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interCHANGE



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GAY BOOKSTORES, AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE FOR THE GAY STUDENT MOVEMENT

by Lee Lehman

Gay bookstores deserve a more important place in gay liberation, and particularly, gay student liberation. The need for accurate information on homosexuality is particularly acute at the time when one comes out. Many of us do that as students, and our academic environment fosters the attitude that books are a valuable source of information.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of university libraries suffer from at least one of three major inadequacies for the inquiring homosexual student or student of homosexuality. To begin with, most libraries have scanty collections. Most of the books were probably ordered by faculty members for their courses or research. And all too frequently, homosexuality is a subject in courses like psychology of deviance. In such a setting homosexuality may well be presented in a negative light. And this is not really the fault of the librarian because they cannot be expected to do all the necessary work to find out what to order on any one subject that comes along.

To compound the problem, one often encounters inadequate cataloging. There is a recent attempt to make "gay liberation" a legitimate catalogue subject title. In the meantime, gay materials are scattered between literature, psychology, sociology, criminology, medicine, and so forth. This problem is aggravated by two other factors: that the title of the book does not always indicate its content or subject matter, and that many articles on homosexuality are located in anthologies which may not be restricted to this subject.

The third major drawback to the university library is definitely not the fault of the library itself. However, it is a well-known fact that gay books have a tendency to disappear from library shelves. (Dare I say that it is by the action of fairies in the night? I suppose I shouldn't ignore fingers from the dykes either!) This state of affairs inflicts great harm on those who need the books most: those who may regard books as the *only* contact they have with other homosexuals.

Sometimes those of us who live in metropolitan areas become callous to the needs of those who don't. Less than 10% of all American colleges and universities have student gay groups. In Menasha, Wisconsin or Red Banks, New Jersey, the gay subculture may not be too obvious. To where does a person in a place like this turn in order to develop a viable lifestyle for her/himself? Books may be the only answer.

The problems with university libraries will only be solved with more liberation among librarians. There is a Gay Liberation Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association. But

it is at this point that the gay bookstore should also come to the rescue. Gay bookstores are, after all, sources of gay books. Many of these books may not be available in the school library, or the campus bookstore either. Gay bookstores should have a responsibility to service the more needy clientele, as well as those of us who may already have at least fifteen or twenty gay volumes on our bookshelves.

The listing of bookstores which appears in this issue is not meant just for those people in commuting distance of the locations given. It is meant for gay teachers who want to order gay books from gay people for gay studies courses. It is meant for gay people who cannot find the gay book that they want to read. And it is meant especially for new-found gays a place to find answers to a myriad of questions.

The list is not complete. Our sincere apologies to those places omitted. Those listed are the ones which have corresponded with the Center recently or ones we heard about through the grapevine. We will gladly print additional listings in future issues. Unfortunately, the Center does not have the resources or the time to devote to the preparation of an exhaustive list, and nobody else seems to be doing it either. But it is our hope that this list, however incomplete, will be useful.

NATIONAL GAY STUDENT CENTER STUFF

It seems that National Gay Student Center has been snowed under ever since it started. Most recently we discovered that our summer issue of *Interchange* could not make it out until late summer instead of early summer as originally planned. Sorry about that. It managed to get caught up in the annual National Student Association summer log-jam, in which the National Student Congress gets priority over everything else.

The NGSC did make it to the 27th National Student Congress in St. Louis. We presented four workshops: one to a pre-Congress Student Body Presidents workshop, and then Congress workshops on "Gay Issues for Gay Students," "Gay Issues for Straight Student Governments," and "Gay Studies." As usual, there was a gay caucus, but unfortunately it was not as active as in past years.

The Center has also had some personnel problems. Sarajane Garten departed last spring, and Director Lee Lehman found herself holding the fort alone during the summer while madly attempting to finish her master's degree. With that out of the way, this fall she has more time since she is merely working on her doctorate. (Those

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK: IS BI BETTER?

Bisexuality has become one of *the* issues of the gay liberation movement. Traditionally, two opinions have been expressed. Many of us have said that human beings are naturally bisexual, or more precisely, pansexual-capable of relating to many kinds of sexual stimuli. We say that in a utopia everyone would be bisexual, or at least, the terms homosexuality, heterosexuality, and bisexuality would become meaningless.

On the other hand, bisexuality has been represented as a threat to the movement. We have said that bisexuals refuse to take sides, that they are gay but don't want to admit it, that they are copping out, that they are trying to be chic.

More recently, articles have appeared in gay publications which have proclaimed bisexual liberation: bi is twice as good as gay or straight. The argument has been that either form of exclusiveness cuts out half the population.

I have tried to consider these arguments openly and objectively. The comments that follow are mainly personal reactions, but I believe that there is some logic to them. And after all, everybody else's comments are also personal reactions.

I must admit that since coming out as a lesbian I have been more open to men. This is because the pressure is gone. I would not classify myself as bisexual, although I could not say that I have never had sex with men. But I don't think the issue rests on either openness or what the individual does in bed.

Surely anyone is potentially capable of relating sexually to either sex. But I would suspect in practice more gay people are capable of relating to members of the opposite sex than straight people are of relating to their own. There are two reasons for this. Because of the oppression we face and have faced, many of us led lives as heterosexuals before we came out as homosexuals. Many of us therefore have a past history of heterosexual experiences and know from these that we can have straight sex. Although many heterosexuals have had homosexual sex, few have actually lived a portion of their lives as homosexuals. The other reason why we may be more open to heterosexuality than the other way around is that we suffer from heterosexism, and are rewarded for any action which connotes heterosexuality. We live in a heterosexual culture and we are constantly prodded to conform.

Although we may be bisexual in theory, this does not say much about practice. Because of the nature of our society we must *all* make decisions about what kinds of lives to lead. When I defined myself as a lesbian, I stated a preference for other women which includes ways which are not sexual in nature.

The crucial issue is, in my opinion, the question of preference. We *all* exclude people regardless of our orientation for reasons other than the appropriateness of plumbing. We all have certain requirements which the person with whom we relate must fulfill. It is in consideration of this fact that the argument of the exclusion of half the species becomes meaningless. The truth is, we exclude far more than that for reasons other than gender. These reasons may include personality traits, intelligence, education, similar interests, economic background, and so forth.

It is in the consideration of the reasons for these exclusions that we come closer to realizing why people may prefer one sex over the other. There are certain combinations of these traits and characteristics that we look for.

Although these may be possessed by members of either sex, there may be a difference in the likelihood of finding these combinations in one sex or the other. I have found that the combination(s) which I prefer tend to be found in women more frequently than in men. This is the central core for my lesbianism: that women are more likely to be the persons which I like and enjoy. This preference for one sex is very real in a society which has separated



the sexes to the degree that different psychological characteristics have been attributed to each sex. I don't know how different the sexes would be in a nonsexist society, but then neither does anyone else.

Although this argument may hold for me, I don't see why any individual *must* have a sexual preference. After all, there are many ways in which the sexes don't differ - we are all human beings, whether we like it or not. It just happens that in my case there are differences which I find to be important.

Since we all have such diverse tastes, and since no one is completely nonexclusive, I find the analysis that bi is twice as good as gay or straight to be incorrect. Bi is different not better. And it may be appropriate for some people, but it is certainly not for others.

NATIONAL GAY STUDENT CENTER STUFF

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of you in the same position or with past experience in this matter will understand the sarcasm!)

Of particular importance to future functioning is the infusion of new blood in the form of Mr. Deg Farally, a graduate student in Library Science at Rutgers and a recent alumnus of the gay student scene in Normal(yes!), Illinois. Welcome, Deg.

In this year the Center hopes to continue its past activities which include publishing a list of gay student groups, compiling information on gay studies and the trials and tribulations of gay groups on campus. In addition, the Center hopes to put together a Book called *Gays on Campus*. Contributions will be gratefully accepted.



BULLETIN BOARD



The following are announcements and information which have come to our attention. If you have any information or announcement which you would like us to print, please send it to us. We reserve the right to determine which ones to print.

Television and radio broadcasters are in the process of starting community ascertainment surveys for FCC relicensing. The FCC requires that each station survey its broadcast community to ascertain the needs and views of this community; the station is expected to make an effort to meet these needs. The stations are required to have individual meetings with members of various people of all sorts of subcommunities. These meetings are to be with individuals, not organizations, and the meetings cannot be mass meetings. In these meetings the stations are required to inquire about attitudes on issues other than the ones for which the individual was selected. The National Gay Task Force drew up a suggested list of individuals to be contacted in the New York metropolitan area and distributed this list, along with a cover letter, to the local stations. Information about this list, as well as information about the broadcast survey schedule in different states, is available from NGTF at 80 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. The actual survey schedule varies somewhat from state to state. Broadcasters have six months to complete the survey once it is started. A booklet on the guidelines of the Ascertainment Survey for Broadcasters is available from the FCC at 1919 M St. NW, Washington, D. C. The booklet is a reprint from the Federal Register.

Barbara Gittings, coordinator of the American Library Association T. F. on Gay Liberation, is looking for suggestions for titles for the new edition of *A Gay Bibliography*. She is particularly interested in suggestions for fiction, plays, autobiography and biography. Contact her at P. O. Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

There was a recent segment of *Marcus Welby, M. D.* which focused on a homosexual rape of a child by his science teacher. Thanks to pressure from gay groups, the segment was cancelled in Boston, Philadelphia, and Lafayette, LA.

For those interested in gay studies, there was an article in the Sept. 7 issue of the *Pittsburgh Gay News* on this subject. Hopefully there will be more!

We are pleased to announce the formation of the *Gay Teachers Association, Inc.* For further information, contact the secretary, Ted Berg, 452 W. Roslyn PL, Chicago, IL.

R. F. D., a magazine for rural gays, hopes to begin publishing in November. Subscription is \$26/year. Contact at P. O. Box 161, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Violet Press publishes a number of books which may be interesting to lesbians. Contact them at P. O. Box 398, New York, NY 10009.

The *Tulane University Gay Students' Union* has just compiled a *Gay Bibliography* which lists over 150 books and pamphlets, 56 magazines and newspapers and seven organizations. Copies may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the GSU, ASB Office, Tulane Univ. Center, New Orleans, LA 70118.

The *Homosexual Information Center* has published "A selected bibliography of homosexuality," sixth edition. It lists books and articles under the headings of general, biography, fiction, history, law, lesbian, literature, psychology, religion, and sociology. Copies are available for \$0.35 from HIC, 3473 1/2 Cahuenga, Hollywood, CA 90028.

The *National Gay Student Center* distributes a number of reprints. These are available for \$0.25 each:

W. Blumenfeld. School is not a gay place to be.

Lesbian Oppression Is.

Gay Student Groups.

M. Rogers. Critical incidents in the evolution of a gay liberation group.

Available for \$1 each:

Motive: Lesbian Feminist Issue

Motive: Gay Men's Issue

And available at \$3/year, our very own newsletter, *Interchange*.



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resources

The Lesbian Collective
P. O. Box 8265
Stanford, CA 94305

Pá fuera!
Comunidad de Orgullo Gay
Apartado 5523
Puerta de Tierra
San Juan, PR

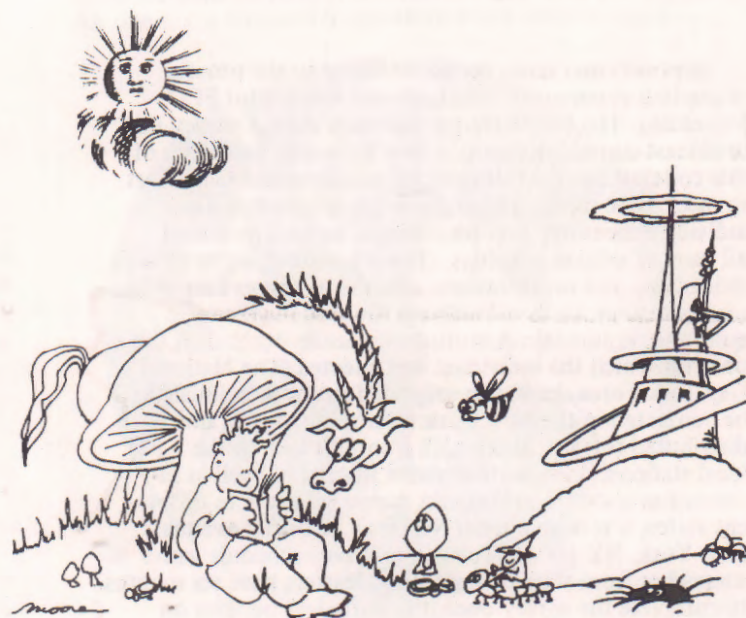
Gay Coalition of Denver
P. O. Box 18501
Denver, CO 80218

R. F.D.
P. O. Box 161
Grinnell, Iowa 50112

Ambitious Amazons
P. O. Box 811
E. Lansing, Mi 48823

The Monthly DOB'R
Daughters of Bilitis -
Women for Action
P. O. Box 1242
Dallas, TX 75221

Committee on Gay Education
Box 2467 GA Univ. Station
Athens, GA 30602



Community News
A. U. R. A.
P. O. Box 7318
Fort Worth, TX 76111

Gay Community News
70 Charles St.
Boston, MA 02114

Philadelphia Gayzette
P. O. Box 15786
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Boulder Gay Record
Boulder Gay Liberation, Inc.
Univ. of Colorado
Univ. Memorial Ctr. Office 185
Boulder, CO 80302

Gay Sunshine
P. O. Box 40397
San Francisco, CA 94140

It's Time
National Gay Task Force
Room 903
80 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10011

Community
c/o C. D. G. C. C.
P. O. Box 131
Albany, NY 12201

Pittsburgh Gay News
Gay Alternatives Pittsburgh
P. O. Box 10236
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Gay Liberator
Box 641-A
Detroit, MI 48232

Lavender Woman
P.O. Box 60206
Chicago, IL 60660

Homosexual Information
Center Newsletter
3473½ Cahuenga Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90068

The Fountain
258 SW Alder St.
Portland, OR 97298

The Manuscript
P.O. Box 972
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Mattachine Midwest
P.O. Box 924
Chicago, IL 60690

The Stonewall Report
4121 Dayton Ave. North
Seattle, WA 93103

ONEletter
2256 Venice Blvd.
Los Angeles 6, CA

Straight to Hell
Box 982
Radio City Station
New York, NY 10019

Gay People and Mental Health
Box 3592
Upper Nicolet Station
Minneapolis, MN 55403

DIGNITY
National Office
Rm 514, 755 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116

PRO/gram
P.O. Box 4642
Toledo, Ohio 43620

The New Way
55 W. 3rd
Denver CO 18554

We are exchanging newsletters with the above newsletters. If you run a newsletter and wish to exchange with us, please write us. Otherwise, Interchange is available at the incredibly low subscription rate of \$3/year.

REVIEWS OF FOUR BOOKS DEALING WITH THE GAY SCENE

Sally Gearhart and William R. Johnson, ed. 1974. *Loving Women / Loving Men. Gay Liberation and the Church*. Glide Publications: San Francisco. 165 p. \$6.95.

It was an honor for me last summer to be able to read a manuscript copy of *Loving Women / Loving Men* and a joy to see the finished product. Sally and Bill's book is a magnificent answer to all those questions which come up about homosexuality and religion. The book is divided into five parts: "The Church and the Homosexual," by Donald Kuhn; "Homosexuality: a Contemporary View of the Biblical Perspective," by Robert L. Treese; "The Gay Movement in the Church," by Sally and Bill; "The Good News of Gay Liberation," by Bill; and "The Miracle of Lesbianism," by Sally. Kuhn's article is a history of a consultation between representatives of homosexual organizations and churches which took place in 1964. Treese's article provides the answers to those questions about the Bible frequently heard in speaking engagements. Sally and Bill's article outlines some of the history of the gay movement and brings the reader up to date on the status of acceptance of homosexuality in the various religious sects within the United States. The last two articles could best be described as personal statements on the role of gay women and men inside the churches and outside as well. Is it possible to be Gay and to be Christian? Read the book and find out.

The choice of articles is a good one. Kuhn's piece, although somewhat dated, provides some information about the status of homosexuals in organized religion in the last decade. Treese's article is excellent scholarship and as such is a valuable illustration of the value of scholarship to the movement. Sally and Bill's article provides information on current events, although already it is a little out of date, but this is inevitable with a subject such as the one covered. I enjoyed Bill's and Sally's articles the most since they both show the conflicts which the Gay Christian must face.

I recommend this book highly. Although there is a wealth of information presented, the style is clever, well-paced, well-edited, and at times, hilarious. And it is certainly time to evaluate our commitments to institutions that are so central to our lives.

Stephen Wright, ed. 1974. *Different. An anthology of Homosexual Short Stories*. Bantam Books, Inc.: New York. 394 p. \$1.95.

Different is a collection of short stories based on homosexual themes. The authors are many and the topics range from cruising to prison to the response of parents to their gay children. Homosexuality may be the unifying subject, but the degree of expression ranges from subtle suggestion to detailed descriptions of homosexual acts. The authors are mainly men, both straight and gay. Some are well-known authors, such as Oscar Wilde, D.H. Lawrence, Guy de Maupassant, Gore Vidal, Christopher Isherwood and Henry James. Others are less known or limited only to the gay underground. Of the twenty-four stories only one has a lesbian theme. In three more, women are central characters, in each case as a mother figure.

This is the main failing of the book. The presence of

one lesbian story is blatant tokenism. It may certainly not be said that there are no lesbian stories which could have been used. Further, the quality of some of the men's stories is below par by a considerable factor: some amount to little more than gay porn. The publication of a book with such a content without labelling it as homosexual male stories is more than inexcusable, it is outright sexist.

Martin S. Weinberg and Colin J. Williams. 1974. *Male Homosexuals. Their Problems and Adaptations*. Oxford University Press: New York. 316 p. \$10.95.

Can a lesbian review a book devoted to male homosexuality? I don't know, but I intend to try. *Male Homosexuals* is another contribution from the Institute of Sex Research of Indiana University (the Kinsey Institute). It is not as enlightening as the original Kinsey studies, but it does contribute some new information.

The intent of the research was to do a cross-cultural study of homosexuality in three societies: the United States, Denmark, and the Netherlands. The U. S. group was further broken down into New York and San Francisco, and these areas were compared to Copenhagen and Amsterdam. There were three sources of subjects: mailing lists of gay organizations, and patrons of gay clubs and gay bars. These people were given a detailed questionnaire and the statistical evaluation of the results makes up a large portion of the book.

Before the results are presented, some background information on each of the sampling sites is given. The field work done in New York was from 1966 to 1968 and could best be described as archaic. My gay male friends tell me that the information presented on the gay bar scene is



grossly outdated. I would merely comment that one of the New York gay groups referred to in some detail is the Gay Liberation Front, with a passing reference to that new organization, the Gay Activists Alliance. The information given is pre-Christopher Street and before gay liberation had become much of a force. Although this is mentioned, and there seems to be some attempt to update the information, it does not present a true picture of the current scene, and the statistical portion of the book assumes less relevance. I do not suspect that this is of as much concern for those of us who are out, since we can usually fill in our own update. But this book will be read by straight people as well as gay people and the picture presented to them may be misleading.

I cannot vouch for the currency of the information presented on the other three locations, but the time period during which the samples were taken are comparable. But I do find some of the observations made to be funny, if not pathetic. For instance, there is the observation that there is actually dancing between members of the opposite sex in gay bars! What's this world coming to?!

I do not wish to give the impression that there is nothing of value in this book. That is certainly not the case. The questionnaire and the analysis of the data are in my opinion excellent, and the results presented give an excellent assessment of the psychology of gay men in the period just before gay liberation. But I should like to see this study repeated now.

Clinton R. Jones. 1974. *Homosexuality and Counseling*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia. 132 p. \$6.95.

Clinton R. Jones is a pastor and therapist and this book reflects that orientation. There are six chapters: "A counseling position," "Youth," "Love and marriage," "Vo-

cation and work," "The law and prison," and "Masculinity and femininity." The book appears to be intended for straight persons, particularly counselors, who may be trying to understand homosexuality. There is little of much value to the gay reader since most of the information he presents we already know, such as that homosexuals may be found in any job, that there are certain legal problems, and so forth. The main value to gay persons would be in the case studies which he presents in each chapter.

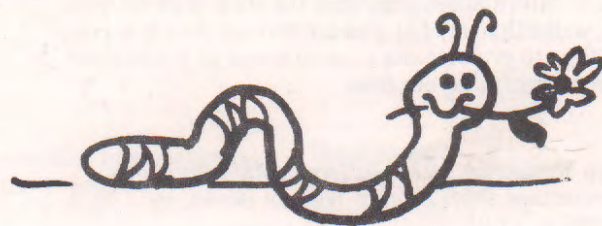
Whenever I read case histories I wonder what prompts the author to include those particular ones. Are they typical, or merely to present a certain viewpoint that the author thinks is important? I found that I could not relate to many of the case studies which Mr. Jones presented. But then my sampling of homosexuals is mainly those which I run into in the gay movement. Mr Jones' sample are those which come to him for counseling. Both of us have biased samples. He is well aware of this bias and does not attempt to extrapolate his sample to all homosexuals, as some other clinicians have done.

I also wonder about my reaction to any piece that I read on homosexuality. How much of my opinion of it is based on whether I agree with it? I happen to agree with most of the statements of Mr. Jones, but in many cases I feel that he barely touched some important issues. In other cases I feel that he goes into too much detail. For instance, in the last chapter the major portion is devoted to transvestism and transsexualism, although he freely admits that neither one is a form of homosexuality. As a result, he never really addresses that complex and difficult subject of masculinity and femininity.

As a gay layperson, I would not find this book very useful. But I think that it would be good reading to straight people as an introduction to the psychology of homosexuality, and to counselors who may have finally realized that they may have gay clients. But for the gay person who has already done some reading, there is not much new information.

Reviews by Lee Lehman

A PARTIAL LIST OF GAY BOOKSTORES



Lambda Rising
1724 20th St., NW
Washington, D. C. 20009

Giovanni's Room
232 South St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147

Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop
15 Christopher St.
New York, NY 10014

The HCHS Bookstore
419 Boylston St. Rm. 403
Boston, MA 02116

Glad Day
139 Seaton St.
Toronto M5A 2T2
Ontario
CANADA

Androgyny Bookshop
1225a Crescent St.
Montreal 107, Quebec
CANADA

Come on, folks, there must be more bookstores out there! Please let us know!