johnny is very human, perhaps more human than is to be expected with the way the author paints the world in which he lives. His life is a precarious balance of events and his rationalizations of them, for he must assimilate each event into his image of himself and his place in the world. He is a dark, sexual angel put here on earth to be desired. Yet his pattern for survival has flaws, and as in those oh so elusive and rare moments in our lives when we catch a lucid glimpse of ourselves silhouetted against the universe, he sees something fragile and very sad in himself and his life, and he feels the need to search out that elusive missing piece of the pattern. He is very aware of death, and sees God as a sniper, picking off mortals as their numbers come up. And to accommodate himself into the confusing scheme of things, he plays his life-game for all that he is worth, but eventually succumbs to some inner driving force along the path that is uniquely his.

As an example of the literature of homosexuality, Rechy's novels present one facet of human adaptation to sexuality. In his search for that missing piece to his puzzle, Johnny senses in himself an awareness of some undefinable bond with his fellow human beings. He even reaches out for another, and briefly explores the possibility of some sort of mutual sexual relationship, but that territory does not belong to him. And so he goes on alone.

This novel deserves at least some attention as an examination of yet another facet of human experience. You may be turned off by what occurs, or perhaps you may be turned on, but as a glimpse at a portion of the tenuous flutter of life it is worth it.

And besides, the guy on the cover is cute.

CANADA: WATCH OUT

May 19-20, Ottawa, 20th floor of Pestalozzi College, some 60 people, a very small room and far too many similar reports outlines the uneventful aspects of the Ontario Provincial Gay Lib Conference. Actually the meeting had a bit of a national air to it as there were representatives from Quebec, Montreal, Saskatoon, and Vancouver. And to add a truly Canadian flavour to it all we even had simultaneous translation into French.

The reports were long, mostly boring with far too much repetition of similar happenings and problems. Hopefully the future will hold written reports. One thing that did stand out was the contrast between those groups who were politically oriented and those that were not. One could not help but feel slightly looked down upon if you were not involved in political radicalizing, in fact one sort of felt rated as second class citizens.

Sunday afternoon, GATE Toronto and THE BODY POLITIC lead the discussion on NGEC (the national gay election coalition) and Gay Pride Week. NGEC as coordinated

by GATE Toronto will send packets of questionnaires and booklets outlining points in the laws where gays are discriminated against to each of the Movements in Canada. These are to be distributed by each group to candidates running for election in their area.

Gay Pride Week has been set as Aug 19-25 and is to be coordinated by each of the provinces. Those at the conference suggested that the focus of this year's Gay Pride Week be the Provincial Bill of Rights. It was also suggested that each group approach their regional Bill of Rights Committee with respect to changes in the bill to include sexual preference.

Aug 25th has been selected as the date on which, most provincial movements will gather in their capitals for a march or demonstration.

July 1st week-end has been set as the date for an Ontario provincial meeting to be held in Toronto to discuss and further organize NGEC and Gay Pride Week.

And all of Canada? We'll see in Quebec city Thanksgiving week-end.

WHO WAS SHE ?

Reprint from *SEXUALITY AND HOMOSEXUALITY*
by ARNO KARLEN

The first recorded homosexual voice to come from this (Greek) society, and the first in the Western world, was that of Sappho of Lesbos. It was also the first recorded voice of a woman, and the first cry of romantic love. But her name and birthplace quickly became generic words for female homosexuality, not woman or love. Sappho was born around 612 B.C. in the town of Mytilene, on the island of Lesbos, off the coast of Asia Minor. Sappho had a circle of women about her who may have been friends, a lesbian coterie, a circle of poetic disciples - or, one nineteenth-century theory said, students at a sort of finishing school she ran for upper-class girls.

No picture of Sappho has survived that was made before her death. But she fell passionately in love with one woman after another. Her poems to and about them are direct and self-revealing like nothing before them in Greek literature. She was lyric, lustful, bitter, ecstatic and sulky by turns. It was she who first gave shape to the Western concept of romantic love.

Sappho wrote more than five hundred poems totaling twelve thousand lines. Today we have only seven hundred lines, many isolated or forming short, barely intelligible fragment. The majority describe her love for girls, though some express love for men, celebrate marriage and address lovers whose gender is unclear. There is not one direct mention of homosexual love-making.

Around A.D. 380 Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Constantinople, ordered her books burned wherever they were found, calling her *gynaeon pornikon erotomanes*-roughly, "lewd nymphomaniac," but without specifying whether heterosexual or homosexual. Pope Gregory VII had many of her surviving works burned in 1072. By the Renaissance about all that remained were fragmentary quotations in the essays of scholiasts. Then in the nineteenth century some of her poems were found written on papyri at Fayum and Oxyrinchus in Egypt-they had been torn into strips and used as mummy wrappings. Sentences, lines, words, broke off in the middle, and the pieces did not form a complete manuscript. Sappho's surviving work was now about 5 per cent of the original, a small but readable body of writing-and still no concrete evidence of physical homosexuality.

Writers today assume Sappho was an active homosexual just as confidently as nineteenth-century writers made her a teacher or priestess innocent of "impure" love. Both parties prove that every age finds what it wants in its past. Certainly Sappho had intense love and erotic feelings for women, and probably heterosexual inclinations and activity as well. That she was a practicing homosexual is quite likely, but not certain.

NEXT MONTH

- a new artist preview, Sherry B.,
- a new information column,
- more poetry and Marg's, corrected.