



**LGBT CAMPUS  
HISTORICAL  
COLLECTION**

**1984-85 Clippings**

**1985-86 General**

**1985-86 Clippings**

**1986-87 General**





**LGBT CAMPUS HISTORICAL  
COLLECTION AND PROJECT**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO**

## **1984–85 Clippings**

# Perspectives

## Accept me for what I am . . .

By STEPHONIE KRIEGER

THE GREY CONCRETE buildings didn't exactly open their arms to me on my first day of school. I stood in the parking lot, knapsack slung over one shoulder, gazing down at the campus map I had torn from my 1982-83 UCSD Student Catalogue. Self-consciousness consumed me when a group of obviously established students approached. They were laughing and talking amongst themselves. One, a blonde-haired guy, rode circles around the group on a skateboard. Another chased him, screaming, "Give me my board, man! You're looking for some ganley bruises, dude!"

As they ambled by, quick glances made me crumple my map into a tight fist. Finally seeing the backs of their blond heads, my grip loosened and I tossed the map into the back seat of my car. I had to laugh at myself. Here I was, a three year veteran of the Ivy League, suffering from "freshman fright." I'd been through all the preliminaries before. College was old hat. Still, I felt all

the room. Young faces were coated with Indian War Paint. Sculptured punk hairdos adorned a majority of the scalps. Girls' bodies were clothed in polka-dotted mini skirts, scissor designed sweat shirts and plastic pumps. Boys' tanned frames were covered with sleeveless T-shirts, pink plaid shorts, or pants with a thousand zippers in each leg. Earrings shone in their lobes.

I looked down at myself and wondered if it was time to change my image. L.L. Beach Chinos, Land's End sweaters, and Brooks Brother's button downs defied any fashion code set by my California contemporaries.

My reflections were disturbed by the voice next to me.

"Hey, how's it goin'?" My neighbor greeted me and then let her eyes travel slowly down the length of my body. Squirming slightly, I returned her greeting, then shyly turned away. There I was, a transfer student from upstate New York, sitting in a classroom full of

cream social on Wednesday. We're going to do it every week. You ought to come sometime. OK?"

After whispering her message, Meg lost interest in my Norton Edition of *Crime and Punishment* and leaned back in her seat. She looked over at me, expecting an answer.

"Yeah, sure, maybe sometime. Thanks."

When the clock's long hand hit the ten, Meg was up and on her way. I heard her mutter goodbye as she slipped past me. And, she dropped something. The minute I saw the envelope drop from her fingers, the minute I felt it land squarely in my lap, the minute she dashed hurriedly up the aisle, I knew not to call her back. I wanted to say, "Hey, Meg, you dropped something." But I knew she dropped it on purpose.

I let the envelope sit on my thigh while the rest of the class surged out of the lecture hall. I sat there until no one remained. Then, wiping my sweaty

A good time to be had by all. At the bottom of this printed notice, Meg had scrawled her name and phone number. I showed the invitation into my knapsack and headed for my next class.

When I got home from school that night, I found my roommates having a Friday afternoon happy hour. Sue was adding Triple Sec to the blender full of Margarita mixings.

"Hey, Sue, pour me one of those, would you? It's time to celebrate."

"Sure. What's the occasion?"

"I got asked out on my first date at UCSD."

"Really? I thought you didn't know anyone there." The blender whirred frantically in the background.

"I do now. Besides, I'm such a fox, who could help asking me out?"

"Wow... sorry your self-esteem is so low." Sue poured three glasses of the frothy green mixture, and handed me one. "Who's the lucky person?"

I sat on the couch and wiped the salt from the rim of my drink. "Wait till

"Yep. A busy predican school o into con Part of n object of ol me fe sexual p hers. An by comp Meg's fe nice to i encouraj Curio decision with Me sat with friendly Californ people. but non Maybe I

The v smoothl didn't a friendly thought was stra to have wanted feelings before t Meg, w When s "Whi "Whi respons "Uh...r of hom "Oh." Whe briefcas relievcd mean, r like a S gay. Ma assump for mak I fou through picture to a gu shirts. "LAGC The pag Newslet

palms on my legs, I touched the envelope. My heart was racing, my stomach contracting as I started to peel the adhesive flap away. Nerves gave way to humor again when I recalled a similar instance in fifth grade. The love of my early life once slipped by my desk to drop off an envelope. Its contents revealed a secret desire to spend recess with me.

I tore the envelope open in a hurry when people started populating the lecture hall. I pulled the purple note paper from the envelope as I passed through the rear door of the room. And, finally outside in the mainstream of traffic, I walked along and read the paper.

You Are Cordially Invited to Attend UCSD's First Annual Non-Sexist Dance

at The Che Cafe October 6, 1982, 8:00 pm Bring a friend or come stag

Kevin gets out of the bathroom. I want him to hear this too."

Kevin joined us. "OK, slick. What's the story?"

I could hardly keep from laughing as I told them about the dance.

Kevin poked me in the ribs and teased me. "Gee, I'm jealous. A dance. Wow."

"What the hell is a non-sexist dance?" asked Sue.

"Well, I'm not quite sure, but I do have a sneaking suspicion. My date's name is Meg."

"Meg?"

"Yeah, Meg."

"That's a girl's name," Kevin exclaimed.

"It was a girl who asked me." I described Meg's physical appearance.

By now my roommates were hysterical. "God, Stephonie, you better start wearing skirts to school. A non-sexist dance? Jesus, you got invited to a dance by a lesbian!"



Illustration: Tom Houka

eyes were upon me as I walked to my class.

My routine at school became quite comfortable by Week 2. I'd chosen a favorite seat in each lecture hall—usually in the back, away from other people. Whenever class was over, I was the first person out the door. If I had free time between classes, I'd find a spot on the grassy quad to sit by myself and study.

By the start of Week 3, however, I began to wonder at my solitude. I had, after all, moved to California to meet new and different people. So, I said to myself, "Starting today, you will make a grand effort to be more sociable."

When I went to my first class that day, I was the first person there. I obviously couldn't sit next to anyone, so I moved up closer to the center of the room. As the classroom started to fill up, I was pleased when someone sat down next to me.

She had short, short black hair, a black leather jacket, a black sleeveless T-shirt, blue jeans and "Spicoli" sneakers. "Spicoli" is a term used back East to describe those slip-on, purple checked sneakers worn by the character Spicoli in "Fast Times at Ridgemont High."

I stole a few sidelong glances as she slouched down in the chair, putting her feet up on the arms of the seat in front of her. She showed no modesty with her legs spread wide out.

I grinned inwardly as I looked around

California's finest. My father and I had argued endlessly about the types of people I'd meet here. He swore on his golf clubs that all Californians were "hippies, weirdos, druggies, and unwee mothers." I swore back that he was narrow-minded and shouldn't pass such harsh judgments. I began to wonder when my neighbor started cleaning her fingernails with a pocket knife. By the end of the week, my new friend introduced herself as Meg.

Monday and my curiosity found me seated next to Meg again. We began to exchange more and more words during class. Meg continued to run her eyes over me. I felt goosebumps tickle my skin as she leaned over my shoulder to look at *Crime and Punishment*.

"Mind if I look on?"

"Uh... no... go ahead."

"Boring, eh?"

"Pretty."

"Hey, a group of us are having an ice

LAGC logo and text: Sign Can Dept

"Yep, I guess I did...maybe..."

A busy weekend made me forget my predicament, but when I returned to school on Monday I felt my mind lapse into confusion. What do I say to Meg? Part of me felt slightly flattered to be the object of another woman's desires. Part of me felt angry that she assumed my sexual preference to be the same as hers. And another part of me was driven by compassion. I didn't want to hurt Meg's feelings. She had, after all, been nice to me. But I also didn't want to encourage her in any way.

Curiosity helped me with my final decision. I decided to continue to sit with Meg, and be friendly. That's why I sat with her in the first place. To be friendly. And, after all, I had come to California to meet new and different people. I'd known many gays back East, but none had asked me to dances. Maybe I'd learn something new.

The week before the dance passed smoothly. I didn't bring it up, and Meg didn't ask again. She continued to be friendly, but seemed a little shy. I thought, perhaps, she had figured out I was straight, and felt a bit embarrassed to have asked me to the dance. I wanted her to know there were no hard feelings. But I still wasn't sure. The day before the dance, I sat in class with Meg, waiting nervously for her to speak. When she did, I jumped.

"What're you doing this weekend?"

"Who me?" I blushed at my stupid response.

"Uh...nothing...studying...I've got tons of homework."

"Oh."

When the professor closed his briefcase and dismissed class, I was relieved. I also felt ashamed of myself. I mean, maybe a non-sexist dance was like a Sadie Hawkins. Maybe Meg wasn't gay. Maybe I'd made the same wrong assumption that I was annoyed at her for making.

I found out on Monday. Thumbing through *The Guardian*, I was struck by a picture of Meg. She was standing next to a guy and they were holding up T-shirts. The T-shirts had the letters "LAG.O." printed on them. I read on. The page's heading read "LAG.O. Newsletter" Editors Meg Farrell and Joe

Krismar. "Hm," I thought, "she's into writing." I read on:

*LAG.O. is proud to announce its birth at UCSD. A successful dance held at Che Cafe this weekend has enabled us to produce these T-shirts which we are proud of. With the profit from these shirts and future functions, we hope to offer services to the lesbian and gay community of UCSD. Meetings will be held at....*

Proudly Yours—

Meg Farrell & Joe Krismar  
Chairpersons, Lesbian & Gay  
Organization, UCSD Chapter

As the quarter wore on, I continued to sit next to Meg. We continued to be friendly, she more than me. Since I had learned the truth, I still felt a bit annoyed that Meg had assumed my sexuality. But I still felt flattered. And, I

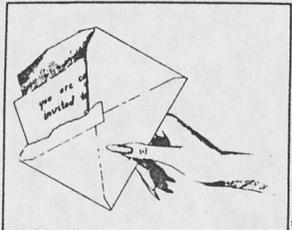


Illustration: Tom Plonka

didn't want to immediately change seats just because Meg was a lesbian. Why, after all, should it matter?

My life at home took a major turn also. Kevin, who had previously been "just a friend" became my lover. He was none too pleased about my continued relationship with Meg.

"Hey Kev, Meg invited me to another ice cream social on Thursday night."

"Christ, Steph. Why do you keep sitting with her? You could just change seats."

"What for? It's kind of interesting."

"I think it's weird."

"Jealous?"

"Hell no! But if I ever see her...."

"Don't worry Kev, she's not my type. I'm just gaining insight into the human race."

"You're just being weird."

"C'mon Kev. Get off it. Who cares

who she sleeps with? You're so big on accepting people for who they are...I'm surprised at you."

Yeah, but she doesn't have to ask you out. I don't like my girlfriend to be thought of as a lesbian."

"Well, I'm not. So you don't have to worry about it."

My relationship with Meg reached a peak towards the end of the quarter. We became more open with one another, but still no secrets were unveiled. One day, while sitting in class, Meg handed me a book. On the front cover were two women holding hands. The title read, *Lesbian Relationships: Understanding Your Mate*. My throat dried up and I pushed it back in her lap.

"Steph, you should read it. Good book."

"No thanks Meg. I'm not interested."

We sat in silence for the rest of the period. I hoped she had finally understood me. And I hoped I hadn't hurt her feelings. But the more I thought about it, the more I became angry. Meg had never come out and told me she was gay. And I didn't think I had led her on. Couldn't I just be friendly?

Two weeks before finals, Meg and my skeletons came out of the closet. We were sitting in an especially boring lecture about Emma Bovary's infidelities when Meg started talking about her roommates. I asked where she lived.

"Pacific Beach. And you?"

"Point Loma."

"Yeah?"

"Who do you live with? I mean...do you live alone?" She sounded nervous.

I was equally nervous when I answered her. "No...I live

with...my...boyfriend."

Meg's face turned white. She almost shouted. "You...you mean...you are going out with...a guy?! A...man?!"

"Yeah, his name's Kevin." Not that she really cared; I just couldn't think of anything else to say.

With that, Meg was up and on her way out of the lecture hall. It happened fast. I sunk down in my seat as the professor looked in my direction. "Shit," I thought. "What happened?"

I felt incredibly guilty when I went home that night. Was I wrong to have sat with her all quarter? Did I lead her

on? What did I do wrong?

Wednesday arrived and I had to force myself to go to class. I didn't want to face Meg. But then, I thought, why? She was friendly to me. I was friendly to her. I didn't switch seats because of her sexual preference. Why start now?

Meg didn't sit next to me that day. Instead, she sat two rows behind me with another girl, and a guy I recognized as Joe Krismar. Meg didn't bother to whisper as she spoke to them.

"That's her there! She's straight! That bitch. How dare she just continue to sit next to me and not tell me?"

My ears strained as Joe hushed her up. "Meg, You're getting irrational. Maybe she was just being friendly."

"Friendly? She led me on."

"Christ Meg, how? By talking to you? Did you ever bother to ask her?"

"No. I didn't think I had to."

"Well. There you go. You shouldn't just go around assuming someone is gay just if they're being nice to you. What right do you have to assume that?"

I heard Meg mutter, "Bitch."

I didn't feel badly after that. In fact, I felt angry that Meg led campus crusades for equal rights for gays and she wasn't ready to accept straights. Here I sat, being chastised for being straight... and being friendly. Joe was right. What right did she have to assume I was gay? It was none of her business who I made love to.

Meg didn't sit next to me for the remainder of the quarter. I continued to sit in my old seat. My anger had subsided, and I began to understand a few things. On our last day of class, Meg approached me. I noticed she had new boots. Around one ankle was a metal dog collar...locked with a padlock. She looked me square in the face and said, "Hey, I'm curious, what's a nice girl like you doing going out with a guy? If you ever change your mind, look me up."

I just looked at her and smiled. "Meg, you work so hard to get gays accepted in a predominantly straight world. Maybe it would help if you learned to treat straights like you want to be treated. After all, people are just people, whomever they sleep with."

"Thanks, Steph, I'll remember that." She walked away. I couldn't tell if she was being serious or sarcastic.

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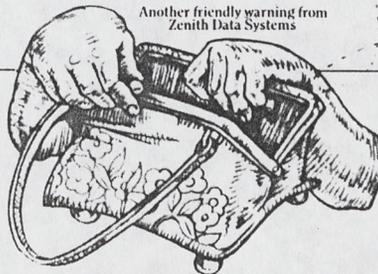
The Guardian

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# SAPPHO SPEAKS

The Lesbian and Gay Quarterly Journal at UCSD

December 1984

## OUT ON CAMPUS

-Interviews with four openly gay UCSD students

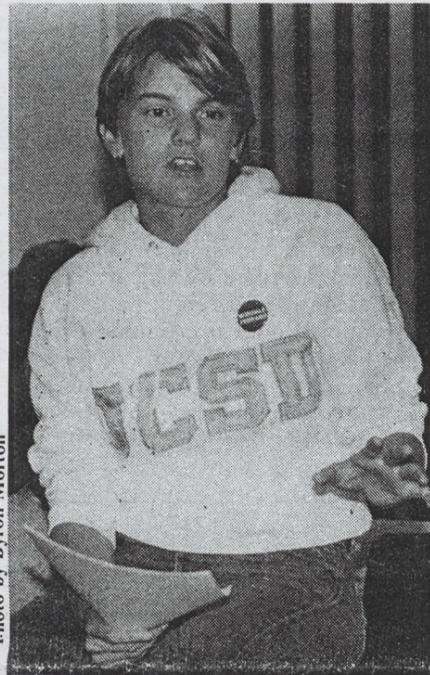


Photo by Byron Morton

**Micki Archuleta**  
A.S. Council

*Sappho Speaks:* You chose to be out as a gay person on this campus. Why did you make that choice, and has it caused any problems?

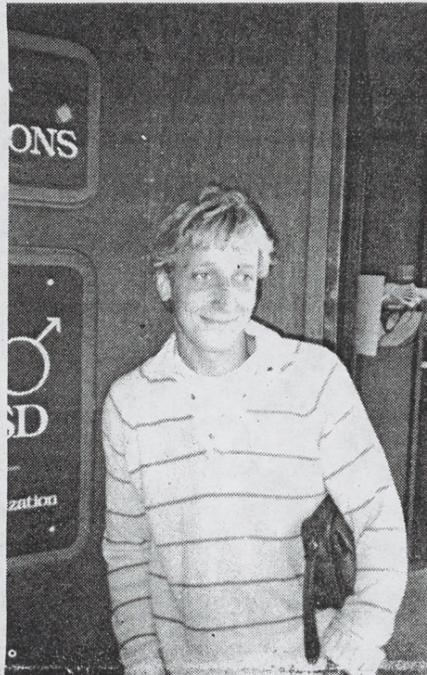
**Micki Archuleta:** I figured since my Mom knew, it really didn't matter who else knew. That's what it boils down to. When I was younger--I'm pretty young, only 22--but I started college when I was sixteen at Fresno State. When I was there, I hid, I pretended to be straight. I had friends on that campus who were gay, but we didn't tell anybody. People would say, "Oh, how's your boyfriend?" and I'd say, "I don't have one." You didn't say, "I have a girlfriend though," you just didn't bring those things up. I just found that it made my life hard. I was living with the fact that nobody knew and I had to be secretive and I had to do this and I had to do that. I am such an honest person, that it hurt me to do that. It really gave me bad feelings in myself and about myself, so I just said forget it. You know the old saying, "Fuck'em if they can't take a joke." I'm happy with myself. If they can deal with me, fine. If they can't, fine. But I'm not lying to anybody. I'm comfortable now because I'm not hiding anything from anyone.

I heard a joke once, it said, "What's better, being Black, or being gay?" and the answer was, "Being Black, because that way you don't have to tell your parents." Being gay, you're faced with that, with having to tell people. You tell everybody, or you don't tell everybody.

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**Carlos Nelson**  
LAGO co-chair

*Sappho Speaks:* Why did you take on the co-chairship of LAGO?

**Carlos Nelson:** For ten years of my life I was in the closet. That was a very painful experience. At 11 I realized I was gay and it was not until I was 21 that I actually started meeting other gay people and letting my friends know I was gay. Those ten years were absolute terror. Adolescent years are a very important time in most people's lives. For me it was hell every day because I was gay and at the time I thought my family and friends wouldn't accept me.

So that's why I'm involved in LAGO. I don't want other people to go through what I did. All the way up to 21 I had no one to talk to, I had no place to go, mostly out of my own fear. I didn't know what was going to happen.

The reason I work for LAGO is to provide a place for people to go as a social outlet. Gay people like to get to know other gay people because we have a lot in common. We're almost like brothers and sisters. We grew up with similar experiences. Also, I think gay people are pretty oppressed in our society, and I'm usually a political person. So being part of LAGO enables me to pursue gay rights.

However, that's not all I work for. For example, I also like to think of myself as an environmentalist. Also, in working for gay rights I work for the rights of Black people, of women, of Asian people, of Latinos. But right now, gay rights are most important to me and is what most affects my life.

**SS:** You said that you went through terror and hell for ten years. Can you describe what that means?

**CN:** Sure. The example that a lot of gay people give is this: Pretend everyone in your society is homosexual, and you are

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**Kevin Ward**  
LAGO co-chair

*Sappho Speaks:* How long were you at UCSD before you came out?

**Kevin Ward:** One year and two quarters. Freshman year was a blast. It was my favorite straight year. I came to college, moved out. I did the typically straight things. I partied a lot, met a lot of people, got into the college life. It was really enjoyable. I thought, "Wow I'm out on my own."

Then, the second year I moved off campus. It sort of hit me that life is not just fun, it's not just college, that you have to deal with reality. I really had to start thinking about life. My head wasn't in the clouds anymore.

By winter quarter of my sophomore year, most of my friends had moved away and transferred to different schools. There were only a couple left that I was really close to. I started taking long drives and getting really depressed.

**SS:** What were you depressed about?

**KW:** Being in the closet. That's essentially what it came down to. I felt alone. All my friends had left, so I felt alone. This made me concentrate on the fact that I was also alone because no one knew I was gay. I had no one to talk to about being gay.

**SS:** What did you want to talk about?

**KW:** Oh, anything! I remember especially when I was in high school, I'd be watching TV and I'd want to say, "God that guy's cute!" I always wanted to be able to say that to someone. You know, the simple things were what I was beginning to feel badly about not being able to do. I didn't feel I could say anything.

So by ninth week of Winter quarter, I finally decided to go to the LAGO Support Group. It was in USB, right upstairs from a class I had that ended right before the group started, so I had

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**Sharon Chandler**  
Women's Resource Center

*Sappho Speaks:* How long have you been at UCSD?

**Sharon Chandler:** Calendar time five years, but I've only been in school three and a half of the five years.

**SS:** Why didn't you go continuously?

**SC:** Well, the half is because when I started, I came in the middle of the year. I also took a year off from school.

**SS:** Why did you take a year off from school?

**SC:** Burn out.

**SS:** What does that mean?

**SC:** It was school. I didn't want to study any more, I didn't want to be a student any more. I wanted to go out and be a real person.

**SS:** And what do real people do?

**SC:** Go to work, pay the rent, party when you come home from work.

**SS:** What are your feelings about being here at UCSD?

**SC:** School is a transition state. It's getting me where I want to go, and it's something I have to do to get to where I want to be. I don't like it, I don't like going to school, I don't particularly like being a student, but it's something that I have to put up with to do what I want to do with my life.

**SS:** What do you want to do with your life?

**SC:** I want to do research. I want to work in a laboratory and do research.

**SS:** What sort of research?

**SC:** I don't know yet. One of the things that I'm seriously thinking about doing is female hormonal imbalance, which is essentially what happens to your body when you go through PMS, and what causes cramps, and the biochemistry behind it. If I can find out what makes it happen, maybe I can find out how to make it stop.

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## LETTERS

Lesbophobic  
Lanthier

Dear A. Lanthier,

I am writing in regard to your letter to *Sappho Speaks*, which was included in the Spring 1984 issue. I had planned to write long before, but was so irritated by your ideas that I put it off for a long while.

First of all, no one I know is surprised that gay men like women, straight women, that is. I feel that you misrepresent the many friendships of this sort by assuming there is a need to articulate those bonds. However, it is also no secret that gay men and lesbians have a hard time getting along and your letter explains clearly why this is true for me in regard to you.

You start off by saying that you are writing a "Love Letter to Women." But then as the letter develops, I see that you've narrowed that to straight women, and dropped the lesbians off by the side road. I resent this condensation of women into straight women, and your association of all that it means to be a woman with being a straight woman. You are mistaken as well if you think

that just because a woman is straight, she isn't going to insist on talking about feminism or growing up and getting your head on, things you might want to sneak out of the room instead of listening to. I think you're being stereotypical and lesbophobic by assuming that you can't get along with a woman because she loves women and well that just blows you away. As a lesbian I am very close to several gay men, in spite of this difference. If one discusses relationships on a higher level, more philosophically, it's possible to learn from each other. We open our eyes to each other, understand male and female distinctions, and become friends.

I am also infuriated that in the end of your letter you actually usurp the position of lesbians in claiming your nostalgic love for a grandmotherly nurturing grandmother, and a traditionally loving mother. This bothers me immensely in the way you seem to think that not only do you love men, but you love women better than women can. I am insulted and feel ignored. In your description of your mother and grandmother, you also make the women seem so traditional, so much like women are "supposed to be." Let me tell you that I know older women who do

more that shoot off a few dirty words. I know women who rob banks, lead organizations and become millionaires, or become Democratic candidates for vice-President of the United States. I feel that you want to keep women subservient by your refusal to acknowledge anything by our most passive participation in life.

I think you should realize that many lesbians feel gay men are the most misogynist and anti-feminist men of all. Since you don't really need women, and you'd be just as happy without them, you don't concern yourself with our difficulties. This is dangerous for you because we make up much of your life. We are everywhere. You're hurting yourself by your ignorance of this part of yourself, your world.

In closing, I'd like to suggest some women authors who do not theorize a lot but make you feel at one in heart with them. Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex, Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*) is excellent. Susan Griffin and Andrea Dworkin are important, but perhaps too much for you presently. Betty Friedan is a conservative feminist who wrote *The Feminine Mystique* and *It Changed My Life*. There is also a book called *For Men Against Sexism* that I highly

recommend- the author slips my mind. With love and concern.

Debbie Mikuteit  
a nice, a stubborn  
radical lesbian feminist

Fundamentally  
Misguided

My dear Editor:

I can't believe the "Reverend" Dorman Owens and his guerrilla forces in Santee call themselves Christians. Throughout the summer I marvelled at their insistence that they were doing the "Christian" thing by persecuting women's centers and homosexuals.

Persecution-wasn't that one of the things Christ was fighting? Christ advocated love- reach out and love your neighbor. I'm sorry; I haven't read much of the New Testament, but I don't recall in Mark or Matthew reading that Christ advocated banishment, hatred, or persecution. I do remember that he said something to the effect of "he who is without sin may cast the first stone." I would like to challenge any of Owens' group to claim they have never sinned.

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## EDITORIALS

## Don't hire a feminist

It has always bothered me that I am not allowed to take off my shirt at the beach when it is hot and all the men around me are bare chested. I would feel so much more free and comfortable if I could do so as well. Yet if I did, not only would I run the risk of having men eye me or make comments, I would also get arrested.

I believe that there is nothing wrong with my breasts or any breasts, and that this puritanical attitude about our bodies contributes to the sexual repression which leads to misogynist pornography and rape. Society's attitude makes people shudder or salivate when they see women's breasts in public; it's not the breasts themselves. We need to get past the sexuality and find the naturalness, ordinariness, and beauty of our bodies.

Recently, my on-campus employers informed me that I must wear a bra to work. They said it was because I "looked bad," and that I was "distracting the other employees."

My initial reaction was embarrassment. I thought I was wrong for not wearing a bra. I became very aware that everyone, including management, had been paying close attention to my breasts.

Then I realized what was happening. There I was, ashamed of my body--my feminist body, my beautiful little tits, which I had just learned to love just as they were. I had begun to feel that my body was okay, and suddenly that had changed.

My next emotion was outrage. Nobody asked men to wear undershirts. How dare my employers tell me that I must bind myself because of course every man can not and should not control himself when he sees unbound breasts. And of course it would be my fault. Shame on me for distracting them.

This society asks women to control themselves; it never asks men. In fact, it is the job of the woman to control the man. Women have always had to draw the line of when to stop sexually, while the man must persist or be labeled gay. If a woman is raped, there is a feeling that she must have been asking for it (especially if she wasn't wearing a bra).

After this, I began to think about other issues of sexism at my workplace. There are two colors of uniform shirts: dark brown, a powerful color, worn by both supervisors and men, and tan, a soft color, worn by women. The shirts are also of different styles and materials. Why do they tell me to wear a bra, yet force me to wear a tight-fitting, clinging, light colored shirt? I asked for a "men's" shirt instead of the "women's," but was flatly refused.

There I was, thinking sexual discrimination didn't happen on campus, that I would only have to worry about it happening to me out in "the real world." I was wrong. All I had to do was look. There are many women here at UCSD who think like I did, that discrimination doesn't exist any more, at least not here in this elite society. All it would take for them to change their mind would be to look at what is really happening here. This is how we become feminists. The next step is joining together to change things like this in our daily lives.

At work, I feel alone and helpless. But my fight is just beginning, and I won't give up. I will not let my employers oppress me or discriminate against me using humiliation as a tool. If you are an employer and wish to enforce such practices as the ones my employers do, then don't hire a feminist. She will only cause you problems.

-Sharon Moxon  
co-editor

## Help thy neighbor

I walked into a bathroom on campus the other day and saw something that I hoped would not still be there. "Aids--Anally Injected Death Sentence" staring me in the face as I closed the bathroom stall.

We're talking about human beings. People who have contracted a disease. People who are facing the end of their lives. They are the same people with the same right to human dignity that they had before they contracted AIDS. There is no justification, moral or otherwise to deny them this.

It is reprehensible, though unfortunately not surprising, that the Bible Missionary Fellowship from Santee has used AIDS as an opportunity to attack the humanity and worth of fellow human beings on the basis of morality. In their counterdemonstration to the Gay Pride Parade early in the summer, I saw a placard saying "AIDS-- God's Pest Control." AIDS was being used as a rationalization for hatred in the name of God.

AIDS is not about hatred. AIDS cuts through to basic human concerns-- living, loving, dying and fear.

The Fellowship's repressive beliefs and confrontational tactics have not brought them closer to their goals. And they have earned the disapproval of the religious mainstream.

In a response to Fellowship demonstrations, the San Diego County Ecumenical Conference, which represents 101 local Catholic and Protestant denomination churches issued a statement. While maintaining that homosexuality in its physical expression is incompatible with Christian teaching, the statement said that "our members' groups, unlike the Fellowship, acknowledge that some persons have a psychological disposition toward homosexuality and therefore none of our congregations condemn the homosexual person...we do not see homosexuality as the gravest of all sins...nor do we believe that God judges homosexuals more severely than other humans."

The Ecumenical Conference, then, believes that being gay is not the problem. They believe that choosing to live a lifestyle that is natural to you, instead of denying it, is.

I'm not thrilled that the Ecumenical Conference continues to believe that homosexual expression is a sin, but I respect their integrity in letting their God do the judging. Unlike the Bible Missionary Fellowship, they have not taken to the streets as self-appointed deities.

I cannot object to the Ecumenical Conference's right to believe what they will. It's what I'm asking for, after all.

Despite thousands of years of oppression in the name of religion, I cannot say I object to religion. Religion helps some people get through life and deal with death. People do a lot of good things in the name of faith and God.

A donor to the Aid for AIDS organization in Los Angeles gave because he is a Christian. He wrote, "I, as a straight 67 year old widower and Silverlake resident, would like to donate my interest check (\$721.10) from my money assets to your blessed and godly cause and undertaking."

"I am not aware of the Gay world, but am a Christian and my heart cries for your monumental Christian cause..."

"I am, though, very sad that not more of your gay brothers and sisters who have made themselves rich...do not at least contribute to this godly cause..."

Help thy neighbor? Not such a bad idea.

-Russell Lewis  
co-editor

Interviews continued from front page

## Archuleta

Now if you don't tell everybody, then maybe your reputation's fine, but inside, it hurts. It hurts to always be hiding. Whereas if you tell anybody, maybe you have a bad reputation, maybe not. In this day and age it's not real major. But I'm just a lot happier with myself now, since people know.

Another reason I came out is because people have this idea: The Gay Woman. She weighs 180, 190, she chews tobacco, she has zits all over her face, she doesn't wear any deodorant, she wears scuzzy jeans that she doesn't wash but once a month, she has black horn-rimmed glasses, red hair, freckles all over the place, and she's ornery and she cusses all the time, and she hates men. She abhors men. Cannot stand them.

A lot of people, including a lot of women on this campus, because they've grown up in upper-middle class surroundings, have this concept of the gay woman. But that's not it at all. I'm going to be conceited here, but I'm not bad looking. I may not be the prettiest girl on campus, but I'm not bad looking. I weigh 120, and I don't hate men. I like men, I have plenty of friends that are men, I just love women. That's the only thing that differentiates my sexuality.

I think that a lot of the reason that homophobia exists is because of this image of the gay woman, and by coming out, I wanted to try and shatter that image a little bit, and say, look, look at me, I'm not going to try to jump you in an alley, I'm not scary looking, I'm not ugly. Hopefully, if more people realize that more of the people that they don't think are gay, are gay, then maybe they'll stop being afraid of us.

Also, a lot of girls that have this idea, as soon as you tell them that you're gay, that you're after them. Okay, here I'm going to be vain. I've had girls who were fat and dumpy and ugly, as soon as they found out I was gay, swore I was chasing them around, and were scared of me. It was like, "Oh no, she's gay! Get her away from me!" Like I'm going to chase anything that's female and on two legs. And that's wrong--I have taste. That really bothers me.

Another misconception they have because of their image of the gay woman is that we're all perverts. They think I'm going to attack little children and every straight woman I can find. Well, I've got news for them! I did sleep with one or two straight women in my time. And you know what? They're flakes.

SS: What do you mean by that?

MA: I mean that you get hurt, or they get hurt. That's all there is to it. Because I'm regular, just like any regular person, and I go into a relationship, and I sleep with someone, and, you know, I'm not sure if I want to get married right then, that day. When you sleep with a straight woman, either she falls in love with you because you're the first woman she's ever been with, or she wants to have nothing to do with you and won't talk to you anymore because she's afraid of what she's done, and that hurts you. So as far as I'm concerned, it's a no-win situation, and I won't touch straight women. I'm perfectly content to go out and find other gay women. There are plenty out there, there's no problem with that.

SS: What's your position on the A.S. council?

MA: I'm a Warren college representative.

SS: Why did you run for office?

MA: I was approached with the idea that the apathy on campus was the reason we were having the political problems we

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## Nelson

not. Also, the society is also very anti-homosexual. As a result, you grew up having to hide your sexuality, something which is real important to you when you're an adolescent. You have to hide it from your family, from your friends, from your religion. That's what it is like growing up gay. Being gay is not like being Black or Jewish, where there is a family or a subculture to offer support. Nor are there any roots to look back on and find comfort in, knowing that there are and were others like you. Gay people don't have any support. As a result, we often feel very isolated.

SS: Well, how did your family react when you came out?

CN: Had I told my family when I was 16 or 18, it would have been terror. My mother wouldn't have accepted it, my brothers and sisters would have been very reluctant to accept it. But, as we all grew older we also grew closer. So, when I was 21, I went to my mother feeling very good about myself and explained to



her that I'm gay. She reacted very well, a lot better than I thought she would. She accepted it, which is about all I can ask for. My brothers and sisters all accept me for what I am, and they don't think that anything is wrong with me because of it. If anything, my disclosure made us closer, because I opened up a big part of myself to them.

SS: I understand you were at Stanford before coming here.

CN: I wasn't a student there, but I was active in their Gay and Lesbian Alliance. The gay student union there is not just for Stanford students, but for the community as a whole. So anyone could go there. There were a lot of junior college students as well as Stanford students. I was a junior college student. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance at Stanford is a valuable resource in the community. The University recognizes it as a valuable resource.

SS: How did that organization differ from a more exclusively on-campus organization like LAGO?

CN: Well, I think that the organization at Stanford, because it's open to people in the community, gives gay men and women in the community a place to go besides some of the more traditional gay meeting places. Also, the group was much more effective because of the large number of people involved. Stanford also provided a more intellectual atmosphere for gay people to gather for social events.

Stanford's Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLAS) is more political than LAGO.

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## Ward

no excuses for not going. It was in classroom 'B' of one of those rooms that are split into an 'A' and 'B', and there was a class in 'A'. I thought, 'Shit, why the hell does there have to be a class in 'A'?'

I finally walked in. I was so nervous. I didn't talk much, but I walked out of the meeting thinking, 'Oh my god, Wow!' I went home, got back to my apartment and there were all these straight people there. I went to my room for a second, and all of a sudden the phone rang. It was my mother saying that my Dad was in the hospital.

SS: Oh, Jesus. What a night!

KW: Yeah, it was. Oh god! The next day my sister calls and says, 'Kevin, it's serious. You'd better get up here right away.' My dad almost died. What an omen!

SS: An omen? What do you mean? It didn't go well with your parents when you came out to them?

KW: It didn't go well with my dad at all. A year ago July, I went to LA for my best

friend's birthday. The next day I decided to tell my parents I was gay. I got them both together--they're divorced--and that was wierd. I learned a valuable lesson: don't have divorced parents get together when you tell them you're gay.

My father can be a stereotypical male, and when I told him he didn't say a word. I really should have done it without his ex-wife and daughter there because he couldn't say anything with them there.

My mother took it really well. I feel that is because she's a singer in LA, and is exposed to lots of lifestyles in the music industry. My dad's in the music industry, too, but he's blind to lots of it.

SS: The music industry. You mean there's a lot of gay people in the music industry?

KW: Not more than other industries. They're just more likely to be "out."

So my dad didn't talk to me for four months. We have not been able to talk real well--we're finally getting to the point where we talk at all. Now, I'm the co-chair of LAGO, I'm a peer counselor for other gay students, and work on the gay telephone line. So, when my dad and I get together what do we talk about? Nothing! I can't say anything. He doesn't want to talk about the things that I'm doing with my life right now.

SS: Does he say he doesn't want to?

KW: No, but I can tell. He just doesn't respond. My mom doesn't really, either. We've had a few gay conversations, we've talked about gay issues. But, when I tell my mom about something gay in my life, she doesn't really get into it. She doesn't keep the conversation going. My

continued on page 9

## Chandler

SS: That's a very feminist thing to want to do.

SC: It's actually more selfish than feminist.

SS: But would you say that it's feminist?

SC: Oh, it's definitely woman-oriented, and it's woman-identified.

SS: Is most of your life woman-identified and woman-oriented?

SC: Absolutely. Not woman-exclusive, but woman oriented.

SS: Well, what do those phrases mean to you?

SC: They mean that the focus of what I do is Sharon first and then womanhood as a whole. I like to take a humanitarian approach to life, but when I look at the way the United States is, the world is, women have a lot further to go to become equal, and when there's true equality, then I can start dealing with humans as a whole. I only have so much energy, and I choose to put that energy into women.

SS: So specifically how does that affect your life?

SC: Well, I work at the Women's Resource Center, and I try and help women. I do things like try to find cures for female hormonal imbalance and try to eliminate the pain that comes with menstruating.

SS: What is your life like?

SC: I lead two lives. I really like to think that. I have a student mode. I put myself in student mode for ten months, when I'm in school, and student mode is real simple. Student mode is you go to class and you study, and you get through it, and you graduate. And within that, sure you can socialize, and sure you can have a good time, but my focus in life is school.

When I'm not a student, I look at things a lot different. There's a whole universe out there that's taking care of me.

SS: When you look at things a lot different, how do you look at things?

SC: If I'm a student, I have different focuses, different things take priority. It becomes more important to me to work on the little things that add up. I go out and buy flowers for my lover, or I'll clean the house, or I'll take my dog to the beach, or I'll go on a protest march or something more political. Just little things that are really important, that I don't have time for when I'm a student. I can't worry about washing the dishes when I have a physics test on Monday.

SS: What kind of work do you do at the Women's Resource Center?

SC: Everything. Everybody does everything at the WRC.

SS: How do you feel about being out at school?

SC: It makes it easier, being out to myself, being out to the world, I don't have to hide myself anymore. It's not something that I broadcast, I don't wear a sign on the back of my clothes that says, "Hi, Sharon Chandler, Dyke." It's nobody's business, but it's something that I'm really comfortable with.

SS: You've been here for five years. How aware of a place is UCSD?

SC: Oh, minimal, minimal! The intelligence on this campus is like...maybe it's because everybody's in student mode. And I go into student mode too when I'm a student, but there's a universal awareness that I think really exists, and you can call it god, or a supreme force, or karma, you can call it whatever you want, but as far as I am concerned, it's all one and the same. There's a protection in the universe that's taking care of the universe. Most of the

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## Bisexuality: Coming out twice

Karen Pickens

If you met me at work, chances are you would think I'm straight. If you met me at a bar, you might think I'm a lesbian. In both cases you would be mistaken.

Yes, I am an often misunderstood person: I'm bisexual. False assumptions by friends, co-workers and acquaintances are just some of my problems. Another is that frequently I am rejected by gays and straights alike. Also, there is the problem of satisfying my needs while still being fair to those close to me.

I have an open but serious relationship with a man. I have a difficult time letting people know I am polygamous and it is really okay with my boyfriend. I find it next to impossible to explain to people that my boyfriend and I both sleep with other women.

People do understand my situation eventually, through observation and stumbling conversations- "Oh yeah, Larry, he's my, um, boyfriend," said at a meeting of lesbians, or, to one of our straight friends, "Where did I go Saturday night? Well, I went dancing. Where? at a lesbian bar. Yes, Larry knows...he was there."

Upon learning I am bisexual, some people assume I must be promiscuous. I have heard bisexuals referred to as "people who will sleep with anyone they meet."

Being bisexual does not mean having

sex with everyone, just as being gay or lesbian does not mean sleeping with everyone of the same sex, and being straight does not mean sleeping with everyone of the opposite sex. I am choosy about my lovers. I just have twice as many people to choose among.

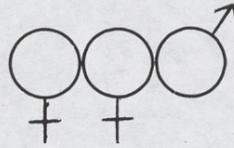
I realize gays have a similar problem convincing the straight world they are not all promiscuous. I am disappointed to find that some lesbians and gay men generalize about bisexuals, even though they complain when straights generalize about them.

Rejection is another problem faced by most lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. There is almost no workplace, community or school that does not have some people who are violently against homosexuality. Gays and lesbians can find acceptance within their own community, however.

Bisexuals are not completely welcomed by either the straight or gay communities. Straights see us as homosexuals; gays see us as indecisive, cowardly gays or straights who are just experimenting. Some straights think, "Well, if she can enjoy sex with men, why doesn't she take the easy route and give up women?"

In *Lesbian Nation*, Jill Johnston states, "Bisexuality is not so much a cop-out as a fearful compromise. Many women pride themselves on their bisexuality, claiming they happily have it both ways. But one half of those both ways is a continued service to the

oppressor, whose energies are thus reinforced to perpetuate the oppression of that part of the woman who would make it with another woman." Later she goes on, "Bisexuality is staying safe by claiming allegiance to heterosexuality."



Jill Johnston is an extreme example of a lesbian feminist, and the above was written over a decade ago, in the early 1970s. Most of my friends are not this extreme. But I have gotten the feeling from some of them that they think I am copping out by continuing to have relationships with men. Other friends think it's okay for people to be bisexual or straight, but they don't want to include such people in their inner social circle.

Rather than establishing separate societies for every imaginable type of person, I would rather we learn to accept differences in each other. It hurts me to feel excluded from the lives of lesbians because they feel I have it easier than they do. I disagree- I still have to come out to my friends. I have the added tension of coming out to my gay-friends as bisexual. I have to deal with homophobes, just as they do. I don't hide

behind my bisexuality- the struggle for gay rights is important to me. I find it sad that gays, who have been discriminated against for their sexuality, can do the same to bisexuals.

There is a gray area between the subject of bisexuality and the subject of monogamy versus polygamy. I have said that I do not consider myself promiscuous, yet to satisfy my desire for men and my desire for women in the same universe requires something beyond one steady relationship. When I had monogamous relationships with men, I still felt something missing from my life.

This is where I have the problem of satisfying my needs, while being fair to my lovers. I have to explain to potential lovers that they can never be the "one and only" for me. This does not mean that I don't care about them.

Many potential lovers of both sexes are put off by my refusal to tie myself down to one person. In order to be fair, though, I feel I must explain before getting involved.

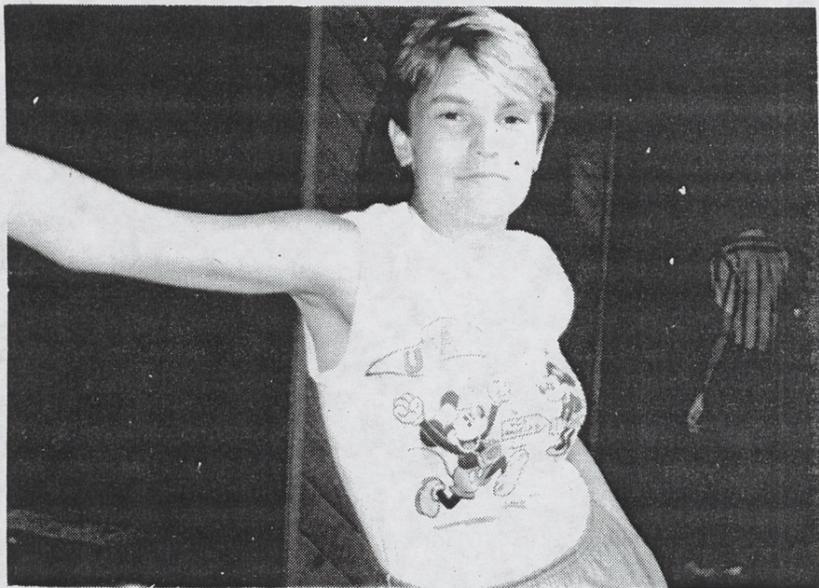
Even with all these difficulties, I do not regret being bisexual. My experiences have taught me a lot. I have learned that there are rotten men and nice men, bitchy women and wonderful women. I have met straights who are extremely open-minded, and gays who are bigots, as well as bigoted straights and open-minded gays. Most of all, I have had wonderful relationships with people - regardless of their gender.

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## Archuleta

continued from page 3

were, and people were going in and out of this institution not even caring about what happened here. A.S. elections were becoming a popularity contest instead of a really political thing. I thought I should not be apathetic. I should do my Christian duty.

**SS:** Does your being gay have anything to do with either your reason for running, or your office, or what you're doing now in the A.S.?

**MA:** I thought that would make a big difference, I thought it was important that gays on campus were at least represented, since we are part of this campus. That was part of the reason, and being a woman. I wanted to represent my community.

**SS:** How do you feel about the Associated Students, politically?

**MA:** I don't think of it as highly as I first did. That's because I went into it very idealistically, with very high morals.

I'm going to be a teacher. I don't need this position to help me get a job after I get out of college. It's not helping me any. As a matter of fact, it's just wasting my time and probably hurting my GPA. I'm not really getting anything out of it other than self-satisfaction, knowing that I'm trying. Things are screwed up enough in this world. I thought I should go out and do my part and pull my own weight and try to help things. That way, when I die, I can at least be on my death bed and think, "Well, I tried to better the world." That's the main thing I want when I die--to be able to say that I tried.

So I got into the A.S. with very high expectations. I realized what I was up against, but I thought I'd try. And I found that some of the other people in there are using it as merely a stepping stone for their careers. They don't give a damn. They have no conscience. Even people I ran on the same slate with, the progressive slate, are not as caring as I thought they were when we ran.

It's really unfortunate that the A.S. doesn't do what it could. Some of the people are just there for themselves--which is the main problem with the world today, in my eyes. Everyone thinks "me" instead of "we". That's basically how it is in the A.S. too. They have no sense of what is fair, they only try to be on the "right" side. They don't ever question their beliefs. There are exceptions, of course. There are other people in there who care, besides myself.

**SS:** What would you like to see the A.S. do?  
**MA:** I've thought a little bit about Reverend Owens, the leader of the fundamentalists from Santee, for instance. I think that affects everyone. Abortion--you know, it's not just anti-gay. I thought about bringing up

Reverend Owens, but I was advised that it probably wouldn't be a good idea.

**SS:** Why not?

**MA:** Because I was told that it would be dragging the campus and the A.S. into something that it didn't care about. It was an off-campus issue and the A.S. didn't want to be involved.

**SS:** What would you have wanted the A.S. to do?

**MA:** I was thinking of using the A.S., using my funds, to organize anti-demonstrations. To oppose those people by going outside Womancare, San Diego's feminist health-care clinic, and demonstrating. I talked to some people in Womancare and they said what they're trying to do now is organize and get people to picket against the picketers. I thought we on the A.S. could help with organizing or advertizing.

**SS:** So you see the A.S. as a body which can and should do more than just plan T.G.'s and other social things?

**MA:** Yes. Granted, that is not in the campus community, but forty-year-old women are not the ones getting most of the abortions. The women who get them are around sixteen to twenty-five. They're young. And it affects these women here on this campus.

When the Supreme Court justices kick the bucket, Ronnie's going to put new people in there and abortion's going to be outlawed in the United States. The only people who are going to be able to get abortions are people who have the money to pay for a doctor to do it or to go out of the country. All Ronald Reagan will accomplish by that, if he does it, is increase the welfare--there are going to be more welfare babies.

The people who want abortions and have the money to get them are going to do it. The people who don't have the money are the ones that are going to be hurt.

If the student body can have a Reaganbuster rally and deal with things on that scale, I think they should be able to go out and work on something that's happening right in their own community. I think it's important. Reverend Owens, to me, is the antithesis of any priest or reverend that is spoken of highly in the Bible.

I think it's a little bit coincidental that the arson of the abortion clinic in San Diego came right after an injunction was granted to keep Reverend Owens off their property. That's like book-burning. They aren't handling things the way God or the bible prescribes. You don't go out and shoot your enemies, you preach to them and use logic. All they've been doing is antagonizing.

One thing I'm glad of is that when Reverend Owens first appeared, leaders of the gay community made flyers and distributed them in the community which said to laugh at the "Fundies," just

ignore them, and I think that prevented a lot of conflict because it was early public education.

I'm afraid something's going to happen, I'm afraid somebody's going to shoot the guy. There's already been arson, this is not playing around any more. I'm afraid it's going to intensify.

When I first heard about the arson, I thought, "Fine. Let's go burn his church down in Santee." But then the rational me comes up and says, "No, Micki, you can't do that. That's wrong." But somebody else might feel that way and I'm just afraid this is going to get so out of proportion that somebody's going to die. And that's the way it always is, no one will do anything about anything until somebody dies.

**SS:** We're all sort of restraining ourselves from dealing with them and yelling back at them and all of that. Do you think there's an anger that's going to build up?

**MA:** Oh yeah. I have that anger building up inside me. I wasn't brought up going to church. I mean, I had a Grandpa that was a preacher, and my Grandma went to church every Sunday and Wednesday and Tuesday. But my Mom believes in reincarnation, so she raised me with the belief that God gave you a piece of himself, and it's your conscience, and you don't need any preacher or any church to tell you how to use that--you know. You were given that from birth and you know in your head that it's wrong or it's right. No one has to tell you.

*"I wish everyone would think about other peoples rights and needs."*

**SS:** What's the case with the Fundies? Don't they have a conscience?

**MA:** What their problem is, is they feel they're so right they have to force their beliefs on other people, which is wrong. George Orwell comes to mind, "All animals are created equal. But some animals are more equal than others."

**SS:** You said you wanted to be a teacher. What age level?

**MA:** I'm not sure. For a long time I thought high school would be really good. But then I thought, you know, being gay is going to be a problem. A girl in my class gets a "D", which she

deserves, but because I'm gay she's going to make it into an issue.

So maybe I'll have to teach at the university level. That would be okay, but it's not where my heart is, despite the bad wages high school teachers earn. I think that a lot of the problems in our educational system today are rooted in the high schools and earlier.

I want to teach literature. When I was in my senior year at school, I was sixteen years old and a pot-head. Granted, I got a "gold cord", but that's just because I had a good memory. I ditched classes all the time. The only thing that straightened me up was an English teacher I had in my senior year. I wasn't going to go to college but she made me think about it and turned that around.

At the high school level, Uncle Sam's still paying for it. Once you get past that, it comes out of your own pocket. I just think it's very important to let kids know that maybe they don't have the money, and they'll have to fight real hard, but it's worth it, and there are scholarships. To get them to think about what they want to do the rest of their lives. It's an important stage. A lot of kids need inspiration then, because it's a turning point. It's harder to go back once they're out of school for a few years.

I think that being gay is going to keep me from doing that, though. I'll probably end up at a city college rather than a university, because city colleges are where disadvantaged kids have to go first. Some of them will need a teacher like me to help them get ahead--a mentor. Maybe I'll get my car egged for being gay, but nobody's mother is going to come in and say she does't want me teaching her child because I'm a homosexual. Then we're back to the homosexual/pervert idea.

I'm not any different from most adults. I don't want to have sex with children. The only difference between me and somebody else my age is that I'm sleeping with women instead of men.

I think that the reason we have so much turmoil and trouble in our country is because of the "me, me, me" principle. If I could have one wish, it would be that everybody would think about other people's rights and needs. "Judge not, lest ye be judged." I wish everyone would listen to that. It would solve a lot of problems, like those between homosexuals and heterosexuals.

Some straight people say, "Well, it's okay if you're gay as long as you don't hit on me." Everyone needs to realize that it's okay what we are. We're all different--race, sexuality--we need more understanding and consideration. Stop thinking "me" and start thinking "we".

grove gallery

ceramics, graphics  
ethnic art, jewelry,  
collectables



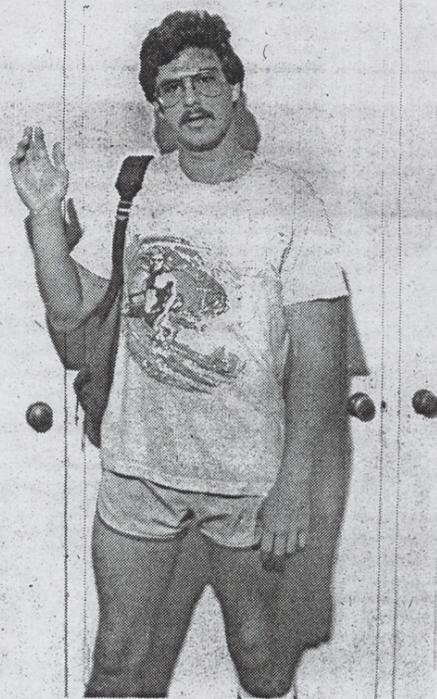
UC Crafts Center  
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# Do you know your stereotypes?

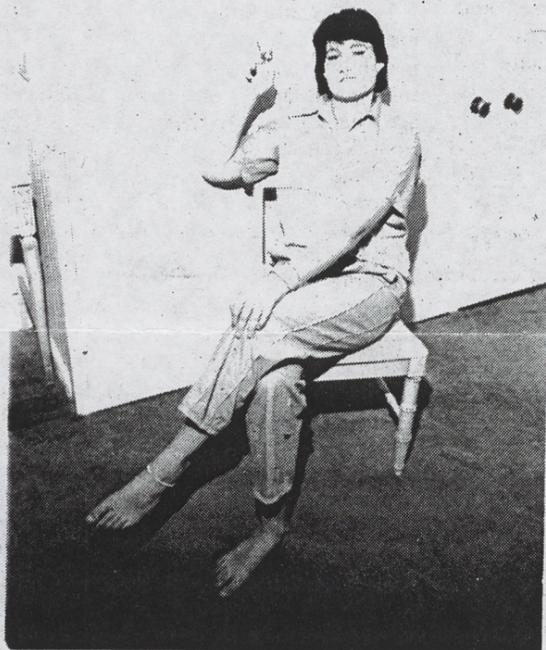
Here's your chance to prove it. And win prizes!

To play, identify both the male and female depictions of the stereotypes listed in the contest entry form on page 7, as well as the special category, "The real me." For example, if you decide that pictures 1 and 8 both depict "butch gay male", enter those numbers under the appropriate gender next to the category.

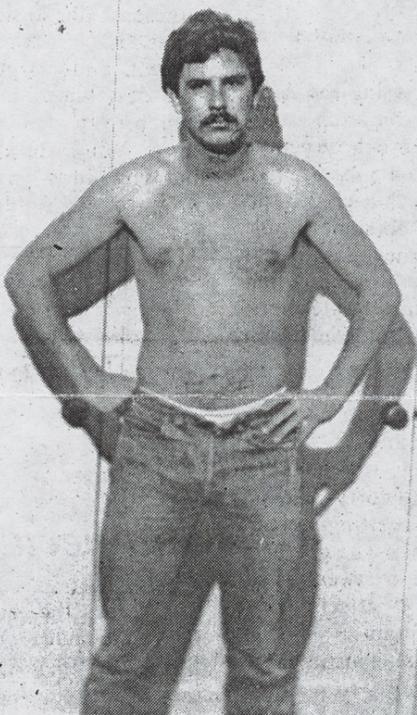
All correct entries received by January 31, 1985 will be placed in a drawing. The winner will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Groundwork Books, as well as a copy of *Gay Oppression and Liberation*, or *Homophobia: Its Causes and Cures*, a \$3 value. The winner's name will be printed in the next issue of *Sappho Speaks*.



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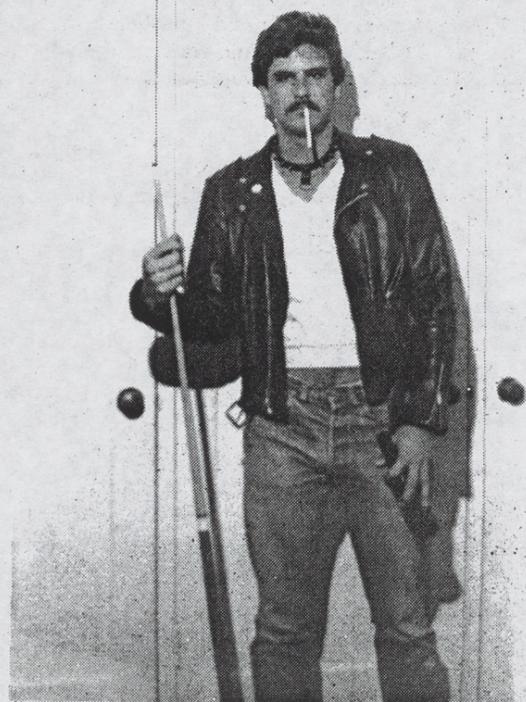
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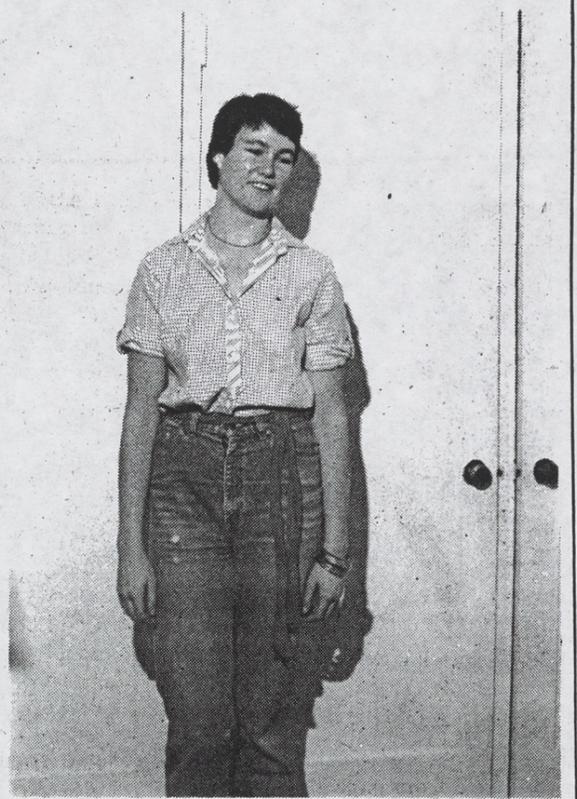
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14

**“Do You Know Your Stereotypes?”  
contest entry form**

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Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

	female	male
“Real Me”	_____	_____
Straight man	_____	_____
Straight woman	_____	_____
Butch gay male	_____	_____
Fem gay male	_____	_____
Butch lesbian	_____	_____
Fem lesbian	_____	_____





## Nelson

continued from page 3

SS: What sort of issues did they work on?

CN: It's difficult to think of an example right now. One that comes to mind is Stanford's discovery of the FBI spying on their group. They made a big deal in the community and the Bay Area. They exposed the foolishness of such an investigation and protested the action. Basically, they try to portray a positive image of gay people to the community. They also have a Speaker's Bureau, like we do here.

SS: Was there a lot of lesbian involvement in the student group at Stanford?

CN: From what I saw, they split some things up, like their weekly socials. On one night the lesbians had theirs and on another night the gay men had theirs. But for political events they worked together. But lesbians aren't always as active in gay groups as men are, at least not from my experience.

SS: Why do you think that is?

CN: I wish the women would be more involved. But the women apparently want to be more political and they feel that is lacking from LAGO. In the past, LAGO has been more of a social and a support organization. From what I understand the women would prefer

LAGO to be more of a political organization.

SS: Do you want LAGO to be more political?

CN: Definitely. I want LAGO to be more political, but the problem with being more political is that the people in LAGO aren't willing to stand out in Revelle Plaza and say "I'm from LAGO." A lot of gay men are like this. They're not willing to go out in Revelle and sit behind a table saying LAGO supports Mondale or something like that.

SS: Why is that?

CN: I don't know why. I don't know why people feel threatened by me asking for my civil rights. What's the difference between me going out to Revelle Plaza, setting up my table, and telling people I'm from LAGO and giving them information about what we do. What's the difference between me doing that for LAGO or me doing that for the Sierra Club? The difference is the response from the people walking by. I suppose some people feel threatened by my presence.

For me it's not such a big deal that people see that I'm gay; I don't care what people think about me or my way of life, as long as they don't violate my rights. But the point is that because we live in such a homophobic society, many are not willing to open themselves up to such a threatening situation.

I know someone reading this will reply that we shouldn't be flaunting our sexuality anyway. The answer to that is that we are not flaunting our sexuality. At least no more than non-gay people flaunt their sexuality. What we are doing is asking for those rights supposedly guaranteed to all Americans; we're asking to be treated equally and fairly, something we shouldn't have to do in this country anyway.

SS: So, why is there a difference between lesbians willing to do something like that and gay men not being willing to do it?

CN: I'm not sure, because I'm not lesbian. All I know for sure is from what's been told to me by the women members of LAGO. They say they want LAGO to be more political. I think that if the women who want LAGO to be more political came here and said "we're part of LAGO and we want to do this" then things would happen. But since I've been co-chair of LAGO nobody has put in the work to make it happen. I guess the best thing to do is for me to set something up myself. But if women want that to happen, they have to work on it. They have just as much right to set the course for this organization as I do. I'll support and take part in any political activities they want. But we need more dedication and commitment. I definitely want more women involved. Since the beginning of this year we have had more women involved. As a lesbian and gay organization we're much more effective and much more influential if we have women and men involved. I think it gives us more legitimacy.

SS: Are there positive things that LAGO has to offer that Stanford didn't have to offer, or is it handicapping to not be able to allow community members to be a part of LAGO officially?

CN: At our meetings, we do open ourselves up to the outside community. We don't advertise out in La Jolla so many people don't know we exist.

One drawback for LAGO's being an almost exclusively on campus group is that the youth in San Diego, that is people under 21, cannot take advantage of LAGO. I think we have a lot to offer them.

As far as Stanford versus LAGO, Stanford is a very well-run organization. They really know what they're doing.

When I came to LAGO, I used Stanford as a model. It is a model organization. I get many of my ideas from what I saw at Stanford.

LAGO is a much smaller organization. Stanford's weekly social meetings often draw fifty people. At their dances they might get close to a thousand people.

Their steering committee meetings have people who are very involved. GLAS is a well-respected organization whereas here at UCSD, among the non-gay student community, LAGO is often thought of as a joke. But if they saw what we're doing here they wouldn't think that at all. If they saw all the events we do, all the support services we offer, and our contribution to the gay community, they would see we're serious about what we do and the services we offer.

SS: Why do you think there's a difference between the organization at Stanford and the organization at UCSD?

CN: I think Stanford University offers more support to the gay students. Also people are more involved. Perhaps it's because Stanford has more to offer. They have a more comfortable office and meeting room for example. They have almost a whole building to themselves. When they have a social gathering it's in this huge room where people can go and feel comfortable because it's their room.

What we have at UCSD for our social hours is a classroom with windows all around. People feel too uncomfortable in there. But we do attract people to our events. They could be better but that's not to say they aren't good now.

SS: So the general atmosphere at Stanford is more comfortable and accepting for a gay person?

CN: It was comfortable for me. When I came out, I came out at the gay student union at Stanford. I felt very comfortable there. But I also think LAGO has a lot to offer to students here. And it's a good place for someone to start because we are designed toward those specific needs.

SS: Stanford is not one of the most politically liberal institutions. The Hoover Institute is there, for example. Is this a contradiction?

CN: I wouldn't say so. I wasn't a student there, so I can't remark on the general political atmosphere. But Stanford seemed more accepting than UCSD. For example, I knew gay people in fraternities. The frats knew these people were gay and there were no problems. Can you imagine an openly gay person in a frat at UCSD?

When I came to UCSD I expected to find something somewhat more liberal. When I searched the UC campuses looking for a place to go to school, I saw at UCSD flyers advertising gay roller skate day, or something like that. That was one factor that tilted me towards UCSD. I thought I'd be somewhat comfortable as a gay person here. It turns out that UCSD is a relatively conservative campus.

SS: Why do you think that so many people here feel uncomfortable about gay people?

CN: I think a lot of discrimination and gay jokes are based on ignorance. They don't know any gay people, or they think they don't know gay people.

I'm involved in the Speaker's Bureau, which is aimed at getting rid of that ignorance and perhaps showing people a realistic view of what gay people are like. SS: So tell us about your speaking experience.

CN: What I do here at UCSD is in conjunction with Psychological Services. We talk to classes in which homosexuality pertains to some course material. I've spoken to sociology

classes, philosophy classes and psychology classes.

We work on a question-and-answer format. Three or four gay and lesbian students go into a class and we tell them a little about ourselves. Then we leave it up to the class to ask questions, and they're never without questions.

SS: What do they ask?

CN: "What are you going to do about kids?" "How did your family react?" "Is there any conflict with your religion?" "How did you know that you were gay?" "How do you meet other people?" "What about AIDS?" "What's it like growing up gay?"

People are always interested. They're always very kind. There might be a couple of jokers in the back making comments and laughing to themselves, but there's never anyone who is really rude about it. I think we open a lot of eyes. I think people listen to us and they hear the story from gay people who are not very unlike themselves. I think they grow up very quickly.

Besides the classes, we also speak to Resident Advisors from all the colleges. It's more like a seminar, so they can learn to deal with gay students who are living in the dorms, such as someone who is gay and having problems with his roommates, or a group of people thinking that someone is gay. Or how to help someone who is having a problem dealing with their sexuality. We try to let the RAs know how to deal with situations like this. A situation can become real explosive for a group or for an individual gay person who may just be coming out and having to deal with a gay related topic in the dorms. It's good to have RAs who know how to deal with the situation without too much trouble.

Besides that, it's good for the RAs to get to know gay people, because it will make it easier for them to deal with gay people in the dorms. If someone comes up to them and says, "I'm gay, what should I do?" and they've never met a gay person, they may be shocked; if they're shocked and freaked out by the situation they're shocked and freaked out by the situation. If they know gay people and they're open about it, they will be better able to help the person.

SS: What kind of advice do you give the RAs?

CN: First the best thing they can do for a gay student who is having difficulty is to refer him or her to the gay peer counselors or to psych services. These people are better able to give the support that is needed.

And then they ask questions. A typical situation they ask about is what to do when one roommate is gay and the other isn't, and there seems to be a problem with them living in the same room. In general, it turns out that the problems are often with the non-gay roommate and not with the gay roommate. The solution is to teach the non-gay people to be more accepting of people's differences.

SS: What do you think would be different in your life if you weren't gay?

CN: Well, I consider myself a very liberal person. Whether that's because I'm gay or not, I don't know, because I've always been gay, so I can't tell how I would have been if I wasn't gay. Besides, being gay wouldn't determine one's conservatism or liberalism. I know some very conservative gay people.

What would be different? I wish it could be the same. I wish there were no differences. If non-gay people didn't make such a big deal about people who are gay, if we could just be accepted, there would be no problems. I don't go around flaunting it, I don't go around wearing buttons or t-shirts saying, "Hey, I'm gay." But I'm not about to hide it.

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munchies?

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## Ward

continued from page 3

sister's the same way.

But, my dad is really a lot worse. I wrote him a letter on Fathers Day. I told him, 'I love you very much, but I don't want to talk to you. I don't want to have these worthless conversations. I see them as being worthless. We talk about trivial things that I really don't want to get into.'

So, it's partly my decision that my dad and I really don't talk much. I'm realizing right now in my life I'm very much apart from my family. Every time I go up to LA to visit my parents and relatives, it becomes a little more apparent that I need to live my own life.

**SS:** Well, that's fairly common for people in your age group.

**KW:** It is. I find a lot of people go through that. My next older brother, who's incredibly straight, went through the exact same thing. He's starting to come out of it now that he's out of college and has a career going. I feel that eventually I will be able to start getting into my family, but not now. I'm really divorcing myself from my family for the time being.

I care about my family a lot, but I really don't want to see them, because they can't relate to my life. And that's understandable, because most people can't relate to what their kids are going through in college, let alone their gay kids. I feel kind of badly about it, but deep down I realize it's just temporary.

**SS:** Do you feel there's such a thing as "growing up gay"?

**KW:** Obviously I can only talk for myself. Everyone comes out differently. Some people don't even realize they're gay until they're in college. I realized I was gay very early on. I never felt that I was straight. I didn't even try to say, 'Yes, I like women.' In grade school I liked girls- you know, they were fun. I'm not the type of person who can suddenly remember realizing I was gay. It was a natural progression. I liked men and then realized there was a name for liking men. So, I definitely feel that I did grow up gay. By high school I had identified myself as being gay, but I kept it to myself.

But, growing up gay is not just fitting gay stereotypes. My best friend and I met each other in fifth grade and we were a lot alike. We didn't like the team sports and I thought he was gay when we were growing up because he fit some of the stereotypes that I felt I fit.

Since then I have come out to him and found that he's straight. He really is. I feel that those stereotypes are so inappropriate. I have a lot of gay friends

who are into team sports and who are what I would consider stereotypically straight.

**SS:** What was high school like for you?

**KW:** It was horrible, I went to an all male high school. It was very repressive. It was Catholic. Most everyone there fit into the mold that I don't particularly like. The straight, career-oriented, young successful crowd that was preparing for the suburban life, the conversations were always about things I didn't like.

I almost wish I didn't identify myself as being gay so early. It always set me apart from other people and I was always comparing myself negatively to other people. I felt I had this incredible burden. I was very unhappy with regard to my sexuality. It seemed to dominate my thoughts and my whole life. It seemed to structure everything. Everything had to do with the fact that I was gay.

**SS:** Well, what about now that you're so active in the gay community at UCSD? Doesn't being gay dominate your life?

**KW:** Well, the reason that I am so out and so actively involved is because I was a person who identified myself early and thought about it so long, and it dominated my life in such a negative sense that now I want it to dominate my life in a positive sense. I figure for at least seven years I realized I was gay, and didn't do anything about it. So I figure that it will be about seven years that I will be active in gay community work, just to sort of offset my childhood.

**SS:** What do you want long term?

**KW:** Ideally, I would not have to worry about gay issues, and get on with my life. I'm career-oriented. I don't know about relationships. I'd like to have someone to share my life with.

**SS:** Well, you said that one of the things you don't like about the people in high school was that they were career-oriented, but now you say that you are career-oriented.

**KW:** Well I really want a career. But, back in high school what I didn't like about the people was that they automatically sought after what they were told they would want. A house, a wife, kids and a job. Because I was always questioning everything, I said 'Screw that! I want to do just what I want to do!' Now that I've come out and thought about a lot of things, I do want a career. But, I really don't feel that it's just because I've been told I want it. I don't want the lifestyle. I want some parts of it. I want a career and I want some intimacy with someone. I don't want the house and the wife and the kids.

**SS:** Do you think that process of questioning everything worked in your favor?

**KW:** Oh, definitely. For the last year, at least, I've said, 'Thank God I'm gay!' I don't look back fondly upon my childhood, but it forced me to think about a lot. I feel I have a lot of my shit together, whereas a lot of people go through life being told what to do and want and they never have to question anything. They're not given the chance to think about things and decide what they really want. I've met a lot of people going to college who, after two years, realize that this is not what they want to do. College was simply the next step in the program for them.

**SS:** Why did you become active in LAGO?

**KW:** Well, there's a lot of gay people on campus who don't get involved. I believe the reason for this is because they didn't go through the coming out process like I did. The other co-chair, Carlos Nelson, in fact, came out somewhat similarly. We identified ourselves early. Then we went through a lot of time struggling with being gay in life. Finally, we decided

to come out. For so long, we were repressed and we got angry. We realized that a lot of things needed to be done for the gay community and for gay students.

At the end of summer, I was thinking about the responsibility of being the co-chair of LAGO and of all the time it would take, but I remembered my childhood and realized I had to do it. If I didn't do it, somebody else might do it, but somebody else might not do it. We need strong leadership and people who really feel the drive.

## "Thank God I'm Gay!"

**SS:** What's on the LAGO agenda?

**KW:** This year, one thing I want to do is to get those already "out" gay students who aren't involved with LAGO involved. Whether or not they're involved with LAGO business is not as important as getting a network going on campus. I want to get a lot of the gay students on campus to get to know each other. One thing that's made me feel so good is knowing a ton of gay people on campus. It's really a neat feeling to walk around campus and see all those gay faces.

In order to do this, I think one thing which LAGO will concentrate on this year is the weekly social hour, which was started last year. This has the advantage of getting 'out' students involved and getting a wider network going on campus.

Another thing is to help other gays come out. Looking back, I didn't know how to do it. One thing that would have helped me, but which didn't exist at the time, was a gay phone service. So, when Steve Brady of Psychological Services asked me to help in setting up the phone service that we have now, I thought that was great. I would have used it when I was in the closet. I really want to concentrate on maximizing that program, so that a lot of students who need to talk can do so and feel better about themselves.

We also need to let the non-out gay people on campus know that we're here and to really publicize that fact, even though this might have some negative effects. It's possible that the more people who know we're here, the more we might get harassed. Last year, that was a concern of mine, but now I say 'screw it! I'm not going to worry about getting harassed.' Especially since the extent of harassment has always been an occasional prank phone call. Those other people- those people who are in the closet- are worth it.

**SS:** There hasn't been a lot of harassment. Is it because there are not a lot of out people on campus, or is it because there's a lot of student apathy?

**KW:** Oh, there's a lot of student apathy. That's one thing that a lot of the non-out gay students don't realize. A lot of students don't give a damn who's gay. They've got their own problems. They don't care about student politics and organizations or the alternative media. If I'm as out as I am and nothing's happened to me, then it must be OK.

18 and up Welcome

## Gay Nights

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## Chandler

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people on this campus not only don't conceive that this thing exists, but they can't figure out that they're part of it. The people I choose to associate with are much more aware of it.

SS: Does that relate to being aware of other things, like personal power and equality?

SC: It all comes down to the same thing. It sounds so mystical and cliché, but I've found in my own experience that it's really true, and I hate to be trite about it, but the universe is taking care of me, and I'm taking care of the universe. And I'm either taking care of the universe by taking care of me, or by doing things for other people. Like the Women's Center people, like the LAGO people. They've got a higher consciousness; consciousness is raised. They've gotten out of that young republican "let's wave the grand ol' flag and everything will be great as soon as the inflation rate drops down." There's more to life than inflation. There's more to life than UCSD politics, or getting an "A" on my

final. When you're a student, these things are higher priorities. But people here don't realize that there's more than that. They think that's all there is.

SS: What are your observations of this past election year?

SC: American politics are bullshit. On a practical level, we don't really have a voice because of the electoral college. On a personal level, it has to go grassroots before we can bother with the presidency. And granted it's important and yes, everybody should get out there and vote, but until you can start at this school, start in your neighborhood, nothing will happen. You start at the grassroots level, and teach your next door neighbor that because I'm gay I'm alright, or because the person next door to me is a Mexican-American it doesn't matter, or because I'm from a different social structure, until you can do that on an intimate level, then nationwide politics have no point. Once it's established a grassroots base, it's going to automatically infiltrate the political system anyway.

SS: It's been a long time that political systems have been going on, and that hasn't seemed to happen.

SC: Well, have you ever heard about the

"Age of Aquarius"? God, this whole thing sounds so spiritual and it's really not me. Honest to god, I'm a pre-med student with a hard core science background. It's just that I don't deny this part of my life. I try to combine them both. This part of my life doesn't get to talk much because they don't ask you about the universe on bacteriology finals (giggle).

SS: Tell us about the Age of Aquarius.

SC: The Age of Aquarius theoretically is an era of universal learning. And one of two things is supposed to happen. Either everybody learns, and everybody's consciousness is raised, and we pass through this Age of Aquarius in full-blooming glory, or we destroy ourselves. And by all astrological calendars, and by people I've talked to, the time era we're in now has been classified the Age of Aquarius.

I witness it daily. Daily. I see people like myself or you or people in the Women's Center, or people that are more aware of external forces, talking to and teaching people that are less aware, and educating and helping them grow, and they're changing. I witness it daily and nobody else even has to be aware that it's happening, but I've seen people come into the Women's Center that started out freshmen sorority girls with their high-heeled pumps, and have gone beyond that and learned beyond that, and have grown and changed. And if I can see it happen here, at this school, and see it happen in my neighborhood, I have to believe that it's happening worldwide. It can't just be that I'm so lucky that I witness the few times it happens. And that's what I consider grassroots. I guess I have a different focus.

SS: What is your home life like, and your view of relationships?

SC: On a purely political level, in terms of what I think everybody should think is right, I think that non-monogamy should be acceptable. I think that an individual's preference for who they're using as their primary support system is entirely up to them, and the means of expressing it is entirely up to them, and that nobody else has any right to jeopardize that as long as you've got two consenting adults.

At a personal level, it gets tricky. And I guess it's hypocritical, but oh well. I mean that I'm engaged in a one-on-one primary support system relationship with my lover, Diane. And Diane and I have sat down and had many long discussions on monogamy, for example. And the two of us have come to terms with the fact that we love each other very much, we're very secure in our relationship, we know that it is probably going to last for a long time, and if by chance she or I fell head over heels in lust with another woman, and cannot live without sleeping with that woman at least once, twice, maybe even three times, it's acceptable. The fact that she's in lust with this other woman does not diminish the amount of love or care or concern she has for me.

It's happened, and I've been on both sides--having the affair and waiting at home.

SS: How did you feel

SC: Well, when I was sitting at home, it was at a real bad time in my life. Recently, I've been at the same place again, but much more so. Nothing has come of it yet, but Diane has been actively fantasizing about having an affair. Currently, I'm real okay with it. Of course, it hasn't happened yet. Last time it happened, I was devastated for three days. It was with one of my best friends, and I almost destroyed the relationship I had with my friend.

We got over that. We talked it out and worked it through. So now, sure I'd be

hurt, and I'd probably cry, but it's not that bad. I'm real secure in our relationship.

I wish I could take it better than I do, because in my ideology it's okay. But I'd rather not find out.

But if I want to go out and have an affair, well that's perfectly acceptable because I love Diane, and I know I'm not leaving her, I'm just having an affair. That's why I think it's sort of hypocritical.

SS: What are some other examples of your politics?

SC: I live my life, that's politics. For example, I was in a lab class, in section, and the T.A. was making lewd and obscene remarks about one of the techniques used in biochemistry. I stood up and said, "Excuse me, that's a sexist remark, and things like that can be reported, and you could get in trouble for it." This was on the second day of class. He never again did it while I was in his room. He may have done it outside my presence, he may still be doing it now that I'm no longer in his class. That kind of thing does not have to happen, and I don't think I'll let it happen around me.

Another thing I do is I like to support the gay community, and as far as business, I'll go to a gay-oriented if not a gay establishment. It's hard to find gay-owned businesses, but I do support the ones that are out there.

It upsets me that so many men's bars are sexist. They won't let women in the door. There's enough sexism and enough prejudice in the straight world. I don't need it in my community. We are a community and we need to unify ourselves because we're a minority. If gay men choose to continue this elitist separatist attitude by excluding women from their bars, that will never happen. Men are treated fine in women's bars, from everything that I've heard from my male friends.

Some men say the women are being separatists, but they're being selfish and not respectful. There is a lot of men-only space in this world, but women have virtually no space, yet we still let them into our bars. I'm a strong supporter of woman-only space. I think it's fundamentally important that there's a place women can go that is just for women, one hundred percent. I don't think that means separatism. I also support men-only space, but I don't think that means we should exclude each other from bars. Men have their space all over, and they enforce it.

Woman-only space is a financial problem. If you think about it logically, men have nothing to support save themselves and their toys, while women have children and make 59¢ to every man's dollar. Of course establishments like the Wing Cafe or Charmed Circle book store, for women only, aren't going to survive. The Club is now the Bulc, for men, and the Box Office is dying. The only thing still here is the Amazon Sweet Shop, and they cater to everyone.

There is also space outside business in women's homes, San Diego Lesbian Organization, etc. I support Alix Dobkin in her decision to have women-only concerts, and I also support Meg and Chris in their decision to include and educate everyone. Separatism denies the problem, it doesn't fix it. We need education--back to grassroots.

If I can take one person, and say, "Not in my presence," and he stops in my presence, maybe the next time he'll think about it. And maybe the time after that he'll start to realize why, and just do it out of humiliation or fear. You have to educate, you can't just deny. You can't just put all the men on a little island and cut their balls off and say, "see, the problem is solved." You have to educate.

## Lesbian Research

I am looking for participants to be in an important study about young lesbians. The study is about fostering positive gay identities and self-esteem. This study is needed for two reasons: 1) few studies have been done on how to promote positive gay lifestyles. 2) few studies have focused specifically on lesbians. Because this is potentially a valuable piece of research with broad implications for the lives of lesbians, I would like to have as many participants as possible. The major criteria are: 1) be

a self-described lesbian, 2) between the ages of 18 and 25 (inclusive).

There will be a drawing upon completion of the study for dinner and theatre tickets for two. Please tell your friends so we can make this a meaningful study. It is a pencil and paper questionnaire that you can do privately and at your own leisure.

Please leave a message for Dawn at 295-9153 as to when and where I can reach you.

## How It Was

When I first met you, I was stunned  
But I was there to see your roommate  
And you had your own to take care of.

Later when I was alone, we talked  
Things seemed to be blooming between us, a friendship  
And to me, it was special.

When we went out, you filled me in  
You let me know that you were alone too  
And somehow that made everything easier.

Then we were together, that one night  
I showed you how I felt, how it was  
And I thought you understood.

Now maybe I should apologize, but I can't  
To me we felt so right, but I guess not to you  
And now we're alone, instead of together.

I understand though, I usually do  
You had your reasons  
And we had too much wine.

But now I'm lost, unsure how to feel  
You don't seem to want me  
And I don't know how to get you off my mind.

So here we are again, back at the beginning  
Hello my name is...

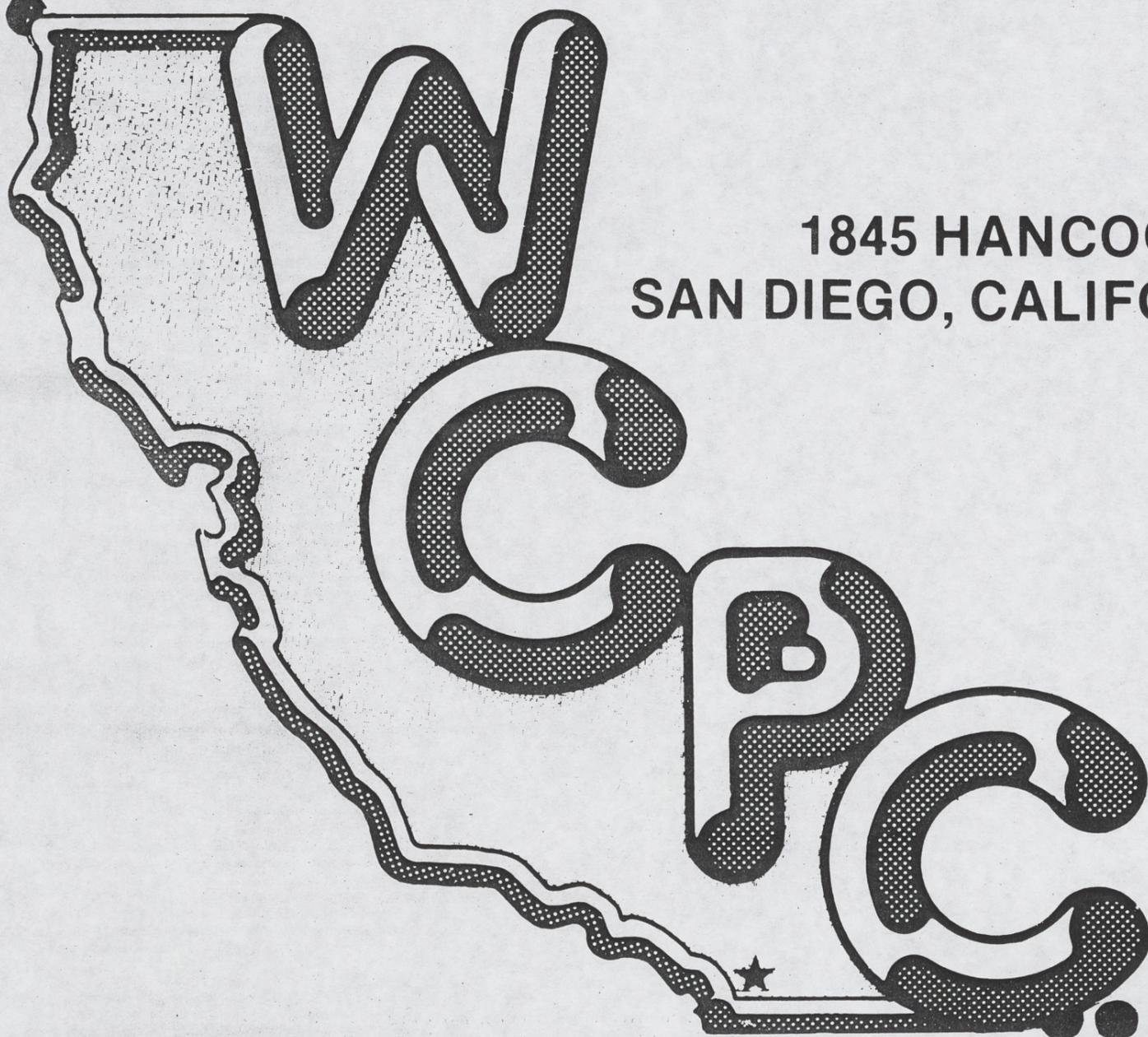
And I'm here to see your roommate.

-Denise S. Norton

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## LETTERS

continued from page 2

I'm not an avid Bible reader, but I was taught to love my brothers and to forgive their "trespasses" (defined loosely, as was originally intended). I learned that god was ultimately responsible for rewarding and meting out punishment. That's not my place, nor is it Owens'.

I understand that Owens' group wishes to save their families from exposure to a world of "sin" and "decadence." The desire to save their friends and country from a perceived danger is honorable, but the end does not justify the means. The equivalent attitude is to advocate bombing the Soviets in order to avoid and protect ourselves from the "evils of communism." Does Owens' group have so little faith in the strength of their beliefs that in order to assure a seat in heaven they must obliterate all "sin" they perceive in their world, just to be on the safe side?

Owens' suggestion to cure AIDS was to ban homosexuality. To cure society of fornication and murder, he prescribes a ban on abortions. I agree that it is highly irresponsible for an individual who may have exposed himself or herself to AIDS to spread the disease further or to donate blood. Enough information has been disseminated about the probable transmission of the disease so that a potential donor would have a pretty good idea whether or not she or he has been exposed or is a possible carrier. Likewise, I believe abortion is not an appropriate method of birth control, all issue of choice aside. Enough information has been disseminated about methods of birth control so that abortion should be avoided at all costs. (A next logical step might be teaching teenagers that birth control doesn't make her "that kind of girl" but instead prepared for "spontaneity." Sexual

behavior is natural no matter how much the various religions attempt to attribute it to "sin.") Owens' methods of eliminating these problems, however, are counterproductive. They serve only to elicit rebellion.

I realize this idea has been restated and reproven countless times, but the redundancy hasn't had much effect. We should still try to stress the positive methods of controlling birth, AIDS, and the various venereal diseases by continuing to stress education, love, and support, not the hatred and persecution advocated by Owens and his militant group which blasphemously refer to themselves as Christians.

I believe Christ wants people to come to him in love, not to run away in fear of his followers. A person's sexuality and sexual behavior is her or his own business. (The one exception I will allow is when someone is getting hurt, as is the case in child molestation or when excessive violence is used. A legal definition is required, and this is very controversial ground which is debated continuously by various factions.)

Barring abortion will just drive it underground or back to Tijuana, and banning homosexuality is plain impossible. If it occurs in nature, it's natural.

It's doubtful that our sexual behavior in itself has as much weight as our overall attitude and motives in deciding our metaphysical destiny. Owen's group should analyze the underlying drive which pervades their hate marches. If, as Owens claims, patriotism and christianity are "one in the same," and christianity is aggressiveness, violence, hatred, terrorism, and persecution; then this would justify as patriotism the horrific political foreign policy as practiced by the present Administration under Reagan.

Owens charges that gays and abortionists are signs of our sacred society's imminent peril. I wonder if this

isn't time for some change. Maybe a new definition of christianity might suffice.

I am most sincerely yours,

Anne M. Duddy

## Optional Sex

I have a friend who is gay. I do not say that with pride, any more than I would take pride in saying that I had a friend who was Black or Jewish or a woman. I value my friends by who they are, not by what they are. But I am proud of him, and of the fact that he is my friend. Because of this, I am often hurt or angered by the responses of others when they learn that I have a friend who is homosexual.

I am often surprised as well. The general reaction of people is not one of self-righteous indignation that I permit myself to associate with vile, amoral trash. Rarely does anyone ask how I can socialize with someone who performs acts of disgusting wild animal abandon.

Instead, the most common reaction is one summed up by their question, "Aren't you afraid that he might try something with you?"

To me the question is absurd, and I often have to refrain from laughing whenever I hear it. Unfortunately, not everyone understands how ludicrous the question is, so I usually have to (often unsuccessfully) point out the humor.

We have been friends for a long time. Like any friends, we respect each other and each other's tastes and preferences. A friend would not pressure you to try anything which you did not want to try, whether it be Chinese food, punk rock, or different sex. Yet many people cannot understand this.

Furthermore, many of these people find it difficult to deal with platonic relationships between heterosexual men and woman. They tend to believe that if

sex is theoretically possible, then that potentiality will be realized, or at least considered. For these people, the sexual potential in any friendship they may have with the opposite sex remains untapped only because one or both is already physically involved. However, this option need not automatically be explored. Sometimes people can just be friends.

These same people then carry the same reasoning along when considering homosexuals. They see that the homosexual has a theoretical potential to have sex with his friend, so they believe that he will act to develop that potential. After all, homosexuals are sex-crazed leches who will stop at nothing to exercise their primal lust. This belief often ignores the fact that the heterosexual has some degree of control over any possible physical relationship.

Of course, this reasoning is faulty. A homosexual man and a heterosexual man can be friends in exactly the same way as two heterosexual men. A friendship doesn't need to develop into anything more. A physical relationship is a wonderful thing, but one doesn't need to have sex to understand and appreciate another human being.

Shawn McCarty

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# Sappho Speaks

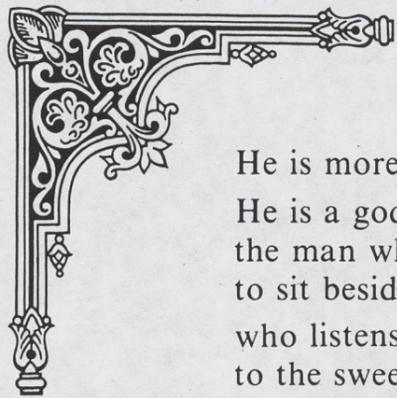
Sappho was a greek lyric poetess around 600 BC residing in an all womyn community off the northwest coast of Asia Minor, the isle of Lesbos (the origination of the term Lesbian).

As was the fashion of the time, womyn of good family like Sappho assembled in informal societies to spend their days in "idle, graceful pleasures," especially the composition of poetry. Sappho, the leading spirit of one of these associations, attracted a number of admirers, some from distant places abroad. Most of Sappho's poems are concerned with her friendship and love relationships with other womyn. Sappho expresses her feelings in terms which range from gentle affection to passionate love. It was precisely in her relationships with others that Sappho found her inspiration for universally admired lyrics.

Unfortunately, time has treated her harshly, and possibly only one complete poem has survived. This and the denial of her sexuality have served to virtually silence her.

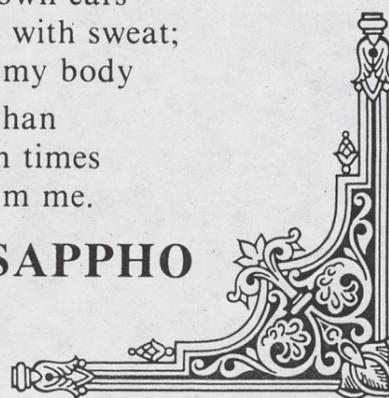
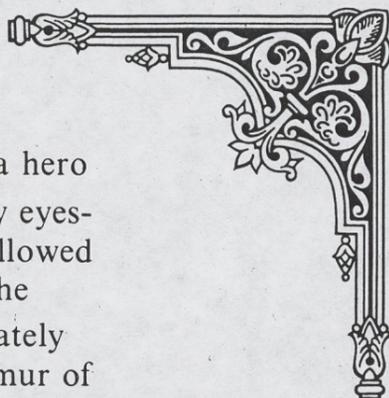
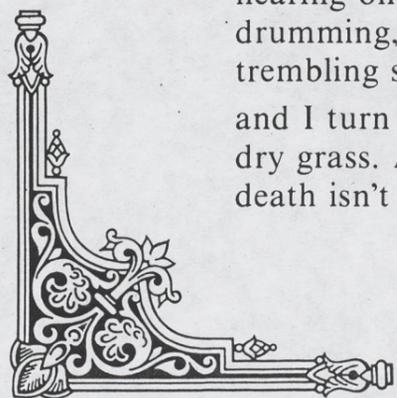
In recognition of Sappho and the countless other womyn writers who have been stifled or silenced throughout history, we have chosen her name to represent our publication. It is, for us, finally a chance to have the voice we are so often denied.

*Sappho Speaks* is now our space to explore our own identities through culture, literature, art, political issues and community news. We also hope to provide non-lesbian/gay persons with a view of who we are as a people.



He is more than a hero  
He is a god in my eyes-  
the man who is allowed  
to sit beside you-he  
who listens intimately  
to the sweet murmur of  
your voice, the enticing  
laughter that makes my own  
heart beat fast, If I meet  
you suddenly, I can't  
speak - my tongue is broken;  
a thin flame runs under  
my skin; seeing nothing,  
hearing only my own ears  
drumming, I drip with sweat;  
trembling shakes my body  
and I turn paler than  
dry grass. At such times  
death isn't far from me.

-SAPPHO



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# SAPPHO SPEAKS

The Lesbian and Gay Quarterly Journal at UCSD

March 1985

## VOICES AND VISIONS

Women talk about lesbian culture, political awareness, femininity, and the future

by Sharon Moxon

The lesbian culture is a diverse yet unified entity; a culture not of genetic heritage, but of political mores, redefined lifestyles, and support systems. Our heritage comes from the voices of other women—painful, joyous, and strong. We are, as a culture, rooted in a continual process of growth. From Daughters of Bilitis in 1953, and NOW's "lavender menace," we have grown out of the mainstream and into a people in our own right.

These voices express a few of the many views on who we are and where we're headed. They speak from the heart about what the lesbian culture is to them, and how they feel about the current changes they see taking place.

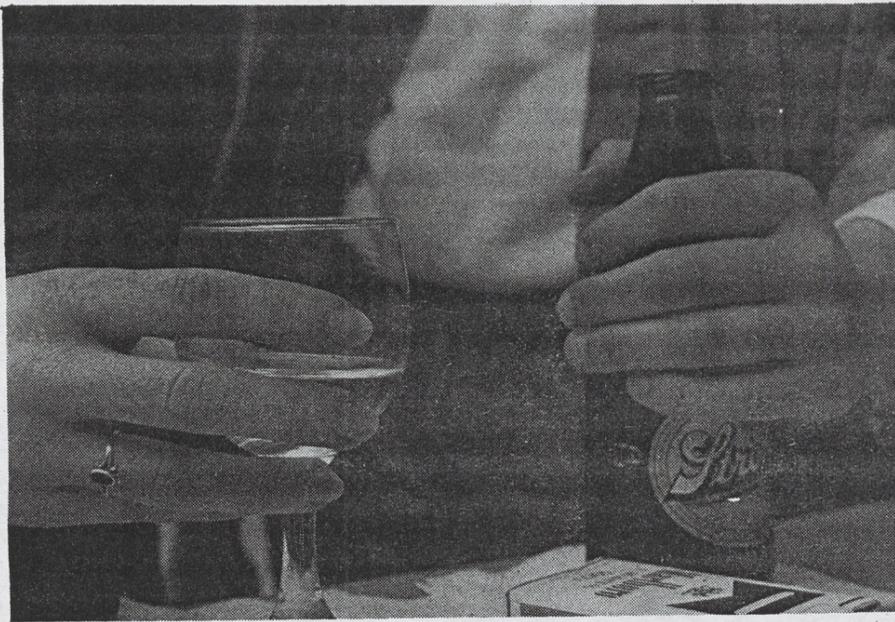
### THE COUNTER CULTURE

Lesbians, as an oppressed class, have formed large networks of support out of necessity. Because we are different from other groups of people, we have developed a mini-culture of our own that is often parallel to the mainstream, and often very different. The lesbian culture is an entity comprised of diversity and bonded in a strength that comes from the pain of oppression and the joy of self-expression.

**Anne**, a 26 year old health care worker, when asked about the lesbian culture, said: It's changing. I guess it will always be changing. Sometimes that's a very powerfully positive thing. And sometimes it's sad.

I wish I could say that there was something universal about lesbians other than the fact that we sleep with other women—a different sort of awareness, a certain political/social consciousness—and that we were all part of a cohesive counter-culture, but as much as I wish I could hold up the ideal and say 'this is what a lesbian is', I can't honestly do that because we are so diverse.

It doesn't matter that lesbians don't all know each other and we don't all go to the same places and do the same things, there is a lesbian counter-culture. When you come out, whether or not your life changes radically, you do have to question certain things. Just about every value you were raised with, you have to question. Because we have all come through basically that same sort of process in accepting our lesbian identity, there's a certain feeling of closeness, almost like a family tie. If I meet someone in a non-gay context and find out she's a lesbian, we have an immediate automatic closeness that we would not ordinarily have had, because we're both lesbians, and we both understand a lot



about where the other person is coming from.

**Becky**, a UCSD engineering student: In general, as far as a community goes, I think that people in the lesbian culture are a lot more supportive than people in the non-gay society. At least that's what my experience has been. I've just found a lot more support since I've come out than before.

**Diane**, a 31-year-old entrepreneur: When I go to a lesbian or woman oriented function, I see so many women that I've never seen before. It makes me wonder where they are and what they do with their lives. A good majority of them are living in suburbia and they don't necessarily go out and do anything social with big groups of people. They have their own circles of friends which are their support.

**Anne**: Because of having some tie, and also the need to find others like yourself, there are certain things that have developed that stand for the lesbian culture. Activities we do together, certain books we've all read, and certain social beliefs. We have customs, some of us have spiritual beliefs, we join groups, and yes, we do go to the bars. They're not something that I think is real positive, to say that lesbians culture is equivalent to lesbian bars, but the bars are the cornerstone, basically, of lesbian culture. That's the place that's most visible, where anyone can go, where a lot of people go when they first come out in order to find other lesbians and to find out what lesbian culture is.

### LESBIAN BARS: THE THERMOMETER OF CHANGE

Most lesbians rarely go to bars. Yet in looking at lesbian culture, lesbian bars are the single most visible element, simply because we virtually have no other contact with most lesbians. The bars are the one place where large groups of lesbians with different lifestyles and interests are able to gather and interact. What we see in the bars is as close as we

can come to a reflection of the culture as a whole.

**Diane**: When women first come out, we search for all the new things about our lifestyle, which is why we go to bars, or join SDLO (San Diego Lesbian Organization), or something. But once we've incorporated some of those ideals into our lives, they become a part of us, and then we must go out and do the regular mainstream things.

People tend to go to a bar to meet other people and when they meet other people they float away from the bar and do other things. They create a new kind of social atmosphere. The bar becomes tiresome because there's only so much you can do there. People need other kinds of things in their lives.

Commonly, people get tired of the bars but they still haven't met the right people. I still don't know where to go to meet people other than the bars. There are fewer political organizations to join these days, to my knowledge.

**Anne**: Bars are not evil. They do have a place as part of our culture, and they can be positive. They often host benefits, and they generally have good energy. Gay bars are not bars in the same sense that non-gay bars are. Most people don't go there specifically to drink or to pick people up. I go there because it is one of the very few places where I can go and be completely comfortable with my sexuality, and where I can be with other lesbians. In San Diego, I feel like the Flame is the only public place that truly belongs to us.

**Cathy**, a UCSD student: I go to the Flame a lot. I go there to talk to people; to meet people. I've built up a network of people there that I know that I can talk to kind of on a superficial level, but it's just for their company, just for some human company when I'm not doing anything. I also like to play pool there. I don't drink that much. Of course I go there hoping to meet someone that I could maybe have a relationship with. Part of the reason you have to stay on a superficial level is that

it's so loud. You can't have a real deep conversation. I enjoy it because I like to go there to escape.

**Diane**: When I first came out, I started going to Diablo's. I never had gone to a bar before I was 21 (I was an incredibly straight Christian). It was a sentimental, nostalgic time. I had a very easy coming out. I got to know several of the people who worked at the bar, and I started going down every night, because that was the only social culture that I knew of at the time. I eventually quit my job and started working at Diablo's, in September of '75, and I worked there for nine months.

I was trying to figure out what it was that was different when I came back after being gone for a while. The people who had worked there were incredibly friendly, and we always had a good time. We got to drink on the job, and it was okay for me even on a Friday or Saturday night to take a break and go out on the dance floor and dance. So it was kind of a big party atmosphere rather than so business oriented.

All the people were fairly young, with a few exceptions. I remember every night after getting off work I used to go over to someone's house and party until 3 or 4. Everybody went.

A few years ago, when I decided to 'do the bar scene' again, I went to the Club. I found it to be real similar to what Diablo's had been like when I was working there. Again, I was going every night after work, and I fell in with a group of people who were doing the same thing I was. None of us were spending much money, and we were having a real good time. We talked, played pool, danced, and usually did something afterwards. The fun depends on the group of people you're with.

**Becky**: I think bar culture has almost changed for the worse. Granted, the Box Office vs the Flame are two very different bars, the Box Office being almost non-existent now, but when I was at the the Box Office, I was a lot more comfortable there in the sense that I felt I could ask someone to dance and not have anyone think I was trying to pick that person up. And if I go to the Flame, I don't feel comfortable doing that. It seems a lot harder for me to meet people and get to know them at the Flame.

**Anne**: the popularity of the Flame has a lot to do with the appearance that the lesbian culture is changing, because it's so flashy and cold. The Flame differs from the Club in the attitude people have, and in the way people dress. I don't know if it's typical of what lesbian bars have become, if they're changing or if the Flame is just unique.

Dressing or being comfortable is discouraged there because the bartenders are the role models, especially for newly-out women, and the bartenders at the Flame have to follow a dress code; they can't wear levis and they have to wear make-up, or so I'm told.

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## EDITORIALS

## "You're Such a Fag!"

When I was three years old, I had a friend named Ronald who lived down the street. We were constant companions. He would come over to play at my house and I would go over to play at his house. At my house, we would climb the weeping willow tree that my Dad had planted the same year I was born. The branches hung over to the fence, which had honeysuckle vines growing on it. There we'd sit in this green garden above the ground and suck the nectar off the pistils we pulled out of the honeysuckle blossoms.

Ronald's yard was different. It was sloping and barren of grass. His father had put in citrus trees bordered by concrete wells. We would inspect the premises and play coarser games with rocks and dirtclods.

One time, when we weren't much more than three, we were going to the bathroom together (I said we were constant companions). My brothers and some of his brothers saw us through the bathroom window.

We had begun to play doctor. "I'll show you mine, if you'll show me yours," "I'll touch yours if you'll touch mine," "I'll kiss yours if you'll kiss mine."

They ran home and told his mother. I remember it caused quite a stir. I don't think my mother said anything about it, but my brothers teased me a lot.

When we walked to kindergarten together, Ronald and I would hold hands and sing "I wanna hold your hand" to each other.

It was my first romance.

Looking back now, a lot of things fall into place. When I was seven and we lived in Hawaii, we used to go to the beach a lot and I would walk through the showers so I could see the naked men. And I remember skinny-dipping in the pool, the sunlight streaming through the water and the naked bodies of my brothers.

When my brother and I fought, sometimes he would call me a little faggot. I didn't really know what that meant, but I knew he was singling me out with it, attacking me with it. And I remember one time getting mad at him and planting my hands on the back of my hips and yelling back at him, my voice raising an octave or two from its already youthful register. He made fun of me for this and teased me about it in front of the neighbors.

Most of my friends at school were girls. I felt more comfortable with them. The boys somehow made me nervous. I was very conscious of them. I was intrigued by them, I liked to be near them and perhaps talk with them for a while, but I felt apart from them.

I didn't like team ball or little league. These were too rough and violent for me. They also put you in front of everyone to see, and everyone could watch you fail. I played teather ball and four square.

Aside from rather mainstream girls, my friends were the other oddball kids. Other femmy little boys. The new kid from New York, who, to the shock of everyone, walked in on the first day wearing a blazer. Janet, with the *really* bizarre sense of humor, and Solange, a girl *way* too big for her age.

I didn't get actively made fun of by other kids until high school. At Mt. Carmel High School, here in beautiful San Diego, a certain group of jocks, aspiring jocks, and their sufficiently masculine "in" crowd, would sort of whisper and laugh and look over at me and I'd hear the word "fag" filter out once in a while. By high school, I had a better idea of what that meant. It didn't hurt any less, but through years of brotherly teasing, I'd learned to paper over pain with a stoic reserve—"Oh, are you referring to me?"

From time to time, they'd ask me if I was a fag. I said no.

I had no label for myself. I was intrigued by the male form. The locker room was a place to remain outwardly calm (that was a feat), but resolutely observant. My masturbation fantasies abounded with what I observed. I could not accept the label they had given me. It was full of hate and ridicule.

For a long time, I didn't know how these people knew I was different when I didn't even know what to call my difference, much less what to do with it.

It was my mannerisms. My stereotypically faggot mannerisms. My voice inflections. My high, lilting laughter. The Vera designer towel I used in P.E. (it was a lovely aqua and green print). My loose body language.

Once I figured this out, I did my best to restrain myself. I succeeded in becoming a restrained faggot, but apparently a faggot nonetheless, for they continued, in an effort to see if they could crack my resolve.

After I came out and gave myself the label "gay," I was still in the habit of restraining myself. I didn't want to be a stereotype.

There is much talk of gay stereotypes, about how destructive they are. But this is not true. We must be precise. It is the stereotyping that is the problem. It is the attaching of negative connotations to behavior considered stereotypical that is destructive. People like me, who at times approximate certain stereotypes through their bodily and attitudinal mannerisms, can internalize these negatives.

Attaching negatives to people's behavior is an insidious form of oppression, for it enlists their aid in their own oppression.

Fighting back against my high school tormentors was too hard, so I decided not to fight. But I did not stop struggling, the struggle is simply moved inside, where I did the work for them.

I've finally stopped struggling. It wasn't a conscious decision, it's just that it was too tiring and I have need of my energy for other things.

So, guess what—I've become a lot more of a fag than I used to be, and I didn't even know it. Once again, someone else had to tell me I was a fag.

One day, early in the quarter, I was extolling the virtues of my four three-ring, color-coded binders and Sharon Moxon (the woman writing beside me) yelled at me "You're Such a Fag!" (I'm a fag! You can't hurt me with that label anymore. It's mine now. You can't taunt me anymore with sad impersonations of myself. I'm so much better at being me than you are!)

"Thank you," I said to Sharon. And meant it.

Russell Lewis

## Goddess in a Godless World

It happens a lot in universities. For a number of reasons, people lose their faith and stop believing in spiritual things. It happened to me. That realm; I had thought, was not for me. It went against my political, social and sexual beliefs.

In my years at UCSD, I have seen many people turn away from religion. In 'intellectual' atmospheres such as this, we have the freedom to question things around us, patterns we had taken for granted, and the social structures themselves which support these patterns. We become idealists. With expanded knowledge and awareness comes the understanding that the system we live with does not live up to our ideal.

I am one of these idealists. My questioning of society has led to its opposition. And with the denial of the system, came the denial of its religion.

Feminism is another cause of loss of religion. Many of my politically aware sisters have given up on spirituality. Like them, when my feminist consciousness was raised, I could no longer accept the definitions and limits religion has given to women.

My other beliefs are too strong to be ignored for religion, and the two are incompatible. Yet I feel that the questions we ask and the things we believe about the world and our existence are important. This is the basis of everything we do—it determines our history, our social structures, and the way we live our lives.

This creates a problem. My politics rendered me unable to accept the teachings of these religions which most of us were raised with, the religions which reinforce and are part of the existing social structure. These are religions of estrangement which separate our bodies from our spirits and our selves from the earth, and from each other. They break the world into components of good and evil, unable to see things as wholes.

They teach that there is One Truth handed down by a Great Man from the One Male God. This life is not IT, they say, we are waiting for something better and can never have true happiness here. If we are 'good,' we can leave this horrible Earth and join God in Paradise. Their doctrine tells us that time is a linear thing with a beginning and an end. And they teach us that we are powerless.

I just couldn't believe in that. Since I could not find the answers to my questions within the structure, I looked elsewhere. I looked to other radicalesbianfeminists, and I looked within myself. I found that there is an alternative, a form of religion which is apart from, and thus opposed to, those systems which I fight in every other part of my life.

I found it where womyn meet in small groups to share the knowledge that they have each discovered for themselves, from within themselves. We are working together, from the ground up, to re-discover our selves and our world. I call it Goddess worship, or womyn's religion, or paganism, or witchcraft.

It is very much something that comes from inside one's self. It is derived in part from the acknowledgement that we do have power within ourselves, and that it's okay to use this power. It involves the recognition of spiritual energy, and the acceptance that we have the capacity to connect with this energy and to influence its flow.

The practice of my religion is often ritualistic, and often comes out of my own imagination. It is joyous and powerful. It involves circles, the phases of the moon, the seasons. It is growth and healing. It comes from things of the Earth, things that are real to me.

It is collective and communal; groups of womyn gathering to share in the celebration of our gains, the joy of our beliefs. We do not come together to be told what to do or to be condemned for what we've done. We are using our power to create a better world. Love, not fear, draws me to the Goddess.

We are continually re-developing and re-defining it ourselves. It validates the importance of each individual, and the knowledge that we have the capacity to think and feel and know for ourselves, and gives us the freedom to do that.

Finally, I am allowed the spirituality, on my own terms, which I have always been denied. The network of womyn gives me strength and support, and the freedom which my religion embraces gives me unlimited options in terms of what I can do, and who I can be. This is a time for change. I learn and grow and discover what is important and what does not matter. I become myself.

I think that we have come upon something which is profound in ways that even we are not yet realizing. Through this form of spirituality, we have the potential to become what we all dream about, but that we haven't accepted as reality. We can be healers, teachers, womyn of the hills.

But I'm still living my life among the idealists at UCSD, for whom religion, in any form, is invalid. My personal emphasis has changed, and my feminist friends don't understand or accept this. I don't ask them to follow my path, only to acknowledge it.

This separation between my worlds should not happen. Witchcraft, after all, is derived from feminism. As womyn reclaim their personal power, and accept womanliness as a positive symbol, the Goddess is also re-discovered. It is religion with a focus on the feminine, on what we as womyn identify with.

The denial of womyn is so ingrained in our culture that Goddess worship seems to be an abomination. Blasphemy, even. As feminists, we face a struggle to reclaim that which is ours. We must not dismiss our spirituality with the idea that all religion is patriarchal, heirarchical, and dualistic, but we must find our own methods and stories, our ancient heritage.

Womyn's religion is completely re-owning our power as womyn. I have found this to be the deepest of all feminist struggles. My idealism is also included in my spirituality. It is congruous with my politics, and it allows me to believe that the ideal is possible.

I wish this were something I could share with my friends. Together we would weave webs of our own flesh. We would unite in our power, and our world would become our own.

Sharon Moxon

## VOICES AND VISIONS

continued from front page

Anyway, they're just different. Young and beautiful and they do dress stylishly.

**Diane:** I don't think the difference between the Club and the Flame is necessarily a reflection of lesbian culture, it's a different kind of bar. The women behind the bar sort of create the ambiance. There's a certain higher-class feeling when you walk into the Flame, because it's not quite so dimly lit, as the Club was, for instance. You can see the faces of the people around you, you can see the plants and the pictures on the walls, you can see the drink that's being served to you. The Club was more of a 'down home' kind of thing. You certainly didn't need to dress up. Jeans were perfectly acceptable. It's acceptable at the Flame, but it's not the norm. The women aren't that much different.

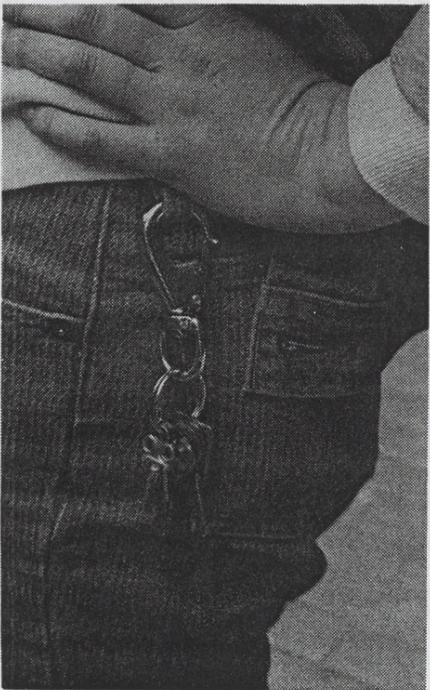
**Cathy:** the flame is a fantasy world. It's even decorated to be glamorous and fantasy-like, because they want to attract those kinds of people, because that's who'll spend the most money.

### ROLES AND FEMINITY

What we wear, how we look, how we feel about ourselves, and how we present ourselves does make a statement to the world, especially when we are part of a minority. For lesbians, the way we dress can mean anything from playing a 'butch' to playing 'straight.'

**Diane:** When I was 21, what was in were halter tops and ankle-length skirts, or mini-skirts, and style was dictated by something other than what you wanted to wear. These days, style is much more open and it's also not 'fadish,' it's more 'stylish.' There is something more universal generally. You get to be who you want to be. There is such a wide selection.

I think that reflects on the lesbian culture, because we don't have to adhere to the stereotype of 'femme' or 'butch', we can be openly who we are. The social atmosphere overall is a lot freer.



It used to be that when a lesbian walked into a bar, she wore jeans and a T-shirt with slight personal variations, and that's not at all true any more. Those women who are comfortable in that can walk into a bar in that, and yet you'll see the full gamut in a bar, anything from full leather down to the frills, and you can do it without getting any funny looks.

I was, what I call, very femme when I first came out, and that's exactly how other lesbians thought of me. It was

supposed to mean that I was never going to take control in a relationship—that was the butch's role. And that was so false!

I'm not stereotyped as much as I was. It's okay to dress femme now and not be assumed to want that role. Before, if I had walked into a bar wearing jeans and a T-shirt and leather, it would have automatically been assumed that I would be the one to ask people to dance, they wouldn't have dared to approach me, because you just didn't do it.

**Jo, a UCSD graduate:** I see a lot of exploring feminity now. I think this is a necessary phase on the way to an assimilation of all of what we are, a more whole and diverse lesbian culture. People used to purposely try not to be pretty in a feminine way because of the negative connotation that had in heterosexual society. Now, we are going through a time of that being okay, and dressing up and reclaiming the beauty of women. But this time it's for ourselves.

**Susan:** Lesbian culture is copying gay male culture. Since there seems to be less of a need for feminism, and people just come out and say 'I'm gay' and that's it, they don't go through the feminist stuff, and then they say, okay, now what's gay? So they look at gay men since they're more visible, and gay men are powerful and have fun, so why shouldn't lesbians want to be like them? I see it in the dressing up, the sleeping around, the goal-orientation, etc.

### FEMINITY DOESN'T MEAN FEMINISM

Years of political action and education have allowed lesbians some degree of freedom and feelings of self-acceptance. But this is not a decade of marches or sit-ins. Maybe feminism isn't so important any more, to some people, for various reasons. Maybe we're just going about the struggle and education process in a different way. Maybe not at all.

**Cathy:** Most of the people I've met at the Flame don't define themselves as feminists. They'd prefer not to think about things like that. They're not especially intellectual, or at least they don't display it there. No one brings it up because they're not there to talk about serious issues, they're there to escape.

Sometimes I meet someone and discover she is interested in politics. It's just that the Flame's not conducive to that. It's suppressed. But I also know people who didn't even vote.

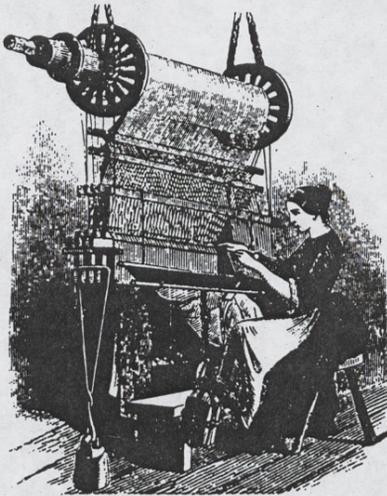
**Anne:** I don't have a TV so I went to the Flame to watch the election results, and they didn't even have them on. We had to practically force the bartender to turn on the elections. Once it was on, about ten people watched it, but most of the bar didn't even care.

That's the main difference between the Flame and the other bars I've gone to. At the Club, politics was a big issue, and nobody dressed up. It was so much different. Nobody seemed to be interested in high-paying careers. Sometimes I thought they had no goals, but now I know I like it better that way.

It seems to me that there used to be a lot of political awareness and political activity, and the political activity isn't happening any more. I feel that maybe the people don't have the awareness anymore either, especially the ones who are just coming out now who aren't exposed to it. People still gather, but it's not for rallies so much, it's a lot more social. I guess we've fought long enough

and this is a rest period to figure out who we are.

**Diane:** When I first came out, there were a lot of co-operative things going on. There was Las Hermanas, which was a wonderful women's coffee house. Feminism was really budding at that time. There was a women's art co-op, which a lot of lesbians were involved with, which was very feminist, and SDLO was more of a political organization than the mini-rap group it is now. There was a lot of political stuff going on that was just beginning to bud,



whereas now, there are enough women at least in the lesbian culture, who are feminist oriented, that those sort of things aren't as necessary, because it's already in the consciousness. There was a lot of anger about being a woman and being oppressed. There was a lot of need for separation which I don't see as much any more.

Most of the women that I'm around these days are very feminist. I didn't realize until about four months ago how feminist I'd become without realizing it. When I was confronted with sexist attitudes, I saw how feminist-oriented and how non-sexist my views were. It surprised me. That's what makes me believe that people at this point have it almost subconsciously, as opposed to being out there fighting for everything that they say they want.

So many women have already been out there fighting on the front lines that it's now becoming small skirmishes. Everyone is trying to win something in their own particular environment. There's enough of an overall consciousness that at this point people are fighting their own individual battles and not trying to win over the entire world.

Granted, there is a change in the overall world view of consciousness.

What I witness as a change is women, at least women my age, are more secure in who they are and what they are. When I first came out there was a lot of anger about being oppressed. The 70's was the time when women really started taking a stand, and that was when the ERA was most prominent in the political world, and what I seem to remember was that women thought they should be political. The only way to break free from the female role was by being political and being up front so they staged marches and stood for their rights. And that really was what worked in changing some people's thoughts—but I'm not sure that in reality anything has changed as far as women's equality. There is more awareness of women's roles and women's rights, but...at this point I don't see women as angry any more. They've been through the hard politics, the trial by fire, and they've supposedly stood strong, but they don't feel that they need to be so politically separate from men. At one point, what they felt they

needed to do in order to create their own awareness was separate off from men, put blinders on, and walk this one narrow path that was going to eventually expand into what was a woman.

There really are cultural differences happening now. It's not quite as closed as it was before to women. There isn't as much political hoopla as there was 10 or 15 years ago about it, but it's still a problem, especially for women who are trying to get into the upper ranks of, say, management. You're still fighting the same fight, but the fight has become much more personal. I think that's real healthy, because everybody is creating their own universe or world and by doing so, they're making a better universe as a whole.

### THE EBB AND FLOW

Daughters of Bilitis was the first openly lesbian organization. The members "dressed in their finest from high heels to earrings." Lesbians eventually broke away from this mainstream, but, as everything is circular, we may be headed right back where we began.

**Cathy:** I don't think the Flame is very different from straight bars at all. I went to straight bars a lot before I came out, which was less than a year ago, and they were all pretty much the same as the Flame. A lot of money spent on drinks, when you meet someone they want to buy you a drink, and you don't talk very much above a superficial level. The only difference is you're meeting women instead of men.

I think that's kind of good because there's a tendency to be different just because you're gay when you may not be that different. Although I think conformity is unfortunate. I would rather see straight society getting more diverse, as diverse as the gay community. But instead, the gay community is getting more mainstream.

**Anne:** Sexual orientation didn't used to be the only difference because there was a certain political awareness and a certain level of consciousness...a different perspective on life, what I would consider a more aware perspective on all aspects of life, and it seems like what I see now is a lot of people are coming out and they're gay and that's it, and they go on with their lives as if nothing was different about them...and I think that's kind of sad because, to me, in order to change society, we have to have a strong base to work from, and a strong base that's different from the rest of society. Because why would you want to change it if you're just like it, and it seems like we're going to start backsliding if we don't have some political awareness. And I don't see it anywhere. Nobody's interested in having more acceptance for gay people. They've got their career, what do they care?

I think the entire gay culture is in the middle of a change. The whole left culture...all of the countercultures I think are changing radically right before our eyes, and most people aren't even noticing it, and nobody knows what to do about it.

Sometimes I think we're losing our gay culture. I noticed it at the last LAGO dance. Those dances used to be different from anything else, now they're not. It could have been any dance. I guess it's mainstreaming. Maybe it's okay to do that. Maybe we need it. But I like having our own culture.

**Diane:** I don't participate in things like the gay pride parade because I feel like that's an overstatement of who we are and what we are. I don't want anybody

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# RHINO

*Ruminations of the writer upon the occasion of "The AIDS Show"*

*by Theatre Rhinoceros, 2-14-85.*

by Stephen Russell

"It is called Artists Involved with Death and Survival, which is a hideous acronym...when people first started calling it the AIDS Show, at first we were offended...Then I was quite glad because the other title is so awkward and ponderous...What better thing to call it than the AIDS Show?...It is about confrontations with AIDS."

Leland Moss, Director, "The Aids Show"

Second only to the physical toll of the epidemic (and perhaps greater to the greater number of us) is the moral toll AIDS has taken. We have fought, and fought bravely, over the past decades for the right to be ourselves. We have fought knowing that we were right, knowing that in a systematic fashion we had been denied certain social rights to basic needs. Our relationships were furtive and fraught with peril, emotions had to be sublimated, and our self-esteem as social beings was categorically denied.

Our people fought, and made progress. We shouted out loud and clear that we were here: we made it known to

them that we existed; more importantly, we let ourselves know that we were here, that we as individuals were not alone. So, we found that we were not alone: but what were we?

The drag queens spoke out against gender traps with their clothes; radicals spoke about class relationships in communiques, position papers, and consensus statements; everyone spoke out against society's restraints by being promiscuous. Promiscuity, especially, rose to the forefront of our revolution. The radical said it was revolutionary, the idealist said it was free love, the hedonist said it was great fun. Sex became more than just a part of the thing, it became the thing itself. Among non-gays as well as ourselves the word gay meant nothing so much as sex, lots of it, with many people. We never denied it; if anything, we affirmed it—proudly.

So having taken a mere aspect of being gay, a banal aspect no less, and proudly shown it to the world as a badge of our very nature, now we find that it is a deadly device indeed. Oops! Some have



Actors/Writers

Bob Stone, Doug Holsclaw, Randy Wiegand of Theatre Rhinoceros

refused to respond to this revelation; they continue business as usual. So did many Jews lend money to the Nazis. Most, however, have paused for contemplation.

We in San Diego are relatively fortunate in that here AIDS is more a subject in the newspapers than it is in our lives. We, most of us, have never seen the reality of this epidemic, only its report. This is fortunate, yes, but unfortunately this also means we have been reluctant, as a whole, to respond to the epidemic as something real. This is in part because such a response forces us to reexamine

many of the things that we have been taught that it means to be gay.

"I want to be touched. But not by strangers..."

From "The AIDS Show"

Sex and love.

One is not the other.

They are unrelated.

Only at the level of pure sensation are they involved: the glow of sensual pleasure, the electricity of touch, they simulate or stimulate feelings of love. But it is the touch one loves, not the one

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