

COLLIN C. SCHWOYER

LESBIAN & GAY NEWS

APRIL 1981 FREE

Lesbian and Gay News is a monthly newsletter produced by the Bloomington Gay and Lesbian Alliance.

GAY POLITICS FOR THE EIGHTIES

Now that we have all recovered from the carnage of last November's elections, it is time to consider what the nature of Gay and Lesbian politics will be in the future. First of all it should strike us that just a short time ago Gay Rights was being hailed as the civil rights movement of the eighties. Now no one is quite sure there will be any such movement in this decade. Secondly, we are all aware that the New Right, utilizing the rhetoric of moral decay and big guv'mint, has set out to destroy the liberal social programs of this century. Thus, under the guise of cutting the budget, the Reagan administration is seeking to alter the priorities of American life. However, we should recognize that it was out of these same priorities that the possibility of a Gay Rights movement was born. And if the assumptions which have fed our system since Teddy Roosevelt are swiftly swept into a corner, what happens to our fledgling drive for social and political legitimacy? How do we respond - both as a national constituency and as individual Gay wymin and men?

To give the question more immediacy, what do we do if an attempt is made to return the sodomy statute to Indiana law? Or, as Reagan-appointed judges begin to appear in the courts, what will happen to the important strides that have been made in recent Lesbian custody cases? And where will we be if the liberals abandon us the way they have abandoned wymin, blacks and veterans?

I believe that the answer to the last question has an important bearing on the first two. For, if we allow the liberals to proceed as though their past policies were now somehow irrelevant, then we will have no political basis for our own movement. Like the political left establishment, our biggest danger is the assumption that the tide is turning inexorably against the social goals articulated during the last two decades.

The Gay Rights movement has never been strictly and solely a drive for sexual freedom. Rather, our goal has been to fight the very processes of social stigmatization which foster prejudice and hatred. Currently, these same processes are being used to strike out against welfare mothers, poor blacks, feminists and all those pansies out there who oppose a virile national defense. For example, a recent Letter-to-the-Editor, in the Bloomington Herald-Telephone, appalled many of us with its insulting insinuations regarding Martin Luther King, Jr., faggots and commies.

How do we combat this sort of thing? Well, first of all we do not suddenly turn belly-up as the liberals

have done. We must remember that the only advantage the Right has is organization. They have spent years putting together mailing lists. With a flick of a computer switch they can collect millions of dollars or barrage Congress with anti-abortion "ballots." And they are ready to do this with any issue they take up. This level of political action is precisely where the Left has failed. As a major national constituency we must not continue to share in that failure. Individual Lesbians and Gay Men must help to break the silence that surrounds the issues they care about - health care, higher education, the arts, school lunch programs, Native American Rights (the list is very long). And do not scoff at writing to your Representatives. That is the major weapon being used against you.

This is where we should start - by remembering that a major part of our struggle is to show the world that we are whole human beings. From there we can go on to fulfill our greatest need as a movement - a permanent national coalition of Lesbian and Gay concerns. But more on that next month.

Peace. Bob Kuhn

LESBIAN GATHERINGS

Bloomington is fortunate to have a variety of gathering places for womyn who love womyn. Finding groups which best meet our needs is sometimes confusing, and occasionally frightening to womyn coming out. A brief description of each group is offered, based upon my experience and the experiences of trusted friends.

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP meets Wednesdays from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. at A Room of One's Own bookstore, 116 N. Grant. This group is designed for womyn ages 16 to late 20's who are coming out, who want to learn more about lesbian culture, or who desire support around relationships. The group offers a relaxed format, with open discussions and presentations by members on lesbian issues. For more information contact the Gay/Lesbian Switchboard, 336-4299.

MENTAL HEALTH CENTER LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP meets weekly, and is an on-going support group for lesbians in relationships. Unlike other groups in town, it does not emphasize feminist perspectives. For more information, contact Chris Ryan, 339-1691.

LESBIAN-FEMINIST CONNECTION meets on Monday nights from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. This group provides several services for the lesbian community. Each meeting has a presentation/discussion on lesbian issues, and times for socializing and for planning political activities. Projects under discussion include awareness workshops, the rights of lesbian mothers, and coordination with the Rape Task Force. Contact A Room of One's Own, 334-9733, for location.

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CONFERENCE IN TERRE HAUTE

Eleven people from Bloomington attended a State Gay and Lesbian Conference on April 4th at Indiana State University at Terre Haute. A sobering keynote address on "The New Right - Policies and Attitudes" was given by Pat Brown, chairperson of the Lesbian Rights Committee of N.O.W. She urged all people to "speak out" against real and potential oppression by the U.S. government. She recommended that people "gently and subtly (but effectively) 'wake up America'" by being in touch with people in the community, and urged citizens to write to their legislators and express their views. Marla Devendorf, an Indianapolis activist, presented an update on upcoming legislation affecting gay and lesbian people. After breaking for lunch, the 57 people attending the conference met for workshops dealing with such subjects as discrimination within the gay community, communication, relationships, and writing letters to legislators. Many new friends were made throughout the day and at the dinner and dance that evening. Those of us who went are looking forward to renewing our acquaintances at the State Conference in Bloomington in June.

Eric Howe

INTEGRITY CONFERENCE

"Breaking Away" is the Midwest Regional Conference of Integrity, which is being hosted by Integrity/Bloomington this month, from Friday, May 22 through Sunday, May 24. Members and friends of Integrity are invited to attend. There will be time for relaxation; the principal purpose of the conference is to allow people an opportunity to get to know one another better. The conference will include the following events:

FRIDAY EVENING

Welcome guests, registration and buffet supper.
Reports on activities and plans of chapters.
Time to get acquainted.
Visit to the bars; separate party for those not visiting the bars.

SATURDAY

Coffee with Christopher Butler, Midwest Regional Representative.
Small group discussions of newsletters, inter-chapter communication, relations with national offices, membership, and community-building.

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Presentation (slides and talk) by Joan Brewer of the Kinsey-founded Institute for Sex Research.

Visit to Bloomington's celebrated quarries, or, for those not wanting to brave the outlands and the outlandish, a seminar on ethics in the gay community.

Banquet.

Visit to the bars; separate party for those not visiting the bars.

SUNDAY MORNING

Holy Eucharist.

Brunch and adjournment of conference.

Registration and payment of \$8 for the cost of the Saturday banquet is due by May 10. Call (812)334-2921 or see any member of Integrity/Bloomington to register, or for additional information. Local members and guests will be asked to contribute to Friday supper, Saturday lunch and Sunday brunch.

CLASSES

The following list of classes, which deal with human sexuality and which may be of interest to our readers, was gleaned from the IU-Bloomington "Schedule of Classes - Summer Session 1981." If you become aware of any classes that are of interest to gay persons and their friends, please let us know - we will repeat this column for each semester. A listing here implies nothing specific - for information, contact departments and instructors. Editor.

Afro-American Studies A210: the Black Woman in America; V. Roberts, 1st Session.

Anthropology E400: Women in Society and Culture; C. Pearlman, 1st Session.

Anthropology E400: Anthropological Perspectives on Human Sexuality; T. Albright, 2nd Session.

History H225/425: Lives of Women in Europe: 1750 to Present; B. Hanawalt, 1st Session.

Home Economics H553: Teaching Sex Education; W. Beam, Intensive II.

Jeanine C. Rae, M.S., M.Div. Feminist Therapist

INDIVIDUAL, COUPLE, FAMILY THERAPY

In Bloomington: Graham Plaza, 205 N. College, Rm. 614, 332-3238

In Brown County: Hygieia's Grove, 8910 Possum Trot Road, 988-6555

CLINICAL MEMBER:

American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy

FELLOW:

American Association of Pastoral Counselors

Hours by Appointment Student Rate

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1981 LESBIAN/GAY FREEDOM WEEK AND INDIANA LESBIAN/GAY STATE CONFERENCE

The Bloomington lesbian and gay community will be celebrating 1981 Lesbian/Gay Freedom Week June 20-28. The Indiana Lesbian/Gay State Conference, held in Bloomington on June 27 and 28, will be the culmination of the week's activities and workshops. The Lesbian/Gay Freedom Week Committee, a collective of campus and community gay, lesbian, and non-gay organizations, has attempted to move beyond traditional Gay Pride Week celebrations to a personal/political statement of human freedom. The conference offerings have been expanded in the area of the lesbian community.

Suggested donation for participation in Freedom Week activities is \$6 per person (donation includes admission to the Terese Edell/"Womenshine" concert, workshop fees, and housing for out-of-town guests). Admission to the Terese Edell/"Womenshine" concert alone is \$3.50; persons wishing to participate in individual workshops will be asked for a small donation.

FREEDOM WEEK ACTIVITIES (All weekday activities will be evening events)

Saturday, June 20:

Lesbian softball and volleyball games.
Solstice celebration, beginning 8 pm, Hygieia's Grove.

Sunday, June 21:

State Brunch, Noon to 3 pm, Essex House Hotel, 421 N. Pennsylvania, Indianapolis. Speaking will be Reverend Harry Britt, City Supervisor of San Francisco, and Ann Maguire, co-chairperson of the Massachusetts Gay Political Caucus. Tickets are available through advance sales only. A reception will follow the brunch.

Men's Dance, 9 pm to 1 am, Old Library.

Monday, June 22:

Integrity/Bloomington will host a pitch-in picnic beginning at 6 pm; open discussion will follow.

Lesbian-Feminist Connection meeting, 7:30 pm.
Workshop: "Straights and Gays."
Workshop: "Bisexuality, A Gay Perspective."

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Tuesday, June 23:

"Reader's Theater" presentation of T-Shirts, by Robert Patrick.

Wednesday, June 24:

Alan P. Bell, Ph.D., will discuss his new book, *Sexual Preference: Its Development in Men and Women*, 7 to 8:30 pm, Auditorium of the Monroe County Public Library.

Workshop: "Lesbians and Gay Men - Separatism/Solidarity."

Thursday, June 25:

Workshop: "Class Differences in the Lesbian/Gay Community."

Workshop: "Men - Exploring Masculinity and Femininity."

Friday, June 26:

Workshop: "Same-sex Rape."

STATE CONFERENCE (Indiana Memorial Union)

Saturday, June 27:

Registration, 9 to 10:30 am.

Welcome and announcements, 10:30 am.

Workshop Session I, 11 am to 12:30 pm, will include: "Writing to Legislators"; "Gay Male Couples"; and "Lesbian Relationships."

Lunch Break, 12:30 to 2 pm.

Workshop Session II, 2 to 4 pm, will include: "Legal Issues"; "Peer Counseling."

Workshop Session III, 4 to 6 pm, will include: "Lesbians and Gay Men in Small Businesses"; "Substance Abuse"; "Organizing a Switchboard Service"; "Play Ritual - Body Image for Lesbian and Gay People"; and a "Workshop for Burned-Out Activists" (tentative).

Dinner Break, 6 to 8:30 pm.

Concert performance by Terese Edell and "Womenshine," 8:30 pm.

Sunday, June 28:

Workshop Session IV, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, will include: "Statewide Communications Workshop"; repeat sessions of other workshops that may have been heavily attended or presented scheduling conflicts.

Plenary session for statewide concerns, 12:30 pm, may include a report on the National Organization of Lesbians and Gays (NOLAG).

Afternoon picnic and excursion to the quarries if the weather permits.

Candlelight Rally in commemoration of the Stonewall uprising, 9 pm.

For more information about Freedom Week/State Conference activities, call the Gay/Lesbian Switchboard - (812)336-GAY9.

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NOLAG REGIONAL CONFERENCE

In Los Angeles this April, the National Organization of Lesbians and Gays was founded. NOLAG is a grass-roots organization committed to the eradication of classism, sexism, ageism and all other forms of oppression. I went to a NOLAG conference in Pittsburgh June 5-7; the conference was held in conjunction with two others, in San Francisco and Boston, and there was a continuous telephone line connecting the three meetings. The conferences were organizational in purpose (the Pittsburgh meeting being concerned with the organization of the midwest and the south). NOLAG is governed by the coordinating committee which was the body represented at the three conferences.

The "Political Action Committee" was formed at Pittsburgh. Its immediate goals are two marches: one on Washington in 1982, and the other an international effort in conjunction with the International Gay Association, in 1984. There are to be worldwide, simultaneous marches on political centers such as Geneva, Switzerland, the U.N., and The Hague in the Netherlands.

NOLAG is a people's organization committed to fight oppression. We're trying to organize Indiana and the rest of the Great Lakes region, but we need your help. Stand up for your rights! The Indiana State Organizers and Coordinating Committee Members/Regional Representatives are: Lynn Paulson, 4921 S. Harrison, Ft. Wayne, IN; and Clay Bond, 3200 Longview #31, Bloomington, IN. Contact one of us for further information. -Clay Bond

POSITIVE PROCESSES IN GRASSROOT ORGANIZING

Bringing together social and political activists from eight midwest states to talk about their work and concerns is the goal of the Second Annual Conference of the Midwest Lesbian/Gay Communications Network, October 9-11 at Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

This is an open invitation to all midwest activists to submit discussion topics and propose facilitators or panel members for topics. Both issues of conscience and strategy are welcome. Examples are "A Primer in Feminism for Gay Men" and "State Legislation in the 80s." Stick to the theme and be creative. Write to

Joyce Stevens or Conrad Satala c/o Rainbows of Life, 1522 W. Main, Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46808, or call 219/422-7913 before 6 pm weekdays. Suggest your topic soon so that it can be included in the registration pamphlet. Suggestions on speaker and entertainment are also welcome.

Interested conferees will study the structure and goals of this Network. Information on national organizations such as Gay Rights National Lobby, National Organization of Lesbians and Gays, Metropolitan Community Church, and Lavender Left may be distributed at the conference. Interested organizations should contact Joyce Stevens or Conrad Satala.

The conference will be held at Indiana University-Purdue University at Ft. Wayne, which is wheelchair accessible. Signers, readers, and childcare will be provided as needed. Some community housing can be arranged. Registration pamphlets will be available in August and registration will close September 30. Fees will be kept to a minimum.

COLLIN C. SCHWOYER SEX RESEARCH

Sexual Preference: its Development in Men and Women, by Alan Bell, Martin Weinberg, and Sue Kiefer Hammersmith, an ambitious study of sexual orientation, charts the development of both homosexuality and heterosexuality in males and females and statistically tests accepted notions about the causes of sexual orientation.

Sexual Preference is based on sophisticated evaluation of data derived from face-to-face interviews with approximately 1,500 individuals. The authors establish in copious detail the relationships respondents had with their parents and siblings while they were growing up, how their parents got along with each other, the degree to which the respondents conformed during childhood to stereotypical notions of what it means to be male or female, the relationships they had with their peers and with others outside the home, and the nature of their childhood and adolescent sexual experiences. Tracing the relationship between such variables and adult sexual preference, the authors address and test all the popular theories about the development of homosexuality.

The main volume presents the actual questions put to the respondents and quotes typical answers. It tells the extent to which homosexuals and heterosexuals differ in a wide variety of ways and which of these differences play a role in the development of sexual preference. Selected diagrams and statistics are included in the main volume; the complete sets of diagrams and tables are given in the Statistical Appendix.

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MIDWEST LESBIAN/GAY COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP

The Midwest Lesbian/Gay Communications Network is a loose organization of people dedicated to an ongoing dialogue between activists within an eight state Midwest region (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin). The Network wishes to cooperate with local, state, and national efforts to improve the quality of life for gay men and lesbians. The Network was formed when individuals from the Midwest met at the 1979 lesbian/gay rights march on Washington D.C.

The second regional conference of the Network will be held October 10-11 in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The second annual conference of the Network, "Positive Processes in Grassroot Organizing," will be held October 10-11 in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The keynote address will be "Electoral Politics - What's in it for Gays and Lesbians" (Grassroots organizing to combat the New Right). Keynote speaker will be Karen Clark. Ms. Clark represents South Minneapolis in the Minnesota State Legislature. She was elected in November 1980 and began her term in January 1981. She is the only open lesbian serving in a state legislature in the United States today.

Workshops for the conference will be: Media Access, The Lesbian/Gay Press (a panel discussion by and for newsletter and newspaper people in the Midwest), Developing Strategy and Planning (assessing group strengths and weaknesses, evaluating community needs, and setting realistic goals and objectives), Grassroots Lesbian Participation (how do we get more of our sisters to actively participate in the gay/lesbian movement), Third World Community Outreach, Meet Us at the Fair (how to set up a state fair booth for lesbian/gay rights, A Feminist Primer for Gay Men, and Campus Issues Roundtable).

For additional information contact Joyce Stevens at 219/422-7913 before 6 p.m. on weekdays.

NOLAG AT MINNEAPOLIS

On the weekend of October 12, at Minneapolis, there will be another National Coordinating Committee meeting for National Organization of Lesbians and Gays (NOLAG). The first day will be spent in subcommittee meetings. The Political Action Committee will discuss ideas for the organization of the March on Washington in 1982 and the International March in 1984. If you have ideas or questions regarding the marches or NOLAG, call Clay Bond, 336-0295.

BGLA ELECTIONS

It's election time again. October is the month when the Bloomington Gay and Lesbian Alliance holds elections for the four offices specified in our constitution. The offices are: co-executive directors (one man and one woman), secretary, and treasurer.

The officers, with the assistance of the seven appointed board members, are responsible for the various tasks of running the BGLA. The election of officers will be held on October 18, at the October monthly meeting, which will be a community pitch-in. For the location of this meeting, call the Gay/Lesbian Switchboard tape (336-GAY9) during the week of the meeting. We are expecting a big turnout. Nominations for officers will be made at the meeting. We will also discuss projects for the coming year. Input from everyone is welcome and encouraged. See you October 18.

Tonya Hays

AN AFTERNOON WITH THE UNITED AUTO WORKERS

Faggots and dykes and the UAW? Yes, really. I told my friends in sociology that the Lesbian and Gay Male Speakers Bureau was talking to the United Auto Workers about gay relationships - they couldn't believe it. I thought - oh well, just another speaking engagement.

The UAW sponsors sessions each summer for its rank-and-file members. Sessions are concerned with the history and workings of the labor movement, and workshops on interpersonal relations are also conducted.

When I arrived at the workshop Tonya Hays was waiting, along with Mark, who was there to observe. The group was small - about twenty people, half women, and including a few blacks. These Midwestern working people were much older than the college classes we commonly address. We introduced ourselves and started the workshop by encouraging the participation of the whole group - "We're here to answer your questions - ask us anything. Don't be afraid to be negative. Feel free to address any issue." Questions began with the topic of parenting - how do we feel about not having children?

Some hostility was expressed. We encouraged the expression of all feelings, but when one man persisted in insulting us personally and disrupting the course of the presentation, I suggested that he could leave if he did not like our presence. He stood and looked around the room as if expecting others to leave with him. He left alone.

We continued to answer questions. Many were genuinely interested in our lives, how we related to parents and