

CAMP INK

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The Editors

DANGER!

The Brisbane and Sydney branches of CAMP INC have recently opened club rooms. Both are costing \$60 per week plus running expences (gas, electricity, phone, etc) and that's a lot of money.

It is, however, money well spent. Without club rooms communication between members is impossible for none of us are prepared to make public our private addresses and telephone numbers. Indeed the need for communication is obvious because already a large number of our members are regularly dropping in to both club rooms for a cup of coffee, a quiet chat and even a heated argument, despite the makeshift furniture and Spartan decor.

But \$60 is a lot of money to have to find each week. Indeed we are to make the club rooms comfortable, then a lot more money has to be found.

The danger is that we will put all our energy into the money making side of CAMP INC and lose sight of our original aims. Our original aims are political . . . we are out to challenge and change laws and opinions.

If we have comfortable club rooms and if we have fun at our social functions, well and good. But if we let our clubs develop into bigger, better ghettoes then we have defeated our original purpose.

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HOMOSEXUALITY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING

Mark Freedman

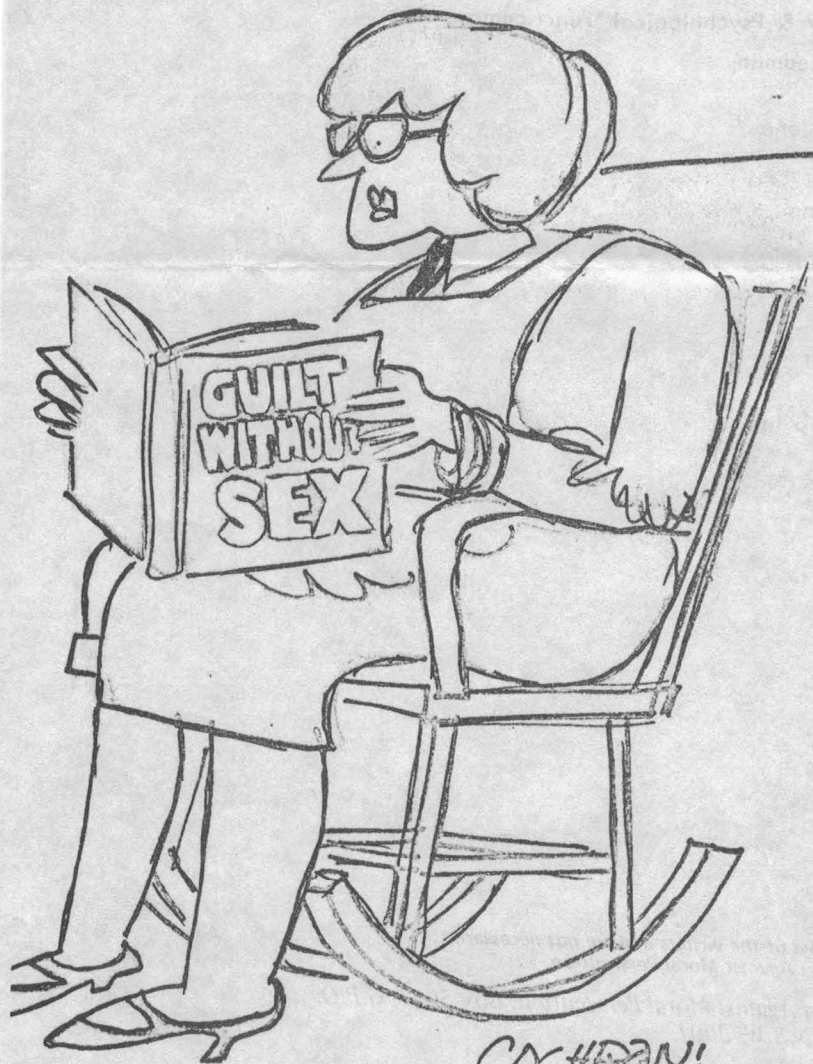
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Homosexuality is now established as a behavioural phenomenon worthy of study from several perspectives: genetic, physiological, sociological, and psychological. Of these perspectives, the last two seem to promise most for any attempt to uncover the basis of homosexuality and to describe the individual's adjustment to it. The importance of such an enterprise is made clear by the phenomenon's occurrence in virtually all infrahuman species, in all strata of human society, and in all geographical areas: it has been estimated that, in the United States alone, there are at least four million men and one million women whose predominant (or exclusive) interpersonal sexual relations are with members of their own sex (Cory, 1964).

Although homosexuality has attracted widely varying treatment throughout its long history, the official attitude in Western societies, at least since the reign of the Roman emperor Justinian, has been almost universally condemnatory and punitive. Homosexuality is considered to be a sexual "inversion", "perversion", and "deviation", and homosexuals themselves are seen alternately as being immature, immoral, or ill. These attitudes are reflected, to a large extent, in the dominant approaches to homosexuality and therapy.

There is a direct correspondence between the interpretation of a phenomenon such as homosexuality and the consequent actions taken toward it. For example, some sexologists including Magnus Hirschfeld, Krafft-Ebing, and Havelock Ellis have argued that since homosexuality is either inborn or the result of hormonal imbalance, the "homosexual" cannot be held accountable for his condition or his behaviour, and thus should not be punished. (It has been suggested that both Hirschfeld and Ellis promoted these philosophies because they were personally—and not just scientifically—involved with homosexuality. (Rubin, 1961.) Likewise, when homosexuality has been viewed as voluntary, immoral sexual behaviour, legal measures have been created to deal with it. Probably the most widespread view of homosexuality currently held is that it is a sexual deviation which is indicative of personality disturbance or of "mental illness". Typical of this approach is the conclusion of an extensive psychoanalytic study by Bieber *et al.*:

In our view, the human has a capacity for homosexuality but a tendency toward heterosexuality. The capacity for responsiveness to heterosexual excitation is inborn—courtship behaviour and copulatory technique is learned. Homosexuality, on the other hand, is acquired and discovered as a circumventive adaptation for coping with fear of heterosexuality. . . We do not hold with the now popular thesis that in all adult males there are repressed homosexual wishes. In fact, most adult heterosexual males no longer have the potential for a homosexual adaption. . . If we assume that homosexuality is a pathological condition, and our data strongly support this assumption, we would no more expect latent homosexuality to be inevitable among well-integrated heterosexuals than we would expect latent peptic ulcers to be inevitable among all members of a healthy population. (1962, 305.)



Of course, the consequent action usually taken against a pathological condition is to try to treat it; that is what has happened with homosexuality. The various types of therapy will be described briefly.

Psychiatrists, and particularly psychoanalysts, have viewed homosexuality as a disease, and as a manifestation of fear of the opposite sex. Their "treatment" of individuals who have engaged in homosexual behaviour has been based on working through the fear of the opposite sex, often centering around the "unresolved Oedipus Complex", the patient's sexual feelings towards his mother, supposedly antecedent to, and analgous to, his sexual feeling toward all other females. Representative of the results of psycho-analytic psychotherapy in "curing" individuals is the data from the Bieber study:

Of 106 homosexuals who undertook psychoanalysis, either as exclusively homosexual or bisexual, 29 (27 per cent) became exclusively heterosexual. Only 2 patients of 28 (7 per cent) who had fewer than 150 hours became heterosexual. . . . Eighteen of 38 (47 per cent) of those patients who had 350 or more hours of analysis became heterosexual. (1962, 301.)

Albert Ellis has had a similar lack of success with his early "psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy" and his more recent "rational-emotive" psychotherapy. He believes that therapeutic success with homosexuals is due to the specific strategy of the therapist. One must accept the homosexual's desires and acts but be critical of neurotic motivations. The emphasis should be on the patient becoming more heterosexual rather than less homosexual. The patient's sense of guilt and shame about sex (as well as other irrational ideas about it) must be attacked, emphasis should be placed on ego-strengthening and feelings of adequacy, and heterosexual relationships should be encouraged (Ellis, 1963).

Another prominent therapy for homosexuality has been the recent "behaviour therapy". Behaviour therapists take the position that virtually all behaviour is learned in human beings, and can be modified through the use of the proper reward or punishment. Behaviour which is considered to be the product of psychological disturbance is essentially learned maladaptive behaviour, and can be changed by using appropriate conditioning techniques. The behaviour therapy approach has essentially been that there are two objectives in "treating" homosexual behaviour: the first is the elimination of the homoerotic sexual behaviour, and the second

is the eliciting or increasing of heterosexual behaviour in the person's behavioural repertoire. The first objective has been approached by means of such measures as coupling homosexual thoughts and fantasies with emetics, electric shock, and other aversive conditions; measures taken toward the second objective include desensitization procedures, and the appearance of heterosexual stimuli with the termination of electric shock (thus pairing these stimuli with relief from anxiety). It is certainly questionable whether one should create anxiety in one area of sexuality while simultaneously trying to diminish it in another area. The behaviour therapists have confined their "treatment" of homosexuality to artificial, laboratory contexts, and heretofore have been unable to deal directly with real-life stimulus situations. (They have put their faith in the laboratory learning "generalizing" (transferring) to other, real-life contexts—something which very often does not happen, as most learning theorists and psychotherapists are well aware.) Behaviour therapy for homosexuality has been done with a very limited number of cases, and there is, so far, a dearth of adequate follow-up studies on the "cures".

There have been other approaches to homosexuality by behavioural scientists. A recent one, evolving out of a psychological study by Evelyn Hooker, suggests these tentative conclusions: Homosexuality as a clinical entity does not exist—it is as varied as the forms of hetero-

sexuality; homosexuality may be a deviation in sexual pattern which is within the normal range psychologically; the role of particular forms of sexual desire and expression in personality structure may be less important than has been frequently assumed (Hooker, 1957). Of course, the implication of this approach is that if homosexuality is not necessarily a manifestation of psychopathology, then there is no reason to try to "treat" it, modify it, or eliminate it on psychological grounds.

The results of the empirical research studies are, on the whole, positive about the relationship between homosexuality and psychological functioning. Most of the homosexually-oriented individuals evaluated in the studies functioned as well as comparable groups of heterosexually-oriented individuals, their functioning typically could be characterized as normal, and in some cases, it even approximated to that of "self-actualizing" (extremely happy and productive) people. Cumulatively, these positive studies had more than 500 homosexually-oriented subjects, whereas the studies with negative results or mixed results only had about 150 homosexually-oriented subjects in all.

As there was a dearth of studies on this topic with homosexually-oriented females as subjects, I conducted such a study in 1967. Two groups were compared in my study: members of the Daughters of Bilitis (an organization dedicated to furthering the acceptance of the Lesbian into American society), and members of the women's volunteer division of a national service organization. Group membership was used as the criterion of categorization into the "experimental" and "control" groups. The experimental group was defined as women whose principal inter-personal sexual outlet is homosexual relations, and the "control" group as women whose principal interpersonal sexual outlet is heterosexual relations. Both groups completed a series of questionnaires and psychological tests which constituted the test battery.

The test battery was composed of a "History Sheet", which asked questions about demographic variables, such as age, education, religion, marital status, occupation, psychotherapeutical experience, etc.; a "Personal Data Sheet", which asked questions about work satisfactions and dissatisfactions, and about happiness and unhappiness in life; the Eysenck Personality Inventory (a test which measures extraversion and neuroticism); and the Personal Orientation Inventory (a test designed to measure positive mental health and self-actualization). After the test batteries were taken and returned to the examiner, they were scored and coded. A summary score, based on the neuroticism scale of the E.P.I. and on the 12 scales of the P.O.I., was calculated for each subject, to give a rating of global psychological adjustment.

The major findings of the study were:

There were no differences between the experimental and control groups in a global measure of psychological adjustment. The large majority of both groups was rated "as well adjusted as the average person in the total population" or "superior to top adjustment".

The members of the experimental group were no more neurotic than the members of the control group, and, in fact, the former group looked significantly more self-actualized than the latter group on six of the 12 P.O.I. scales. Specifically, the members of the experimental group manifested these traits to a considerably greater degree than the control group: Inner-direction, or living by one's own values; Acceptance of aggression (i.e. willingness to acknowledge one's own natural feelings of hostility and anger); Self-actualizing values; Feeling reactivity (sensitivity to one's own needs and feelings); Existentiality (the ability to situationally or existentially react without rigid adherence to principles); and the Capacity for Intimate Contact (the person's ability to

develop meaningful, contactful relationship with other human beings, unencumbered by expectations and obligations).

In both groups, interpersonal relations were listed more frequently than sexual relations as a source of happiness in life.

Because of possible difficulties in "sampling" procedures, one cannot generalize the finding to *all* women who engage in homosexual relations. However, the study does suggest several conclusions:

Firstly, homosexuality is not necessarily related to psychological disturbance. Secondly, it is possible for individuals who engage in homosexual relations to function effectively in our society, to have access to their potentialities, and to actualize these potentialities. Finally, women in general, whatever their choice of sexual outlet, are more oriented to the interpersonal aspects than to the sexual aspects of close relationships.

Hopefully, behavioural scientists will become more aware of studies like this on the psychological concomitants of homosexuality and will change their theoretical assumptions and personal attitudes accordingly.

It is appropriate here to discuss various possible *levels* of psychological functioning which may be associated with homosexuality. The levels considered will extend from the most debilitating, psychosis, to the most salubrious, self-actualization.

***PSYCHOSIS:** There have been several theories coupling homosexuality with some forms of psychosis. In particular the different types of paranoia, paranoid state, and paranoid schizophrenia are thought to be based, in part, in sexual conflict—especially in the inability to acknowledge homosexual impulses. But the theories of the genesis of paranoia, in relation to homosexuality, are based entirely on psycho-analytic speculation. Since only in a minority of the cases of paranoia is homosexual behaviour evident, and since psychoanalysis has been notoriously ineffective in eliminating or modifying this and other forms of psychosis, there seems to be little justification for accepting the psychoanalytic viewpoint on this subject.

Psychosis is characterized by lack of coping devices, inability to solve interpersonal problems, and general ineptness, which markedly reduce the interpersonal sexual experiences of the psychotic individual. This means that sexual experiences, whether heterosexual or homosexual, are relatively rare in such an individual's life. Moreover, there is no substantial evidence that there are more psychotic individuals among the population of homosexually-oriented individuals than among the community of heterosexually-oriented people.

***NEUROSIS:** Neurotic functioning has been investigated more thoroughly by psychologists and psychiatrists than any other level of functioning, including normal functioning. The most prevalent view of neurosis is in terms of emotional overresponsivity and inability to give and receive love.

The available research studies suggest that a slightly greater number of homosexually-oriented than heterosexually-oriented individuals manifest neurotic characteristics, although in both groups these individuals are far outnumbered by normally functioning ones. The tremendous societal pressure against homosexuality would seem to contribute to the genesis and maintenance of neurotic characteristics, just as the negative attitude of the majority has made some minority group members—especially Negroes and Jews—neurotic. On the other hand, societal pressure can also foster independence and inner-directedness in the victims of this pressure. It should be pointed out that most neurotics are able to function

effectively in many areas of their lives, particularly in those areas which are more technically and less people oriented. (It is a point well taken here that an individual's disorder is never a justification for blaming or for maintaining pressures against the individual: this only perpetuates the disorder.)

As suggested above, whatever the level of the individual's functioning, sexual behaviour in itself has little to do with determining that level of functioning. That is, it is only the person's *attitude* towards his sexuality which can cause disturbance or conflict. (Consider all the guilt and shame both heterosexual and homosexual sexual behaviour has caused people raised in puritanical society.) People who accept their own sexual behaviour without guilt or shame are less likely to manifest disturbance than people who don't accept their own sexual behaviour, whether this behaviour be heterosexual or homosexual. Of course, society's condemnation of interpersonal sexual behaviour other than face-to-face heterosexual intercourse reinforces this guilt and shame. Since society is more censorious of homosexual behaviour than any other interpersonal sexual behaviour, homosexually-oriented individuals tend to feel more guilt about their sexuality. The ones who do not "work through" or resolve these attitudes are more likely to exhibit neurotic functioning. Again, as stated above, only a minority of homosexually-oriented individuals seem to be functioning at a neurotic level.

***PSYCHOPATHY:** In the psychiatric nomenclature, "character disorders" and "psychopathy" have been waste-basket categories in which to throw persons who did not exactly fit into the other formal categories. In this way, homosexually-oriented people were classified as psychopathic or manifesting a character disorder. These categories are based on the concept that the individuals in the category are either amoral or immoral (better, asocial or anti-social). It does not seem to be the case that most homosexually-oriented individuals fit this description, unless you take these definitions literally to mean that because most homosexually-oriented people are breaking the law by engaging in outlawed sexual behaviours, they are therefore immoral and anti-social. (Anyone who has ever known any homosexually-oriented people understands that it is fatuous to conceive of these individuals as lacking conscience or a moral sense.)

People occasionally associate homosexuality with child molestation. This connection is not supported by factual data, which report that a child molester's victim is as frequently a girl as it is a boy, and that there is virtually no resemblance between the character and behaviour of a child molester and that of a typical homosexually-oriented person.

Lack of conscience, most psychologists know, is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon: Amoral characteristics are distributed in the population much in the same way that intelligence is, in a more-or-less fashion. (Technically, this can be conceptualized by the Gaussian, or bell-shaped curve.) Moreover, there is no evidence that there is a causal relationship between sexuality and amorality, in the sense that certain forms of sexuality *cause* or *promote* amoral behaviour; deviant sexuality is, on the other hand, occasionally a consequence of an asocial mode of living. In some cases, there are connections between homosexuality and amoral behaviour because of our social posture toward homosexual behaviour. That is, since homosexuality is illegal in virtually the entire world, homosexually-oriented people are afraid of exposure of their sexual identity, and are therefore vulnerable to blackmail and theft by amoral persons, whether these persons are homosexually or heterosexually oriented.

***NORMALITY:** Because of the pervasiveness of homosexual behaviour in Western society, which Kinsey and other researchers have discovered, it appears that there is no *a priori* relationship between homosexual behaviour and psychopathology or disturbed functioning. Rather, the question is whether homosexually-oriented individuals are more disturbed in general than heterosexually-oriented individuals. The research studies discussed above suggest that the majority are not. That some of the homosexually-oriented population *are* more disturbed seems to be a result of the tremendous societal pressures against homosexuality. Much has been made of this point. However, we tend to forget that people are *resilient* creatures, capable of coping with many pressures and much stress. That is why the functioning of most homosexually-oriented individuals can be characterized as generally efficient, effective and normal.

From the perspective of effective coping with life's problems and difficulties, most homosexually-oriented individuals are normal. (As discussed in an earlier chapter, this approach to normality seems to be the most reasonable one.)

***SELF-ACTUALIZATION:** As with the concept of normality, there are also many interpretations of the meaning of "self-actualization." Generally, the mainstays of this concept are the fulfilling of one's unique potentialities, self-acceptance, and the ability to have close interpersonal relationships. According to these criteria, at least as great a percentage of the homosexually-oriented population is "self-actualizing" as of the heterosexually-oriented population, although in both populations these people are relatively rare (at best only three per cent of the entire population). This conclusion has been corroborated by the empirical research studies on the relationship between homosexuality and psychological functioning.

It is precisely in the area of self-actualization that the distinction between psychological adjustment and psychological functioning arises. For "adjustment" implies fitting into the society and conventionality; self-actualization entails living by one's values, although this does not preclude overt compliance with most of society's conventions. (The self-actualizing person may generally dress like other people and conform to many other of society's mores and laws, while having his own individual attitude and style with regard to more significant matters, like sexuality or drinking or smoking marijuana, which he will not flaunt.) Many people today are frightened by the prospect of this type of individualism. They fear that it will result in a state of anarchy or chaos in society. The available evidence suggests a far different conclusion — namely, that when individuals live their own lives and pursue their own destinies, the consequence is generally *productive activity in the social interest*. This conclusion is the result of theoretical and empirical investigation by such men as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Erik Erickson, Frederick Herzberg, Paul Goodman and John W. Gardner.

Having discussed different *levels* of psychological functioning, it is necessary to now look at different *types* of functioning. There is no accurate way to assess how prevalent each type of functioning is among the homosexually-oriented population: no speculation on this matter of the frequency of type of functioning will be offered here, as this would be essentially futile. "The Homosexual"

Some homosexually-oriented individuals accept the societal stereotype of "the homosexual" and consolidate their identity around this stereotype. The facets of this stereotype which they accept, and act on, are: For men, effeminacy, superficiality, promiscuity, and maliciousness; for women, roughness, insensitivity, and dominance. That this situation (consolidation of identity around the

societal stereotype) occurs is a product of an insidious psychological phenomenon, the acceptance by members of a minority group of society's evaluation of them and the consequent engagement in the role which society has written for them. Since society's evaluation of a given minority group is never a unity, but is multi-faceted, we see the facets of the stereotype as dominant characteristics of different individuals. Thus, the pushy Jew is as much a result of the stereotype as the mercenary Jew or the cunning Jew is. Likewise with the shuffling Negro and the sassy one. So, with homosexually-oriented people who accept and act on the societal stereotype, we may see one or more of the above-mentioned attributes in each person. (The "mincing homosexual" may also be malicious or promiscuous, but this will not necessarily happen.)

The most unfortunate part of this phenomenon is the *waste* of potential that results from a person subordinating his uniqueness to act out a stereotype role with which he has mistakenly identified. Also, the particular characteristics which are prominent in such a person's functioning are typically ones that diminish him and reduce the possibilities of leading a full, meaningful life. (To glory in superficiality might be temporarily pleasing or delightful — "What a camp!" — but in the long run is deleterious to the experience of the richness of living.)

This type of functioning *does exist*. In fact, most people in our society are cognizant of it, precisely because it derives from, and is based on, societal stereotypic thinking about homosexuality. Most people are, unfortunately, not as aware of the next two types of functioning to be discussed.

Pragmatism

Another type of functioning is exemplified by the homosexually-oriented individual who is pragmatic in his approach to living. This type of person acknowledges the dangers of being homosexually-oriented in the society, but is willing and able to live effectively despite these dangers. He, or she, maximizes the rewards and pleasures of living and also manages the omnipresent social problems revolving around homosexuality. For the homosexually-oriented person is simultaneously a part of the society and an outsider abiding there. He disguises his sexual identity on his job, wearing the mask of heterosexuality there as well as in his interactions with most of the other persons he has to deal with in order to live. (He, like the vast majority of homosexually-oriented people, is not outwardly identifiable by most people.) He befriends both heterosexually — and homosexually — oriented persons. And he learns how to fulfil his sexual needs most efficiently — how to find friends who will also be sexual partners, how to look and conduct himself in the gay bars in order to be successful in meeting people for social or sexual contacts, etc. This person may be a businessman, lawyer, teacher, student, physician, soldier or clerk: the quality which most characterizes him is his pragmatic outlook on life. The same applies to homosexually-oriented women, whether they be secretaries, nurses, teachers, students, or salesgirls. This type of individual has the greatest chance of attaining a self-actualizing level of functioning, because he is typically attending to his psychological growth needs (generally through his work) and is also fulfilling his basic human needs, including sex, companionship, pleasant living condition etc.

Creative Oppositionalism

Creativity has been considered from various perspectives — as process, as product, and as to the frequency with which it appears in the population. The most appealing definition is Adriann Van Kaam's definition of creativity as "the productive use of past experience". But there is a phenomenon that differs from this type of creativity, which

we could call "creative oppositionalism." This is a phenomenological perspective on the world which results in important creations, and which is the result of the reaction to societal pressures by certain individuals. This typically manifests itself in sensitive, intelligent, and original members of a given minority group. Their talents foster the creativity, but it is the societal pressures that determine the form their creations take. That is, not only are their creations original, but they are also opposed to fundamental trends or perspectives of the society which demeans or disdains "their kind". Thus, Martin Luther King, Jr., used his unique social genius to unite a wide diversity of people in order to gain the individual rights and liberties which until then had been mostly American rhetoric. Had he been born in a society that did not discriminate against blacks, his creativity would probably have taken more conventional forms. Other black persons who have typified this mode of "creative oppositionalism" are James Baldwin, Dick Gregory, Eldridge Cleaver, and James Earl Jones. (Similarly, this type of functioning is manifested by many Jews in American society, from Philip Roth to Walter Lippman, from Mark Rudd to Abraham Maslow, and from Bob Dylan to Paul Goodman.)

In some respects, one of the most harassed groups in the society, homosexually-oriented individuals are also the source of this type of creativity. It is well known that homosexually-oriented individuals have changed the shape of theatre, the novel, economics, modern dance, and social thinking in this century. Because of the dangers of society's wrath, most of these people have not permitted publicity about their sexual predispositions, except by word-of-mouth communication. That is why it is impossible to catalogue their names, as has been done above with examples of Jews or Negroes who manifest "creative oppositionalism." (Even the most dynamic living American playwright does not permit publicity about his sexual orientation. This is prototypic of the position taken by virtually all these homosexually-oriented persons who are creative and oppositional in their creations). The only kind of example which can be given here is of an individual who, after his death, was revealed to be homosexually-oriented: John Maynard Keynes. Of course one can only speculate on the extent to which Keynes' sexual predisposition provided the foundations for his original and oppositional thinking. (This relationship has been established clearly and unequivocally with respect to some homosexually-oriented people who are alive and still creating, much as the relationship between discrimination and form of creative expression is clear with regard to Eldridge Cleaver or James Earl Jones). It is in this type of functioning that the person experiences himself as the outsider abiding in the society most clearly. His creative oppositionalism renews and re-makes the society.

Conclusion

Homosexuality is not a unitary phenomenon. It is at least as multi-faceted as heterosexuality, and certainly as difficult to understand. Current evidence suggests that, if homosexuality is more often associated with psychological disturbance in a person this is caused by society pressure rather than individual psycho-pathology. Many homosexually-oriented individuals function well despite these pervasive pressures against their sexual interests, pressures which are, moreover, indefensible. Hopefully, the gradual change in official politics on homosexuality will influence social attitudes as well.

MELBOURNE SCENE

The newly formed Melbourne branch of C.A.M.P. held its first social function, a cheese and wine afternoon, a couple of weeks ago, in the backyard of one of the members.

It was a very pleasant and warm afternoon, and people relaxed and sat on the lawn and under the trees, drinking a glass of wine and having something to eat.

The amount of people who came was quite heartening, many of them not members, but who had been asked by friends. The committee was introduced, and several discussed homosexuality and its various aspects. It was quite surprising that many were not aware of our aims, but after they were explained to them, questions were invited, and an all round discussion ensued, which was quite invigorating.

The unanimous reaction from those who were there was that an organisation such as this is very much needed in Victoria to help the homosexual establish his rightful place in society. After the speeches the committee mingled amongst the guests, and spoke to people in more detail. Many have offered their help, and quite a lot became new members.

Yet still there is fear among individuals, fear of exposure or recriminations, and reassurance was needed that members names are treated with strict secrecy. This assurance was given, and in time we hope that members will lose this fear, which in most cases is in their mind, and will learn that this organisation is a responsible body representing all homosexuals, and its purpose is to help them.

The subject of homosexuality was discussed openly, and freely, and the fact that it was outside on a lovely sunny afternoon made it very informal. Many people mentioned how much they enjoyed themselves, and there was a surprising lack of small isolated groups, rather, most seemed to mingle with people they'd never met before, and we hope a lot of new friendships were formed.

Quite a few wanted to know when there would be a similar day, and because of the reaction, the committee has decided to hold these informal discussions at regular intervals so that members will be kept up to date with what's being done on their behalf, and will feel that they are taking an active part in the establishment of their organisation in Victoria.

Only through many suggestions and criticisms can this organisation be truly representative of the majority of homosexuals in the community. What is required is more contributions to the magazine by way of letters, articles, comments, etc. This magazine is yours, as is C.A.M.P., and for it to succeed, it must have the support of its members.

Likewise, if any of the Melbourne members feel they can give their branch specific assistance, please contact us through our box number.

In time we hope in this column to give details of various places where members can dine out, which needn't necessarily be camp, but somewhere where homosexuals can relax and eat in a pleasant atmosphere. In the future we hope to provide many social outlets for the benefit of our members.

WINSOME MOORE.

As most of the Sydney members of Camp Inc will now know we have our own 'mansion' at 393 Darling St, Balmain. We intend to make it our administrative and social headquarters although our postal address will remain as P.O. Box 5074 Sydney. If you're not a Sydney member, or if you haven't managed to get to any of the parties or meetings we have had, the photographs printed here will give you at least some idea of what we are renting for ourselves.

Formerly occupied by the Methodist Mission, the house is a two storey affair, built in traditional Old Colonial style, complete with iron lacework balcony, and standing in its own very spacious grounds. The ground floor and the garden are for the use of all Camp Inc members, and we are open from 2 p.m. till 11 p.m. every day, so if you're passing through Sydney, or just looking for somewhere to go, then drop in. You can chat, drink coffee, read, do whatever. The whole place is surrounded by trees, and is quite private.

At present, the interior is presentable, if a trifle spartan. We have inherited, and been given various items of furniture, and after major jobs like repainting have been done, we should have quite a comfortable clubroom. Any items of furniture will be gratefully received, and if you live in Sydney, we'll even arrange to come and collect anything you might have. We will always need things like cups, glasses, spoons and teatowels etc.

How we use the rooms in the house is up to you. After the success of the last party, the large room is obviously a good place for gatherings, and although we will have trouble seating everyone when we have the general meetings there (3rd Wednesday in each month), this is a small price to pay for having our own place. One of the other rooms has been suggested as a quiet room, housing our ever growing library, and a place to retire to when the gaiety (?) gets too much. The suggestion was received at the last meeting that the third room be hired out to members for private dinner parties and further information should be available on this point in due course. The upstairs part of the house is divided into two flats and is completely private and not part of the club rooms.

The basic idea of the clubrooms, aside from being a place at which to hold parties etc, is to provide a central point where members can meet, talk, and generally get to know each other. It is essential for us to have a point where we can co-ordinate all the varying activities of Camp Inc. Come along anytime. If you have any ideas, any problems, or anything that you think will be of interest to the society then we'd like to hear from you. The clubrooms are for your use.

Remember: Camp Inc is alive and living in Balmain!! (And who would want to die *there* anyway?????)



BRISBANE SCENE

— THE GALA OPENING.

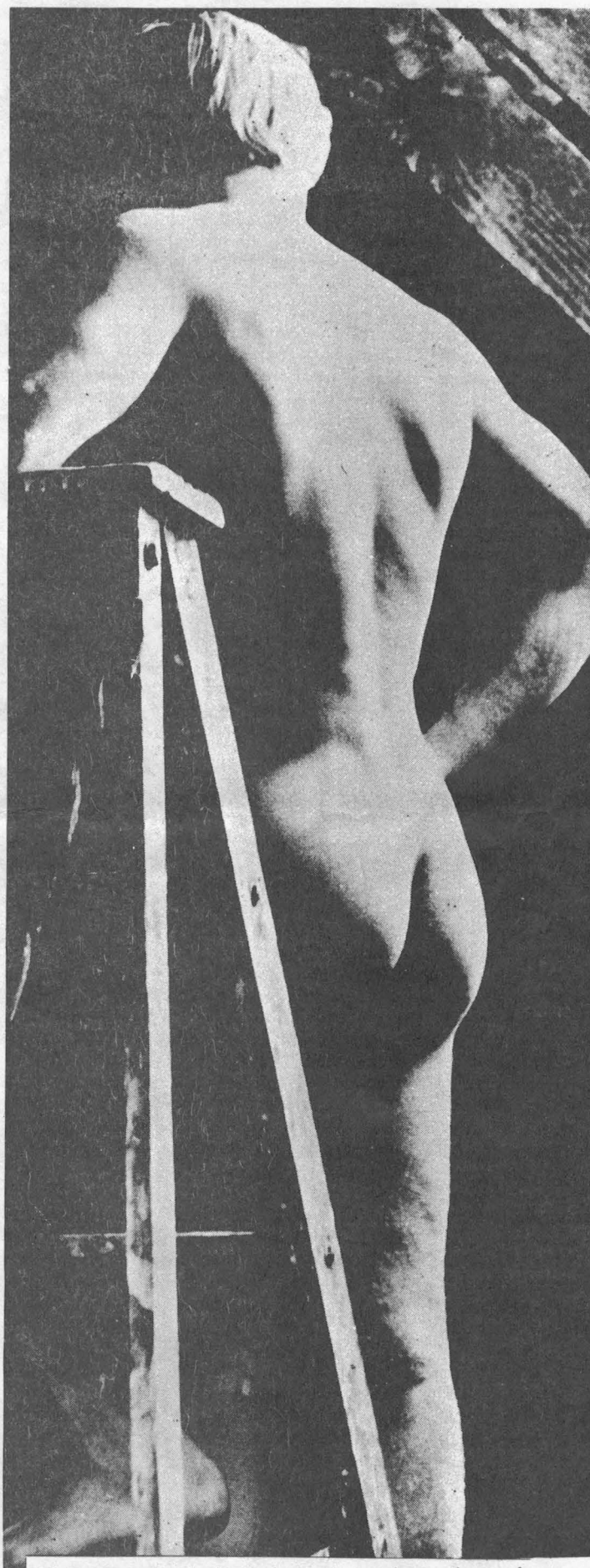
Walking up the stairs at 379 George Street about 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 15th April, I was fairly confident that I knew how the place would look now that it was finished. After all I had been actively involved in the "working bee" which took place over the Easter weekend. In company with willing and cheerful helpers too numerous to mention individually, all vigourously wielding mops and buckets, brooms, hammers, saws, power tools and even sewing machines, I had spent four days attached to the business end of a paint-brush helping to bring about the transformation, and when I last saw the place on Tuesday night it needed only the finishing touches to make it ready for the Gala Opening. At the top of the stairs I could now hear the strains of music and looking in from the doorway I suddenly realised that I had not really been prepared for the finished product, for now I was transported into another world.

The soft lighting coming from the coloured lights inside, Chinese lanterns hung from the ceiling, the gaily coloured curtains hiding the previously dingy windows, the tables covered with bright tablecloths and each bearing a lighted candle, the painted chairs in an assortment of colours, shapes and sizes and in the background music from the newly installed jukebox — could this really be the same place that four of us had inspected only a few days before and decided to take a chance on because it had possibilities.

At that stage, covered with the accumulated grime of years of neglect, it had looked more like a hide-out for Fagin and his gang of pickpockets than a potential clubroom. Now, less than a fortnight later, the possibilities had become realities. An appeal for all manner of chattles needed to set the clubrooms in order brought a tremendous response so that by the opening night we had most of the essentials we needed. The remaining few items were purchased out of club funds. And now, the Gala Opening night had arrived. Everything was in order and all we needed was the support of the Gay people for whom we were catering. Would they, or would they not support us? That was the question. It was not long before we had our answer. Even before hotel closing time they were there, coming singly, in pairs or in groups, suddenly we were in business — up to our necks!

To start the ball rolling for the evening a tiny bird named Sandy complete with guitar nearly as big as herself, sang some folk songs. With all the stops full out she set the tone for the rest of the evening. Following on her bracket of numbers the pop group "Seasons of the Witch" took over and soon had the couples on their feet, dancing with gay abandon. In all it was a tremendous evening and everyone appeared to be having a ball.

The co-founders of the Brisbane branch of C.A.M.P., Cora and Paul, together with the members of the Clubroom and Social Committees wish to thank everyone who contributed to the evening and making it such a success and last but not least to thank everyone who turned up to enjoy themselves and by so doing making our efforts worthwhile.



We wish to thank all those members who worked so hard in decorating the club rooms.

Minnie Drear

"even at 13 I was fairly big," says Bent, Victorian Superintendent.

'Don't make it legal'

Homosexuality should not be legalised, despite what doctors and academics said, Supt. Bent told Corio Rotarians.

"The doctors, psychologists and professors might know as much about homosexuals as I do, but they don't know any more than I do," the police chief said.

"Let me tell you a few things - then decide whether you still want to pander to them."

Supt. Bent frankly and graphically described cases of homosexuality

and perversion.

He told the club that, as a boy of 13, he was lured to a house by a homosexual.

An 11-year-old friend was with him.

teacher

They had been taken to the house by a school teacher, supposedly to meet some touring English cricketers. Instead they found themselves

among a group of active homosexuals.

Supt. Bent said he and his friend were accosted by a couple of the men, but, "even at 13 I was fairly big".

They escaped unharmed.

The police chief told Rotarians: "The homosexual must seduce young boys.

"This is his entire urge. We are continually picking up men for taking young boys away."



Minnie Drear found the cutting in her box when she returned from her overseas tour (Women's Weekly thirty-one day Asian Extravaganza). She assumes that it came from a friend who reads the Geelong "Advertiser". Minnie sends her sympathies to her friend, and comments on the article.

Minnie thought she would sue the policeman because, as a homosexual, she never had an urge for young boys, and so the policeman had defamed her. But Minnie won't sue, she has a soft spot for old policemen (guess where it is) and loathes young boys. She would never try to seduce even a fairly big 13. "Even in well-packed lunches, I like my rarebit made of very mature merchandise," says Minnie, a noted cooking expert and home nutrition advisor.

"I think lovely, Supt. Bent has an amazing memory for the finer details of his life as a child. Supt. Bent could probably even remember the faces. I never got that far at that age," said our lovely Minnie. She went on to add, "I think Supt. Bent has a lot of latent talent closeted away. He drives his point home so well."

"Maniacs that attack young boys are usually, coincidentally, homosexual. A child stands far more chance of being brutally attacked by a parent or heterosexual. Can't expect the Supt. to have statistics like mine," quipped Minnie, "I am many, many years younger, and I am a cooking and nutrition expert."

The first cruise organized by C.A.M.P. (Qld) chugged along the Brisbane River last Sunday afternoon (April 4, 1971), in a blaze of streamers, balloons, and other festive paraphernalia in the true camp tradition.

The passengers, in spite of the painful lack of numbers, due in part to the unfortunate lateness of notification to club members to whom sincere apologies were made, were a good cross section of camp society. The exception being two young male members of a Pastoral Society who

hitched a lift to Bishop Island and had not come prepared for a "camping" trip. In fact, they seemed quite out of their element.

The captain, who first showed signs of bewilderment, was as merry as the rest of us at the trip's end, expressed a hope that we would use his services in the future. An offer which the social committee will put to good use in the not too distant future.

THINK CampInk

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND.

Surprise surprise — A proposal that homosexual acts between consenting men in private should be legalised was defeated by a two-to-one majority on a show of hands at the Young Country Party conference in Yeppoon last month.

SYDNEY.

The first general meeting held in CAMP INC's new Sydney club rooms was a tremendous success. The meeting hall was a little small and a few people had to stand. The discomfort of some was more than compensated for by the relaxed atmosphere of the club rooms. A number of the people standing remarked that they would prefer to stand rather than go back to having meetings in the stark, cold church hall. The meeting decided that general meetings would be held on the third Wednesday of each month.

BRISBANE

The Cabaret held by the Brisbane branch of CAMP INC on the 1st May proved a huge success. They made enough money to pay their rent for a few weeks. Similar functions are to be held each month.

LONDON — February

NOVA reports the following incident in a public convenience in Covent Garden.

'A friend of mine was about his business not long ago when a note was pushed under the wall.'

"WHAT DO YOU LIKE?" it said.

"Callas in 'Medea' " wrote my friend and pushed it back.

Nothing came of it.

THE HAGUE — April

The Dutch Parliament recently lowered the age of consent for homosexuals to 16 — the same as the age for girls with heterosexual inclinations.

Yet at the same time they made available subsidised minicipal housing for homosexual couples on the condition that the couple have been living together for at least five years. Now before the Parliament, but not yet passed, is a new bill to give pensions to homosexual 'widows' & 'widowers' on the death of their mates.

NEW YORK

The Gay Activists Alliance staged an unusual demonstration outside the offices of an employment investigation agency when the agency's President said at a meeting of New York stock brokers....

"Establishing that someone is a homosexual is often difficult, but I like to go on the rule of the thumb that if one looks like a duck, walks like a duck, associates only with ducks and quacks like a duck, he probably IS a duck."

"What's wrong with being a duck?" responded the Alliance.

So, dressed as ducks and quacking and chanting angrily, they set up a side walk picket line and handed out leaflets on the fair employment legislation pending in the New York city council.

Having publicly shown their feelings to the agency, the Alliance President commented:

"Birds of a feather flock together, and the ducks will be heard from again."



NEW YORK — March

Has the trend towards 'coming out' among noteables and celebrities begun in earnest? The best-selling 53-year-old American writer, Merle Miller has confessed that he is a homosexual, a fact that he denied whilst sitting on the ACLU board and editing for "Time" and "Harpers."

"It feels great" he said after his confession appeared in the "New York Times" magazine.

His autobiography "What It Means to be a Homosexual" was a let down for some of the Gay Activists in that it was more introspective than movement-oriented.

Miller regretted that much of the story had to be cut from the magazine because it was too long, but he said that nothing was censored by "New York Times."

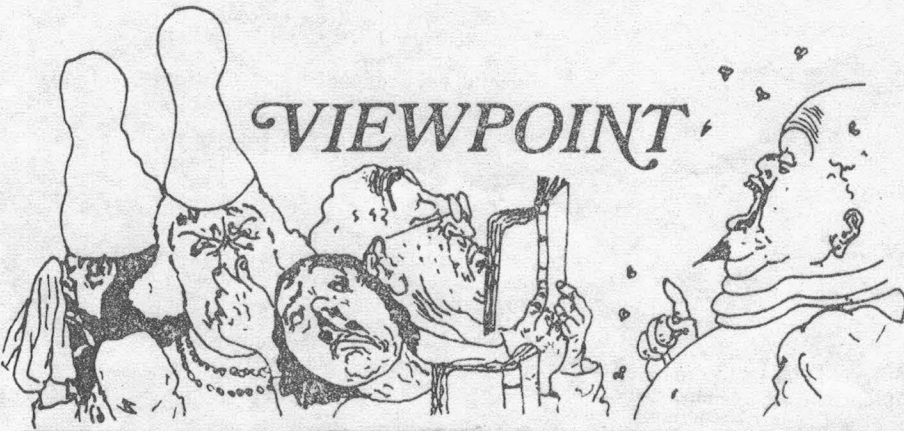
A humorous note regarding the long awaited story was sounded when an advance copy of the magazine was held up before a meeting of militants to see the promised "gay" cover. It consisted of Joan Sutherland and Marilyn Horne, in colour, locked in an embrace in a scene from "Norma".

"We never knew", cried one of the women present.

"Neither did the Times" someone said "but if it was going on at the Met, they figured it was fit to print."

The April 1971 issue of Playboy has a very good, lengthy article on homosexuality entitled *Homosexuality — a symposium on the causes and consequences — social and psychological — of sexual inversion*. The panel of 11 includes male and female homosexuals, prominent academics, magistrates and theologians.

VIEWPOINT



In Viewpoint we intend to raise controversial issues.

If you wish to raise some issue or if you agree or disagree on the issue raised, please let us hear from you.

With your help Viewpoint will become an exciting and important monthly feature.

BOTH SINNERS AND SAINTS

A point that needs to be raised in connection with the articles in Viewpoint of the March edition is that Roger Dean is not, and Troy Perry is, preaching the orthodox Christian position. The traditional position is that Sin and Love are not a dichotomy but two ways of viewing the world.

Sin, reduced to its elements, is not a category of human acts, but the unloving state of humanity—its divisions.

Sin may be understood as the natural separation of humans from God, evident in our ignorance of God and our unlovingness to our fellows. This means that *everyone* is a sinner because no one is perfectly loving, the homosexual no more or less than anyone else. The Church, true to form, can oblige anyone with their "sins" categorised.

Total rescue from the guilt felt by all humans at some time about the misery of their lives, comes with the realisation that while God condemns every sinner, he totally forgives those who believe God has worked this by coming into human form as Jesus Christ, living a perfect life, dying with the condemnation of all, and resurrecting himself to his eternal state.

This one perfect life is accepted by God as enough for the whole human race, if only we, as individuals will accept this. Then we are totally forgiven—we are saints, free from the

condemnation of God and our fellows, and responsible to God to return his Love, to all our fellows and (so) to God: to be loving and tender, to care and be concerned for everyone.

So any external judgment of the "loving way of life" is invalid. Those people who do know what love is (and "God is Love") will be both forgiving and tolerant—the "loving" ways to be. And of course sex is one very valid form of loving.

These are the arguments implicit in Troy Perry's article. It is important though to realise that the realisation of this sin live duality requires a complete about-face in our attitudes, something which most Christians and even St. Paul have found difficult to master, well-founded as they are in applying "the Law" to find Sin.

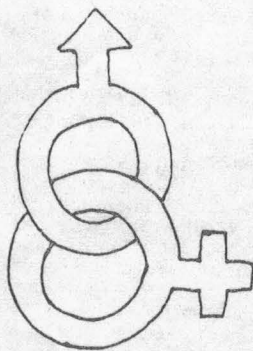
In this respect Roger Dean, trying to lead the perfect life by not sinning (and not loving either!) is a long way from the orthodox Christian position and its message of comfort. So we're sinners! It doesn't mean a thing to us or to God if we can accept this Love. God loves us as we are!

God's Love: Rom 8:31-39, ICor 13:4-13, IICor: 14-17. No more judgment: Rom 14:13-4, Gal 5:1306:10, James 4:10-12.

J.N.

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Letters

The Editors,

In reply to the excellent letter from Marion Norman in March Issue of CAMP, while fully agreeing with her views, I feel that the seeming "lack of interest" in the problems of the Lesbian is caused not so much by indifference as by ignorance that such a problem exists.

A Lesbian couple wishing to purchase a flat or dwelling are discriminated against, not so much because of the fact that they are Lesbians (because most people are ignorant of their private relationship) but because they are WOMEN. However, what she says regarding the dependant, next-of-kin and superannuation laws, is most true. However we trust that Woman's Lib may overcome these injustices in time.

On the brighter side, a Lesbian has more freedom than her homosexual brothers in some ways. Two women may share a flat or digs without attracting undue attention. Women may kiss when meeting or parting in public, hold hands or otherwise express affection, and no notice is taken. (God help the male of the species if caught in a similar situation.)

Society does not really acknowledge Lesbainism, probably it would be rather a blow to the Male Ego to admit that a mere woman could prefer one of their own sex to HIM. There is a story prevalent that in 1885 a clause governing Lesbian practices was inserted in the famous Labourchere Amendment Bill which at that time, created homosexuality a crime. In the section dealing with this, it included both men AND women, however when the Amendment Bill was presented to Queen Victoria for signature, she queried it, saying that she could not understand how WOMEN could commit home practices!! Rather than give Her Majesty a full-scale lecture on Saphism, her advisors agreed to change the wording of the Bill and omit the section governing women. This, I was told was the origin of Male Homosexuals being liable to prosecution by law, while the more fortunate (?) female gets off scot free.

Yours
MARGARET BAXTER.

The Editors,

This is an open letter I'd like to have published. If not, then I do hope that SOME of the ideas I feel have to be put in writing and read will give fruitful thought to whoever selects letters for publication in your magazine.

Many of the articles in Camp Ink, so far, have been well done, and expressed Camp as camp-is. The pitfalls I see may never eventuate but it is imperative they are place in the open now before the chance arises.

We all know that persecution exists. Your articles on homosexuality have covered it well for both sex-labelled second-class minority people as we supposedly are to all outside eyes.

My fear is that articles will be over-done/or, done to death, on the Understanding of Homosexuals. You can do no more than you've already done in the 'Understanding' line. The next step, having accepted that the homosexual carries an extra burden, that should be the end of it.

Considering that the homosexual is a person First, a desirable 1st class citizen (and why not?) second, and homosexual third, then the road, though still rough in patches, should be reasonably clear.

Because we do happen to be people and citizens populating mother earth, there are many things screaming for attention. Political structures on shaky stilts. Immigration corruption. Trade and labour. The Arts. There are thousands more.

If a homosexual is charged in the traditional slob-like manner, ridiculed etc etc, then Camp Ink should take it's stand. It is within it's right to blacken and expose laws so pathetically immature and try to present it's case in such a way that any thinking 'outsider' must see the stupidity of the law itself and demand changes.

There is nothing wrong with your book-reviews on camp literature, but why not reviews on others as well? Why not a column on the Arts—i.e., theatre, movies, and exhibitions?

I fully realise how difficult it is to find writers to give their time and knowledge and help with this task.

But, we do have camp actors, writers, poets and artists. We have people in prominent positions interested in law-reform. Let them write their pieces under assumed names, if they want, and put forward their cases. All this can only give additional strength to Camp Ink—never detract from it.

Should your book reviews deal with camp topics, then what happens when (as it's very possible I'll be published in the near future) my poetry is on display to be bought and doesn't sound or read camp? Seven-eighths of the poems are not camp at all.

I put my name at the bottom of this letter knowing I leave myself open to police persecution (which I've faced recently, anyway) and all that goes with it. Known here in Brisbane as 'Sandy'.

STEFANIE BENNETT.

The Editors,

Writing letters to Editors is not my cup of tea and I have to feel pretty steamed up about a thing before taking to the biro.

But first let me thank you for "Camp Ink". It's well-read at this address and I always pass it on in the hope that someone else will "flock to the colours".

I'm concerned about the enclosure that came with the March edition, "Cunt is a Christian Word". That a jury decided Wendy was not guilty of distributing an obscene pamphlet is OK by me. But I wonder seriously if such an enclosure does anything for Camp Inc And for our image.

Fair to say I'm broad-minded. (Nasty men used to ask me if I was, when I was 18 and 'doing' Hyde Park!) But I found enough in "C. is a C.W." to offend my susceptibilities. Whoever penned the lines has a point (I'm sure you know what I mean); though I can't see any need to run the risk of blaspheming. The author, it seems to me, is confusing issues. He/she has a gripe with the Church as an institution. Fair enough. God knows, and even some men I know know (lots of knowing there) that there's just so much wrong with the institution. So the Vatican Council, the W.C.C. and so on. And although I'm a Churchman, I'm glad to see the boat rocked, however uncomfortable for the passengers! Give it time and good will come.

But blasphemy: It doesn't deserve the support of Camp INK! And I don't believe I'm the only member who thinks this way.

Now you'll think I'm awful!

John.

The Editors,

I have been practicing camp for only a few short months. I'm 21. I guess my late coming out could be blamed on certain internal moral and religious pressures that wouldn't allow me to express the sexual side of my personality until now.

I'm enjoying my life more than I've ever enjoyed life before, but one thing worries me: my promiscuity. I'd never go back to the wretchedly depraved state I was in before coming out, but I'm shy (for want of a better word) and find it difficult to stand alone in a gay bar and wait for a pick up.

The only reason I go looking for sex is because I don't really want "sex" (for itself) at all. I want to get married but I just haven't met the right guy yet, so I keep on and on. Because of my shyness, I find it a lot easier to make pick ups in public loos where I feel myself not quite so obviously in need. If I like the guy and he likes me, I go out with him. But these relationships never last because they're based only on sex and not love. Of course I want my love to be sexual but it must be based on something higher than pure sex (if there could ever be such a thing). Come to think of it, pure sex is possible but only if it's based on pure love.

So what happens with fella's like me? There must be others like me in Sydney. I'm not suggesting you start a Lonely Heart's Branch (heaven forbid), but isn't there some way to get a hubby without having to nab him in a loo or pick him up off the street or in some bar?

You may like to print this letter in Camp Ink. I'd like to hear how many other camps there are around who are interested in making a permanent relationship in life based on love, and not in just completely wrapping themselves in their "gay", free little world of pseudo-square flirtations and non-event one night stands.

Sincerely,
GERARD.

The Editors,

Having read your November issue of Camp Ink, I must congratulate you on having produced a news sheet which I think is well overdue in Australia, although it is apparent that no one in the past has had the intestinal fortitude to run the risks that are obviously associated with a publication of this nature. I hope that you are not finding too many difficulties being placed in your way with this sheet.

With regard to the questions raised in your article "W(h)ither Camp Inc", I would like to offer the following comments, for what they may be worth.

Unfortunately I am not sufficiently conversant with the present overall situation to offer any suggestions on what lines Camp Inc should develop, however no doubt you will have had some definite indications by this stage.

Activities which should be given priority are again not within my sphere of knowledge, being a country lad, however it is apparent that as the majority of your members would be in the city, it would be there that most of the activities would take place in any case. We from the country would be able to attend some of the activities arranged no doubt, on our generally infrequent visits and no doubt will realise the difficulties associated with living a camp life in the country towns, mainly due to the restrictions placed on us by lack of public acceptance. Perhaps some sort of an education programme for the general public might be in order, although this would be a major undertaking outside your scope at this stage—however a thought to be borne in mind for later consideration when Camp Inc becomes much stronger, as I have no doubt it will in time and when those who have most to gain realise what can be achieved by presenting a combined and consequently much stronger front.

No doubt you are aware of the prejudices which ones is likely to encounter in any locality, however these are of a much more solid nature in a small town where one is fairly well known and also has to maintain a pretty solid front of (dare I call it this) "respectability" in many instances in order to retain one's job. I have found some small degree of acceptance of my activities here, however this is only among close friends whose attitude seems to be that they are not concerned with my persuasions so long as

they do not become involved, nor do they have remarks made to them in public about my sexual preferences.

The official stand to be taken on various issues would depend to some extent on the issues involved, but here again a long term aim of public acceptance would be probably the most beneficial approach.

Social activities to be planned would be again a matter of much greater concern to those living in the city and so able to attend such functions, although if they knew that a function was being held, I am sure that a fair number of country people would make an effort to attend at least one or two a year, if only to let their hair down to some extent and relieve some of the mental tensions which are a part of living in a small community.

As for what should be done for members living in isolated areas, here is a field in which we could gain considerable benefit from certain meeting places being known to interested parties likely to be travelling through our areas. There are of course some difficulties involved here too, as we are finding that some of the larger country towns seem to have groups who do not really care who knows about them and who knows about their associates, which can and has caused some considerable embarrassment to people in the central western area in the past. Discretion is a very important part of our continued existence here and some people that I have met, both from this area and from "out of town", have no regard for our rather precarious position. Suitable meeting places are not difficult to find, it is just a matter of these being known to travellers and them exercising discretion in attending these places. "Doing the beat" is repugnant to me, but in most of the country towns I've been in over the years, this is the only way of meeting up with fellow travellers.

Representations to the law making bodies by Camp Inc, the Canberra Homosexual Law Reform Society and any other interested bodies will in time result in the legalisation of our practices, I am sure.

The major problem which is likely to be encountered by Camp Inc would again be this one of lack of public acceptance I feel sure, and it will only be through a long and determined effort on the part of every responsible homosexual within his own circle of square friends that this can be altered. This of course is a very long term project and it is very doubtful if I shall see more than token acceptance in my lifetime, however if some progress can be made along these lines, then at least life will have been made a little easier for a few people, which in itself will be an achievement.

Your suggestion of regular social gatherings in the smaller towns where establishment of a branch of Camp Inc would not be practical, is a sound move, although here again we are very likely to run into the problem of lack of discretion and therefore it is very likely also that the members who would be able to do most to further the cause may feel that they would be placing their necks in a noose by joining in even these activities. Once again we come back to the attitude of the community generally and their lack of knowledge and so damnation of us. The club idea for the large cities I think is one

worthy of further investigation, as I know that I would be very happy to have somewhere to go when visiting Sydney. Of course some of the existing gay bars do serve this purpose up to a point, but they have their limitations.

A pool of qualified speakers to address church, school and other groups would go a long way to dispelling many of the prejudices at present existing, but are those attending such gatherings likely to be only those who are prepared to accept us now anyway? This is only a question and not an opinion.

The legal aid fund and mail order book service sound to me to be very practical methods of helping members, as also is the directory of gay bars, particularly in the country towns. Those using these directories will have to realise though that only a comparatively small number of drinkers in some of these bars is likely to be gay and once again discretion will be essential if we are not to present an unacceptable image. Word travels so very quickly in smaller towns that it does not take long for people to become aware of what is going on in some particular bar and it then becomes labelled as a place to stay away from and anyone who frequents such a place could well become a social outcast.

From all the above comments you will have realised that my major concern is remaining unknown for my sexual activities in my own town, in fact my job depends on this, as is the case with a large number of us in country towns. It may appear that I have given undue emphasis to this point, but should I be forced out of my job for such a reason, probably the only other place where I could obtain work for which I am qualified would be in Sydney or some other large city, thus defeating part of the purpose of Camp Inc, in helping us to live in our own chosen locality more happily.

Several friends to whom I have spoken about subscribing to Camp Ink seemed very concerned that only plain wrappers should be used so that the local Post Office employees (many of whom are personally known to them) would not be aware of the literature they were receiving.

(name and address supplied)



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BOOKS

"I GIVE YOU OSCAR WILDE"

by Desmond Hall MAYFLOWER BOOKS, London 90c

When the majority of heterosexuals think of "famous homosexuals", the name which usually springs most readily to mind is that of Oscar Wilde.

His private life, which proved his downfall, is, to some extent, overlooked by many. I have heard him described as a bloke who told a pretty good yarn, even if he was a poof!

In "I GIVE YOU OSCAR WILDE" Desmond Hall has written what purports to be a biography of a man who remains one of the most famous figures of the 19th century, with more than a dash of sensationalism thrown in for good measure.

His account follows that pattern set out by countless other books on the subject by presenting Wilde as an intrinsically "good" man led astray by the evil wiles of Lord Alfred Douglas (the only book I've read which fails to paint Douglas as completely black is "Bosie" by Rupert Croft-Cooke).

With an impossible narrative technique; that of the memories of his own acquaintance with Wilde (an association which renders him privy to the man's most intimate moments, even when he (Mr. Hall) is not present) being sparked off by the fact that he stays in the room occupied by Wilde at the time of his arrest, Mr. Hall tells his story in a style reminiscent of ladies' magazines and Sunday papers.

The pages are peppered with such terms as "The lovely, white naked body lay on the sand in an attitude indescribably graceful. Oscar bent over the golden head and the lips parted like rose petals." and "... His skin was white; the deeply red, marvelously curved lips, with the underlip so full, gave the mouth a slightly sulky look."

But, in case his readers condemn him for over-indulgence in the scenes involving "perverted" relationships, the author has defended himself by continually referring to Wilde as the victim of a "forbidden love", a man whose life reached the heights and touched the depths in the wake of this aberrant desire.

He has made a feeble attempt to give his book authenticity by including whole passages from a number of Wilde plays and practically all of the fairy tale "The Remarkable Rocket", but the thing still smacks of an attempt to write a book for the masses about "queers".



"CONFESSIONS OF A MASK"

by Yukio Mishima SPHERE BOOKS, London 65c

"CONFESSIONS OF A MASK" tells of a young Japanese boy, unnamed in the text, as he experiences post-pubertal homosexual desires, and his attempts to shake off these feelings in his later years, when he commences a relationship with a girl, Sonoko.

Mr. Mishima's 1st person narrative takes the reader deeply into the boy's tortuously complex personality, and is disturbingly effective when detailing the numerous (although one-sided) homosexual affairs of his schooldays.

The agonies of his adolescence are uncomfortably portrayed, as in the adoration he feels for an older boy, Omi, who becomes the key figure in many of the boy's sexual fantasies, but who is prevented from fulfilling this role as much by the boy's reticence to be open about his feelings as the unexplained expulsion enforced by the headmaster of their school.

The second half of the book, concerning the boy's relationship with Sonoko, falls down somewhat, but only in comparison with the brilliance of the first half, with its claustrophobic description of the guilt the boy feels about

his obsessive masturbation, which he refers to continually as "my bad habit", and which leads him to the brink of a nervous breakdown. One wonders, however, which factor was predominant in this; the masturbation itself, or the guilt feelings associated with it?

The book is devoid of hard core pornographic content. Rather, Mr. Mishima has imbued the story with a subtle eroticism which pervades each paragraph while never manifesting itself to a great extent. Even such events as the boy's first attempt at masturbation and his subsequent ejaculation, brought on by the study of a picture of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, is handled with gifted restraint, and the quality and overall effect of the book is improved greatly by this.

The Australian censors have expurgated the original edition to such an extent that only four chapters of the original book are included in the copy published by Sphere Books. What is missing I do not know, but what remains is an exquisite piece of erotica by one of the most accomplished modern authors.

MELBOURNE CALENDAR

Mailing address: Box 1801, G.P.O., Melbourne, 3001.

All right you Melbourne lot - we've got a bash coming up for you, so you can stop wingeing. Following on the overwhelming success of our last General Meeting, we've decided to bung on another gathering. We like to call it Cocktails and Hors d'Oeuvres, but actually it's the usual cheap plonk with party pies, little savs, lamingtons and bread and butter with hundreds & thousands. Oh, and prunes and bacon for those with irregularities.

This sophisticated affair will take place at the Tia Maria Reception Rooms at 81 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg, between the hours of 4pm and 8pm on Monday 14 June (Queens Birthday Weekend). It's going to cost you \$2 to get in. Allan, our treasurer, will be at the door; you'll recognise him by his cash register eyeballs, his receipt book, and the empty cash tin. For those who think that business should be discussed, (there's always a party-popper) the Committee will give its usual penetrating speeches on the Society's achievements, future plans, financial situation (\$2.57) etc., all of which should take two minutes, which leaves us plenty of time to get plonked-up.

So it's a long weekend and you'll all be away - well, get back in time! The Committee can dispense with the booze, but one's stomach gets clogged up after fifteen party pies.

And if you think that's the lot - got news for you! A couple of weeks thereafter, Friday 2 July, we'll be holding the glittering social event of the season. With the Lord Mayor's Ball, and the Governor's dos out of the running, naturally it will be. Well if you want to know the honest truth, it's a Dinner Dance, held at the same place - the House of Klaus. Klaus and Paul, a couple of nice people, will be your hosts on both occasions, and this dinner dance will have a German atmosphere - German food and German band. So if bashing beer steins together and dancing on tables is your thing - please fell free.

Drinks and horses doovers will be served from 7pm, and a three-course sit-down dinner from 8pm onwards. Everything included, unless you care for lollie water, in which case BYO. Dress semi, so no need to wear your ruffles, but suggest leaving your jeans and Snoopy sweatshirt home in the wash. We've told you what you're getting so that you won't have a fit of the vapours over the price - \$7.50 a head. Oh dear, some fainted anyway.

One catch, Klaus and Paul can only accommodate sixty comfortably, so it is a matter of priority, and sorry loves, cash on the button. Those who wish to come should fork out their loot no later than 25 June. Allan will accept bookings at our meeting on the 14th, or otherwise send the money to the box number. Don't worry if you are coming alone, because it's always a family affair.

CONTINUED ..

MELBOURNE CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

To get to Tia Maria Reception Rooms by public transport, take the train to Heidelberg Station and set out to the right (assuming you have come from Melbourne) along Burgundy Street, which is the one that dives under the train line just after the station. Number 83 is on the same side as you are. If you would prefer, write to the Box No. and give us your telephone number so we can provide a lift.

Other things will be coming up, but here's a couple to keep you going. We hope at our meeting to give you news of our very own premises, so if you don't come along to support us, how d'y think we're going to pay our first week's rent?

All new members are especially welcome because we want to meet you - do bring along any interested friends.

BRISBANE NEWS

CLUB ROOMS: 379 George Street, Brisbane.

Over the next ten days, Queensland C.A.M.P. will be spending \$2,500 on the George Street Club Rooms. Needless to say, now more than ever before, we need your support and in this regard we would appreciate your attendance at the Formal Opening on Wednesday 26 May at 8.30pm.

The main Club Room is to be tiled and wallpapered. The entrance hall and reception area is to be carpeted and the walls papered. An extra toilet has been installed and modern tables and chairs to accommodate a hundred people have been provided.

These amenities and new decor will bring your Club Rooms to a standard equal to any club rooms to be found in the Brisbane area.

We have been able to undertake these improvements through the generous support of Mr. Rex Young, who has lent Queensland C.A.M.P. \$1,500 interest free.

We have had over 1,300 people through the Club Rooms in just under three weeks. This is a marvellous response in such a short period, and it also proves that our Brisbane Club Rooms were long overdue.

We should all be proud of what has been achieved in such a short time, and YOUR Club can only make greater progress with YOUR support.

SYDNEY CALENDAR

The following activities will take place at your house -

393 Darling Street, Balmain.

If you weren't born with wheels, try these tasty Govt. buses:

401 from York Street to Darling Street Wharf, East Balmain
or Balmain.

441 from York Street to Birchgrove.

433 from Circular Quay - George St. - Central - Broadway -
Glebe, to Darling St. Wharf etc (as for 401)

445 from Canterbury Station - Petersham - Norton St.,
Leichhardt, to Darling etc (as for 401 & 433)

Leave the bus at Balmain P.O., ask an innocent bystander for the
Town Hall (20 seconds' walk) and there we are right opposite!

Now for the activities ..

May 26. Wednesday, 8pm - Meeting of the House Committee.

June 2. Wednesday, 8pm - Meeting of the Church Group.

June 3. Thursday, 8pm. - Film Discussion Group. Topics to be
covered will include the formation of a film society to
enable us to borrow films from various film libraries.

June 7. Monday, 8pm. - Discussion on the problems of being married
and homosexual, and wanting to remain so. Married members
and those interested in the topic are urged to attend.

June 10. Thursday, 8pm. - Law Reform Committee meeting.

June 12. Saturday, 8pm. - Queens Birthday. For those not in
Katoomba a gala celebration has been devised. Usual
donation of \$2 for wine, cheese, biscuits and music.

June 14. Monday, 11am to 7pm. - As this is a long weekend we shall
hold a Monday barbecue as well as the usual Sunday one.
To ease the catering problem on this occasion could you let
us know if you can come to Sunday and/or Monday barbecues?
There's a handy tear-along-the-dotted-etc. at the bottom
of the second page of the Sydney Calendar for your reply.

June 16. Wednesday, 8pm SHARP - General Meeting.

June 19. Saturday, 2pm. - Women's Meeting. The women's membership
of Camp Inc is far too low. Perhaps the best way to
increase our numbers might be for each member to make a
strenuous effort to recruit her womenfriends, but there may
be other and better ways to increase our numbers. To
discuss this and also to enable our female members to meet
under less crowded circumstances than the Saturday night
parties it has been decided to hold this WOMEN ONLY
meeting on a Saturday afternoon.

Information from, also suggestions to: Rosalind, 36 2861
or Margaret, 31 3294.

CONTINUED ..

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Hello darlings. Yes, it's me again - dear old Aunty Jo! Another month has passed..... and isn't it about time that we pulled our little fingers out and sent in an ad! Why spend a fortune inserting your advertisement in a dreary national daily? For a mere 10 cents a word you can place any reasonable ad with me: Jo Beaumont (Miss)

Box 5074 GPO Sydney.

Male, 22, soldier, would like to correspond with other members anywhere. Is presently serving overseas. Reply to No. 38 please.

Male member would like to meet or correspond with others in South Australia or Adelaide. No. 39.

Sydney male, 25, wishes to correspond with others aged 18-28, anywhere in Australia or overseas. Interested in theatre, cinema and home movies. No. 40.

Intelligent young woman, 26, would like to contact other members in the Bendigo area. No. 41.

Sydney members interested in joining discussion group for married men. Please contact No. 42.

Sincere square male would like accommodation with one or more female members in Melbourne - prefer south of the Yarra. Would like peaceful, platonic, domestic relationship. No. 43.

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SYDNEY CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

June 22. Tuesday, 8pm. - Discussion on the nature of homosexuality. This is intended as an informal discussion (there will be no guest speaker).

June 26. Saturday, 8pm. - WINE AND CHEESE PARTY. This is the usual monthly rent-raising party. This time it will be restricted to MEMBERS ONLY. Usual \$2 donation.

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Membership cards have arrived at last. With this journal New South Wales members should receive a membership card. If you have not, please write to us. If you wish, you may cut the words "Campaign Against Moral Persecution" from the bottom of the card.

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Handy tear- out- or chew-off slip for Queens Birthday Weekend Barbecues:

.....  
Tear here

.....  
Cut here

.....  
Chew here

Social Group  
Box 5074, G.P.O.  
SYDNEY. 2001

I expect to be at the barbecue on 13 June .....  
14 June .....

I shall bring about ..... guests on 13 June.  
..... guests on 14 June.

(This is not obligatory, but will assist with our catering.)

STOP PRESS SYDNEY CLUBROOMS TELEPHONE NUMBER - 82 3707  
(S.T.D. Area Code 02)

(Save yourself postage on the return slip - telephone your intentions)



LAW REFORM COMMITTEE

At the General Meeting on Wednesday 19th May, the proposals of the Law Reform Committee were discussed and it was decided that all members should have an opportunity of considering these proposals, and making any suggestions to help the committee prepare both draft legislation and a statement of aims.

There are three areas to be considered:

1. Actual Law Reform of the existing provisions of the N.S.W. Crimes Act, and those of the other states of Australia.  
These amendments are largely based on the A.C.T. Law Reform Committee's submission to the Federal Attorney General in 1970, and include that body's comments on the U.K. Reformed Laws.  
The question of 'Adult' is one area of discussion - should this be the age of legal capacity (i.e., 18 in South Australia, and 21, in N.S.W.) or of consent - 16 in all Australian states; or some other age?
2. The status of adults (see above), either as single people or as partners in civil marriages. This covers areas of women's status, of the problems - (spinster and bachelors in housing loans etc.).
3. The status of partners, especially 'de facto' and of the same sex - property ownership, inheritance, recognition of civil marriages, pensions etc.

Your committee most particularly wants your views, either by letter or at the next General Meeting. Only by drawing on the widest views and knowledge of all members, can we hope to provide the community with the necessary information to remove all the stigmas that are currently borne by us all - in job discrimination, in legal status, and in social ostracism and persecution.