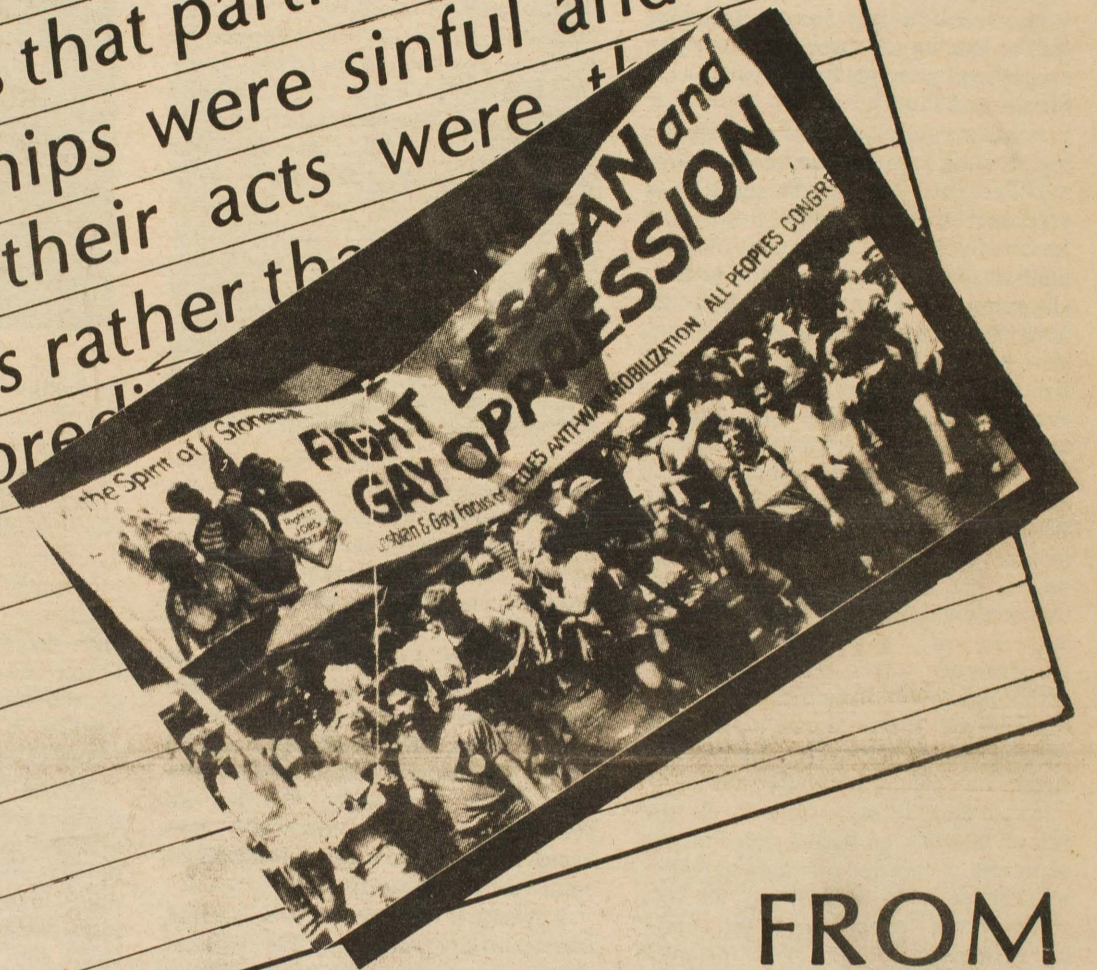


# SAPPHO SPEAKS

The Lesbian and Gay Quarterly Journal at UCSD

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The predominant belief at the outset of the 19th century was that participants in same-sex relationships were sinful and degenerate, that their acts were the result of ill morals rather than the result of ill morals or conditioned prejudices.



## FROM SODOMITE TO GAY IS GOOD

### The Changing Nature of Homosexual Identity

by Stephen Russell

Most subcultures are regenerated from within--its members are born and raised and die within the same culture. Among the few exceptions is the gay community. Members of this community have all been raised within the confines of the larger society. They must, through the few clues given by this society, ascertain that they are different from the standard, and are, in fact, members of a group that is hidden, despised, and oppressed by the society of which he has always been a participating member.

Yet, this sub-culture has not always existed. There has not always been this alternate value system with which homosexuals could identify. This article looks at the changing social perception and self perception of the homosexual. The specific focus is on the American gay male community. This is not intended to slight the rich

history of the lesbian or feminist movements, rather it recognizes that these are, in fact, separate, yet related, fields of inquiry, and to treat all of them would do justice to none of them.

#### The Conception of the Homosexual

The exclusive homosexual (no overt heterosexual proclivities) is a relatively new creation. The contemporary gay community is not the modern manifestation of a cultural constant, rather it is a newly defined and, hence, newly created entity. In regards to historicity, Jeffrey Weeks says that *In different cultures...very different meanings are given to same-sex activity by both society at large and by the individual participants. The physical acts might be similar, but the social constructions around them are profoundly different.*<sup>1</sup> Given the

conception of homosexuality that existed prior to the 20th century, the idea of a homosexual community was both meaningless and inconceivable.

The predominant belief at the outset of the 19th century was that participants in same-sex relations were sinful and degenerate, that their acts were the result of ill morals rather than an innate or conditioned predisposition. Weeks indicates the nature of this conceptual difference: *There was a crucial distinction between traditional concepts of buggery and modern concepts of homosexuality. The former was seen as a potentiality in all sinful nature, unless severely execrated and judicially punished; homosexuality, however, is seen as the characteristic of a particular type of person... (the sodomite) was a temporary aberration; the homosexual belongs to a species.*<sup>2</sup> As such, it would be difficult for a 'sodomite' of that period to identify with others of his kind, for the role in which he existed in society's eyes was that of 'moral degenerate' or 'criminal', rather than 'homosexual'. The 'others of his kind' would include prostitutes, murderers, and the insane.

The late 19th century, with its advances in psychological reasoning, brought with it new definitions of those who preferred same-sex relations. The prevailing theory of the time was that of 'inversion', the idea that this 'abnormality' was the result of the brain of one gender being in the body of the opposite gender. It was a step forward in that it recognized the existence of a psychological 'type' of person who was attracted to their own biological sex, but it nonetheless precluded the recognition of a distinct 'type' of sexuality. As John Marshall explains: *The curious result of such gender inversion... was that it effectively eliminated the need for a homosexual concept. For as long as the person in question could be conceptualized as a 'Non-man', his 'real' sexual identity could be interpreted as 'female heterosexual' (in a male body) rather than 'homosexual male.'*<sup>3</sup>

The lack of a widespread understanding or definition of homosexuality isolated many homosexual individuals by

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# GRANDMA, ARE THERE ANY STRAIGHT MEN OUT THERE?

by Anne M. Duddy

No, of course the question isn't serious. Well, not THAT serious. You see, I find myself in a very curious position: I am a heterosexual woman completely surrounded by homosexual men. From my experiences I'm beginning to think that I may be jinxed. It may sound foolish, but that's the tune they're singing on the welcome wagon every time I go to my hometown to visit friends and family.

It all started innocently enough in high school. I was known at the time as the "Perennially Platonic Person". I was everyone's friend. Secretly, however, I was madly in love with my best friend. I used to dream about how his perfect, glistening white teeth flashed in the desert sun as he sneered at me and about how his keys danced wildly upon his tight, well-proportioned cheeks. Fantasies about him that would make a nun break out in a cold sweat swirled wickedly in my pubescent mind as I dreamed of one day making him My Boyfriend. I was tempted to wrestle him into a half-Nelson to bring him to his senses, but I finally convinced myself that settling into a platonic relationship was in my best interests. My grandmother was a bit disappointed. All along she sort of entertained the idea that maybe some day I might have married my high school friend. He was such a nice young man after all.

As all good things eventually do, the fun we had in high school ended all too soon and we headed our separate ways to college. He ended up in the wilderness of Los Angeles County and I came here to UCSD. We constantly kept in touch, but we both branched out into our respective college interests and made new friends.

I was incredibly fortunate to find

myself another very good friend shortly after I began my freshman year. Having just not-so-successfully navigated the tortures of puberty, my instincts kicked in once again and I found myself hopelessly in love with my new friend. He was all I had ever dreamed of: tall, dark, handsome, witty, bizarre, with dreamy thick luscious lips and a hormone-charging smile. It was all I could do to keep from jumping his bones in an effort to make him aware that I wanted his gentle caresses which I thought were wasted on the pillow he clutched tightly to his chest as he stared deeply into space. I frequently found myself standing in front of his Adam Ant poster in attempt to make his gaze fall on me instead. Despite my endless endeavors, the concept never took hold in his mind.

I began to go nuts with frustration and our friendship became quite strained. We had more than the usual amount of ups and downs. He was moody, I was irritated and neurotic, and we talked less frequently. By the first quarter of our junior year I had fallen out of love, but the remaining tension caused an estrangement which lasted through most of the second quarter.

Incidentally, my grandmother was elated. She is quite prejudiced and never approved of my relationship with my college friend. She was always afraid I'd marry him and our children would end up retarded and ugly, "as are all children of mixed races". I was accustomed to hearing that every time I visited her. What a drag.

Anyway it was during that second quarter of my junior year that my high school friend and I became a little closer. I called him on his birthday to congratulate him for turning 21 and I found him to be unusually distracted. A week later he called me up and came out



to me. I was surprised but understanding, yet definitely confused.

Life went on and just as I was adjusting to the new changes in my life, I found that my best friend in college and I were able to get along better. It was two months later that I finally discovered why my friend never responded to my feeble attempts for romantic involvement and innuendo. How was I to have known that to him Orion was not just another astral constellation? As if some catalyst were applied to the men I knew, my best friend came out to me, too.

At this point I began to look at the positive side of things: his coming out to me gave us a chance to demolish a few barriers and our friendship evolved to a much higher, freer devotion. What an improvement! Meanwhile, I remember that my grandmother mumbled something about homosexuality being a disease and that it was spreading like wildfire.

I studied in Europe the next year. By February I had fallen in love with a lovely dark-skinned man with black hair and crystal blue eyes. His red ski jacket caught my gaze from afar and I dreamed of the songs he used to write during our art class. His sweet smile lit my dreams at night. I adored him from afar throughout the whole year. I watched him even until he stepped off the plane as we were leaving. I walked up to him to say goodbye, but before I could speak his eyes lit up and his arms spread wide: a tall blonde man picked him up and spun him around, planting a passionate kiss on his lips.

Jinxed. I knew it then. After that, every guy I thought was cute would be seen within that week walking arm in arm affectionately with another guy.

Grandma says, "See, I was right! It's catching! Save yourself and everyone else: move to Arizona". I'm sure she thinks I'm an immune carrier of a new epidemic. Like colorblindness or hemophilia. With all these homosexual men, I think that although she promised to throw a fit if she ever caught me in bed with a man, my grandmother would probably be more upset if she didn't.

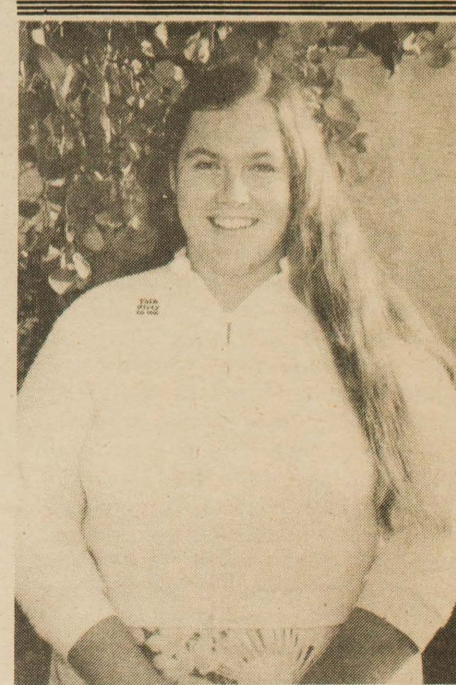
Before I could open my mouth to argue, she decided that if I weren't overweight, men would stop "turning queer" each time I fell in love. I disagreed: diets don't make the sexuality. Imagine if the numbers of homosexuals in the world decreased in proportion to the amount of weight I lost on my diet: I'd have Anita Bryant chaining me to a weight machine in a health spa, feeding me chicken broth

once a week for six years!

I thought it would be funny to tell my grandmother that I'm not jinxed after all, that perhaps "it's in the water". However, knowing her, she would probably give up showering for weeks in fear of "catching it".

She makes all this fuss over one phenomenon: there are more homosexual men in my life than I ever could have imagined, and in spite of my grandmother, I'm thankful for it. I've made some marvelous friends who have opened my mind to a lifestyle different from mine. My concept of the true meaning of love has broadened as a result of my contact with them. I may not have many heterosexual men or romance in my circle of friends, but sharing a platonic love with my homosexual friends has freed me somewhat from some of society's many romance-related constraints on my emotions. I know that their influences in my life have made me happier than I might have been otherwise.

So—how do you like them apples, Grandma?



## About the Author

Anne Duddy is a senior at UCSD, whose academic interests include neuropsychology and Spanish literature.

She's embarrassed to say she comes from El Centro, but promises never to return. Her aspirations for the near future include meeting a few straight men. We wish her luck, but with the company she keeps, that may take some time.

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## LAGO SPEAKS ON MAKING BABIES

*Sappho Speaks* recently asked LAGO members and their friends the following questions about having children:

Do you want to have children?

Why or why not?

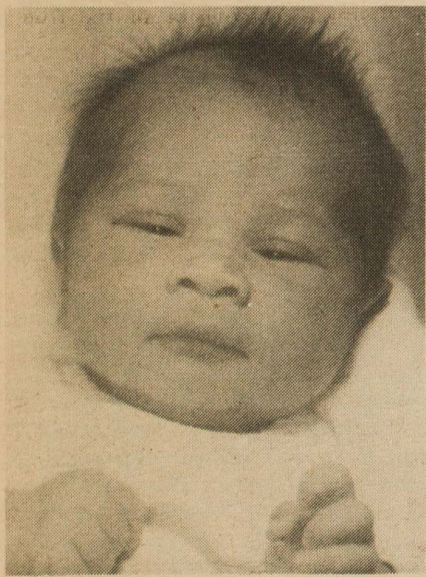
How would you go about having them?

What would you say to people who object to homosexuals raising children?

What would you say to your child if he/she came home from school after being hassled or teased for having gay parents?

Yes, I would love to have children, and no, I couldn't bear to. I have a strong parental need to nurture, but I don't know that I want the responsibility. I would want to be the natural father of the child, so I would find a woman who wished to be a mother...perhaps a lesbian couple who wants children as well. I feel I could raise children with greater tolerance and understanding as a result of being gay. I think that my being gay would be better for them. I would try to explain to my child why it is that people fear what they don't understand, why it is that people are hung up on labeling one another, and make sure that my child knows that he or she was loved.

--Stephen



We would like to have children sometime in the next ten years. We consider child-raising to be a uniquely enriching and satisfying experience. We aren't certain yet how to go about having a child, but, at this point, we think we would like to artificially inseminate a close, preferably lesbian, friend of ours if all were agreeable. We feel we're as ready emotionally and financially to take on the responsibility as anyone. We would raise our child or children to respect other people's happiness in their private lives.

If our child had a problem at school, we would tell him or her that some people cannot accept certain groups of people because of their ignorance or prejudice. That our being different threatens their concept of how they feel the world should be. Some people fear what they have not experienced and can't understand. We would also talk to the teachers about limiting the teasing from other students. If need be, we would talk to the parents of the children responsible for the teasing.

--Michael and Russell

I'm not sure whether or not I would want to have children. I suppose that would depend on what I do with my life and who I am with--kids are a mutual decision. I'm not sure that I want to bring a child into this world; maybe the best thing would be not to have children. On the other hand, some incredibly conceited part of me feels that what I have to give would create a wonderful child, maybe one who could improve the world, if the world lasts long enough. Still, my fear is that the kid would turn out wrong. I know that I've caused my mother pain, and I don't deal well with pain. The problem is that there are no guarantees. I mean, you can do everything right and still get a rotten child. I couldn't deal with having a bad kid, I would feel guilty, like I'd done something wrong. I think I would react badly to having a kid who was a Republican or worse.

Let's see, how would I have a child...well, you get a sperm and an egg, and presto...how I'll get them together depends on the circumstance. I mean, I'm not totally adverse to sex with men or artificial insemination. My lover might want to have a child and she might have ideas.

I don't really care what people say about homosexuals raising children, as long as nobody hurts me or my kids or takes them from me...besides, I don't think assholes should raise children and they do (look at Jerry Fallwell).

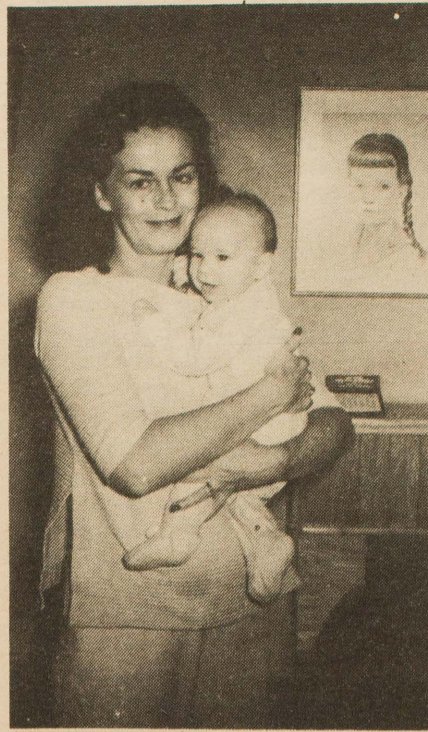
A parent in a situation where their kid is having a hard time from other people about their parents is bound to feel lousy and bitter. But, what can you do? Kids are so cruel, that they will find something to pick on. I was teased because I was adopted. I got through because I knew my parents loved me a lot. Maybe that's all you can do. A kid doesn't understand that people who hate those who are different are sick and need to be pitied. You can tell them, but it's so difficult to understand, that a lot of adults never grasp it, they just return hate for hate. All you can do is love the kid as much as you can and hope that she or her learns this. (If a child learns it, the rest of life is easy, because no matter what, she or he will have friends.)

--Lisa

No, I would not want to have children. I feel that it is optimum for a child to have two parents and I am unwilling to make that sacrifice. There is certainly no real need to bring children into a crowded world. As regards objections to homosexuals raising children, I would say that that may be a valid point, but only on a case-by-case basis, in the same way that many heterosexuals are also unfit to raise children. Love, compassion, and patience seem more important than sexuality.

If people caused problems for my child, I would attempt to explain to the child that it was too bad that the person(s) who hassled her or him had been taught to hate rather than love their fellow human beings. The child would know from an early age that the sexual orientation of a person does not make the person, just as for color or age; but that hate and close-mindedness does make a person inferior.

--Mike



Yes, I have a very strong belief in family ties. I believe raising a family is important. The interaction among family members is a unique form of personal satisfaction as well as a form of self-expression. One's children are a reflection of one's self. Although each are individuals, we tend to become like one another consciously and sub-consciously. Yet, that melange of different perspectives makes each family member unique.

Personally, the thought of carrying for 9 months is not at all appealing to me as a woman; but the satisfaction of watching one's child grow and develop ideas, personality, etc., would overrule any discomfort I may be anticipating. At this point, I cannot answer in whole how to go about having children. I have contemplated adoption as an alternative mode for having a child.

Of course, those who are "homophobic" will object to "homos" raising children. It is therefore important to educate the straight community into believing that homosexuality is an alternative lifestyle and not abnormal or "sick".

Since society reacts so destructively towards homosexuality, it would not be fair to explain to children about homosexuality until they are able to understand and defend themselves verbally. Like anything else, the child must be educated to understand that homosexuality is O.K. It is almost like a child who is adopted; if one loves the child, and the child is brought up in a warm, caring environment, it really should not matter in the long run that their parents are gay. Unfortunately, in order to protect the child, I believe, in many cases, that the parents' gay identity should be hidden from the child's peers and their parents. Since it may be found out, though, the child should be made aware and taught to defend his/her parents.

I would hope that I would raise my child to want to come to me and tell me about problems he/she encountered with other people regarding my being gay, and that we would be able to sit down and reevaluate our position and make sure the child was totally comfortable with the family environment.

--Kryns

Yes, we want to have children. We love children. We would have children through artificial insemination. We would want to know the father well. No sperm banks!! We would combat those people who would object to us raising children with statistics. We would tell those people that the same proportion of homosexuals come from heterosexually-parented homes as come from homosexually-parented homes. If they worry that we will turn our kids into "one of us", we would tell them that most of the people we know were raised by heterosexual parents and they didn't turn out straight. Why should our kids turn out gay? And, why should it matter?

As far as dealing with hassles directed toward our child, we would try to prepare for those by making him/her aware as she/he grows up where he/she came from and the love involved in his/her creation. We plan to explore the differences in our family structure and that of others. Although these explanations may not lessen the hurt of being hassled or teased, they may make it a little easier for the child to deal with the prejudices against homosexuality.

--Liz and Michelle

No, I would not want to have children. The assumption of past generations that one grows up, becomes married and has children without serious consideration to the contrary, is being challenged by many women today. When considering my goals and ambitions, having children is not very high on my priority list and would, in fact, preclude or delay goals which are more important to my life. As you can see, my sexual preference has nothing to do with this particular decision.

If I were to decide to have children, I would choose the path of least resistance, which appears to me to be: convincing a male friend to impregnate myself or my partner. Adoption and artificial insemination would not only be a financial burden, but would also present legal complications due to single-parentage adoption barriers, or to problems related to having a homosexual partner. Although there are obvious complications with impregnation by a male friend, such as the psychological and parental responsibility the male might feel and alienation of the nonbiological female parent, these problems appear to me to be easier to deal with.

Objections by others to my hypothetical family pose no great threat or concern to me. My deep-rooted tolerance of other people's lifestyles, philosophies, and opinions allows for tolerance of their prejudices as long as they do not manifest themselves as infringement on my life.

While I would ensure the child understand why I chose a homosexual relationship, and at the same time guard against communicating any negative feelings toward heterosexual relationships, the issue would not be sexual preference, but love. I would assure the child that both parents deeply love him/her, which is an asset many children do not have. However, breeding tolerance in society is never easy.

--Kathryn

## DIARY OF THE INSOLENT

by Debbie Mikuteit

Insolence is my beloved response, growing sophisticated in time but still containing the brazen intensity of the child. I feel and give this reply when he asks with squat, sharp, unperceiving eyes, dully and in accusation. When he speaks out, from a stupid field of similar glassed eyes, his uniformity mutes his statements into those of the idiot crowd itself. I reflect on the correct reaction, watching his opinions grow from the simplicity of a single pea to the profundity of a mass of ants engaging in an orgy of decaying flesh. His commentary, spoken or unspoken, will, I conclude, demand of me defiant insolence until I can view it without disgust. A unique single thought can be volleyed with subtle reply. But *his* voice is the automaton; each sentence unconscious mimicry, each word the errors of mediocrity and resignation, each inflection mechanical and hollow...its repetitive rhythm resonates on me; I echo back upon the wall, "I have heard it before, before, before."

The robotic the dim the despairing the followers, following out of fear of doing differently, their ignorant leader taking them to a cliff. By the time they arrive they'll have realized where they were going, but will also know they can't start again, sadly realize they can't be rewound like reels on a machine even though they imitate the device in every other way. They are likely to leap to death when they discover this.

Insolence, therefore. Insolence, because I have hope, to tug at eyes grown shut out of rare use. Insolence because maybe I can light a fire in them. Insolence to pinch them if they have human flesh left to feel it, to draw the pain that will keep them alive.

And the source of life is in pain. Sorrow brings, as it always has, some adrenalin for tomorrow. Tomorrow when we may be alone again. But do not avoid it, instead revel in the solitary; let it be a comfort. They say that if alone you will look inside, seeing nothing but black, then that's why there's God, to heal that darkness into light. But if you don't try to escape, but face that black, why then it becomes white and is God. Pain avoided needs help. Pain we face is our savior. The one who believes, on this basis, that accepted sadness is strength, is coming. The one who knows it is but surely there. Know, know, know you can never be too familiar with, the ache of uniqueness, the thud of the I would wish, the sharp bite of the faux pas. Rather than escaping them, merge sensually with the things that hurt and with curious fingers explore their source. Commit acts disrespectful and immoral for the intimacy with which they bring you together with the feeling of the painful. All this very close knowing piles up, becoming a mountain of gathered wisdom and influence. No one can dismiss the mountain. The one who lives its life is immortal. Death then is not afraid; for she who finds herself in the stuff of the mountain is near indestructible.

You say it seems true and so okay you believe it, now close the book and go home. But then you don't

really think it is right, because integrity demands that to believe a thing you have to act it yes indeed. Also, you cannot toss this requirement to the wind, no not at all. It says to your robotic "okay nice but okay nice but okay nice" an unhesitatingly patient "Yes but still and still and yet still." This is after all an insolent integrity. This is what you will call it when you turn and go there and it is already there, or you run this way and it smiles back insistently. You will begin to think it is provokingly pert. Especially in the way it seems to know you. It says things repeatedly like you do but is desrespectfully more successful than your calculated robotic speech in maintaining consistence. This is but of course only natural because integrity means consistence. You cannot claim to have anything whole constructed without integrity; there is just absolutely no way to pretend. Can't hide. Can't think *this* bit of no consequence and do other things in the meantime. No, no. And no. Nothing can be forgotten, especially not the smallest. If it is forgotten, you can be certain of one thing and that is it will come back to haunt you.

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*You may call us idealistic or dreamy... but we manipulate you.*

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When it haunts you at first you will only feel it as a vague itch. You'll nevermind it, you hope, out of existence, dismissing things that irritate with, "But it just has to be done." At first you will say this objectively, but later the insistent ghost integrity will make you utter it defensively and finally despairingly and uncertainly. It seems as if the tide of life is inching you out to sea. You call this 'reality,' and are content with that designation because you have heard 'reality' is a good thing and besides you look about at other faces blank as your own, then think this all must be real when you're given the evidence of the commonality of the phenomenon. The avoidance you see is popular; this dull life the masses share has a name. It is mediocrity. It is conformity. It is manners, politeness, and civility. This, the ballet of the ridiculous hordes, is done together; one bumbles and the other tumbles and like grotesque gorillas and dancing slippers they ape one another with twisted faces, dripping saliva and over the cliff they go. Locked into mimicry they cannot escape becoming animals and are forced to express themselves in any decent way. People turn away at the funeral embarrassed by the Dorian Gray hideous facade.

This what you call 'reality' is your reality. If you live in polite avoidance, it is the fact of your life that you are haunted and helpless. But, if you disregard everything else, you still know this--it is not my reality, not that of others, and did not or does not have to be yours.

My reality is insolence. It is what you call 'idealism' or 'a dream' or 'immature' or everything else that can let you forget its threat to your philosophy. Oh, beware of the dream, this ideal that we share! We



the nonconformist, the unpopular, the eccentric, the unfortunate, the silent and the ignored. Oh yes, you must stay away from our dream once you have denied it. Never peruse our books which might irritate you. Stay at home and avoid our haunting eyes. Do not watch TV or hear our singing the promise of tomorrow on the radio. Never look out the window and see the sky full of our brilliant blue wish. Instead, jail us with severe laws. Confine our defiant idealism by deluding yourself with the significance of the practical in life. Buy, buy all you can, and imbue yourself for posterity because if you forgo dreams there will be no other continuation of you when you die. Find things to do in your spare time; clutch with murderous intensity to this or that delightful pitiful insignificant deathly hobby which allows you to live without the reminder we are screaming in the hallway where you turned your back and ignored your friends. Oh, but we scream loudly. We'll drive you to more than psychotic stamp collecting. If you run from us it will be a harsh sentence. You may call us idealistic or dreamy, thinking you can control us, but we manipulate you.

How do we get this way? You help us. Look under your feet and see how you're cultivating insolence by squashing us. We grow wild with the pain, grow up with the pain. If we seethe in anger we are blinded by it and cannot learn by it, then we become like you. But when we accept the pain, we bloom into mountains. In my life the growth came directly out of the tense years, where from pain I got love and also insolence. The tears seemed to arrive in a pattern, which I enjoyed observing when for conformity's sake I ought to have concentrated on the pain. Instead I spit in the face of it.

At 14 it began, when I got an illness that left me weak and pale. It hurt. Coming home from school with flesh still ringing of all the insults, I looked in the mirror. Seeing the paleness, plain hair, and worried eyes, I thought I was like a stone from the river that got rushed over, becoming worn out. But I looked at my hands and feet with traces of blue in them. I liked how these veins or arteries or whatever stuck out and looked strong. It sort of made up for that face I avoided in the mirror. The face that got left alone due to strange color and odd expression. I turned my face to the ground and put my hands with

veins on the ground and thought they were like roots of a tree from which all things might come. Through tears, the hairs on my arm glistened like a silvery forest. Something strong on the wind blowing, I knew at 14.

At 16 I was trampled again. At 16 they did not speak, but called queer those brilliant burnings in me whereby I felt whole and ascendantly poetic about Sandra and Elizabeth, and Joanna and Christine. "Keep it to yourself," they sang in the hallways; I could read it in their monotonic smiles and boring variations on a single theme. Because I was only growing insolent, to myself it stayed. To my own captive heart the profound love. For my own churning guts the penetrating passion. Under my pillow, alone sobbing the pain of unexpressed feeling. I would love later on; and very tenderly for all that I had found it was worth.

I bided my time, as we the disrespectful will do until we are ready to leap out in defiance. So I ambled along, from adolescence at 16 to adolescence at 18. At 18, now I'd gone from the bittersweet home and faced adulthood in the university. There I heard them yelling another untruth. That woman is weak, her body strange, with its odd bumps and not smooth muscle and its incapable voice. Well, by now I was ready to go with all the anger. So I went off on an insolent journey. I took my mishmash body, the mountain. I took my arms hands legs feet, the forest. Took my stringy hair I cut myself all frayed and hanging. Took my breasts new and strange, not a little scary for all their bouncing I don't know where. I brought along my voice scrawly like no human being I loved. Then I packed up my waist and hips that were altogether foreign and I thought from Mars. Mountains I believed were more regular, and my body was just a lot of unexpected turns. Well I took all these things and said this is enough of the trampling: hop in and let's see where we end up.

We went driving driving driving. I gave the eye to those strange passengers at first, but occasionally listened to them, thought them wise, and reluctantly, than more fully, loved them. We all then got together for the big event, which was falling in love at 20. Oh in vain oh in vain oh in vain. She was after men. The pain, the pain, the pain made me gentle and

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## The Consequences of Queerness

by Debbie Mikuteit

I thought about it much but kept it tumbling looking for expression and because she feared, "How do you feel?" might loosen some torrent, she never asked. Until the thing escaped of its own power. Then emotions cascaded as predicted, and in what she--still in friendship--told me--without words--would be one of our last meetings, she finally asked ever so politely, "I wonder what it is like for you anyway? I mean to be a lesbian. It must be kind of hard." She did not want me to answer, only to listen while she reflected. "Your lives and your feelings are not made to seem normal like ours, so I guess they end up not being routine, and you turn out with a different sense of humor and all." A different sense...yes. "As a result I could see how you'd feel lonely or sad and stuff like that." I smiled at her genuine interest, and at the way in which her normally collegiate vocabulary became inadequate in exploration of the unfamiliar.

It had often been so for me as well. And it is indeed, I thought to myself, stuff like that which I feel. If I feel. Often I am driven to complacent unfeeling. Quite ordinarily, it seems that I have to be especially insistent if I want to feel, so frequently I forget it altogether and sit on a rock. Let my legs hang and I think rock, tick tock, start to hum a song to the rock. That kind of feeling I can do very easily; nobody pays me any mind. I don't have to give the right answer (as in when my classroom seat becomes the cherished rock and I stare out of it insolently growing its unmovable expression, and then the professor avoids looking at me and I am not



only content as the stone, but then begin to see my fingers growing into leaves.) Oh, it's actually a pleasure to do this which could be called unfeeling or at the same time and just as accurately, profound feeling. Because I really start to think like the rock, and at the same time others note it. Nobody expects sense from a woman who sits on rocks all day. Who possibly does even stranger things when out of the pressing public eye.

My thoughts broke as she went on, and I was happy to see that she did. "Yes, I guess it must be difficult. But tell me something--and no offense--sometimes I think those stereotypes are true. Like, how come you dress like men? Not only that, but you often seem to dress with little sense of style. I know a few gay men and they dress nicely, but a lot of the gay

women just seem like they don't care as much, you know?

Oh boy did I know. Ever since I was little I'd get "helpful hints" on how to dress from parents, friends, teachers, and even passers-by on the street with their dour looks, who could not fathom that what they thought an omission of style was in fact one of the most subtle styles of dress. Now to think my own dear friend fell into the same misunderstanding disheartened to say the least. It demanded a clarification unachievable through ordinary answer; it insisted that she must see it as no common reply. And I knew that an expected response, or even new pearls in a well-known format of answer, will encourage the discussion to go click click click and repeat ideas which have occurred in thousands of dialogues over the world. I did not want this snap click ignoble end for the promise I saw in our exchange.

Thus I laughed congenially and pointed to my own somewhat drab clothing, signalling that no offense had been taken, and that the following unusual argument was to be taken by her without offense as well. I thought that once I had shared her worry--once when I was finding a vision of my own but kept getting it lost in other eyes. But now...now I knew. But more thoroughly understood was this, than simple believing. Now I felt this vision. It did funny things to my body to know it so well, like right now when in answer to her question before I could stop them my legs were stiffening and my body becoming the trunk of a tree. The arms were of course the branches. Then I smiled and my fingers fluttered like falling leaves and I brought them in contact with the ground, where I picked up a real leaf and held it to my arm over the wrinkled lined shirt I had on. Then I held up an eyebrow and looked at her from under it. "See how that leaf sits there? The crinkles in that leaf match the wrinkles in this shirt. Do you see that? Not only that, but see this. The lines in this leaf imitate the stripes on this shirt." She was annoyed, but also vaguely intrigued because she understood my sincerity. I was not yet done expaining.

I dropped the leaf and picked up a pebble, then sat and balanced the pebble on my knee. I put my head down and glanced at the stone sideways, starting to breathe harder while maintaining that difficult position. I looked at her with a humble and mischievous request for recognition. "And can you see this! The stone balances there. Not only that but its gray color goes with the fading blue in these jeans. I could not help myself but grinned impishly. She smiled, but became a little irritated with my denial of the solemnity she thought this, one of our last meetings, certainly deserved. So then I became serious, or at least tended in that direction.

"Really now, these are the reasons why I wear certain clothes like jeans and cotton shirts. I am not however dismissing the importance of your idols to you, just as the simple paintings on my wall at home do not imply I detest the work of Rembrandt or Picasso. If you prefer a little more sophistication in your dress or model yourself after some heroine, I remain appreciative but without a trace of envy. Because my hero after which I



model myself is the earth, exquisitely pure and outrageously simple. If I wore things which did not bend in compliance with the earth, then I could not so skillfully be the tree or place the leaf on my person; if I covered myself without adherence to nature's fashion then the pebble on my knee would fall off out of plain shame and nervousness. Being the bold earth puts magic in my intention, and certainty in all my action.

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*"The stone balances here. Not only that, but its gray color goes with the fading blue in these jeans."*

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She laughed and said, "I'm not sure if I understand it completely."

I smiled, "Think about it. Promise me you'll do that, okay?"

She smiled and grew impatient to go, realizing these moments of closeness had to be severed. She said she would try to remember but didn't know if she could and as a matter of fact had to go right now and pick up some copies at the xerox center and her mind was on that.

Her mind on that. On that on that.

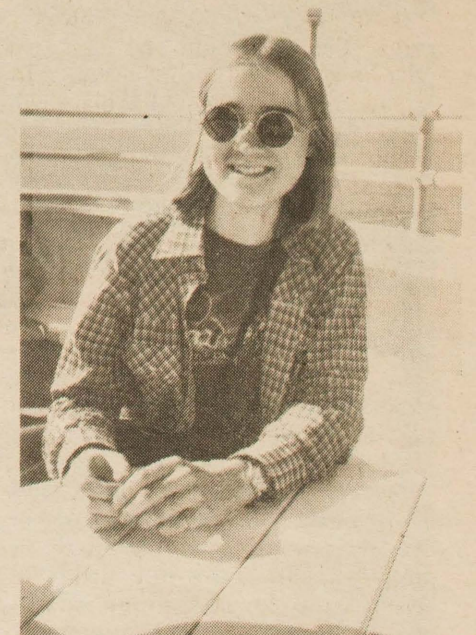
I sighed; then picked up a leaf, poked a hole in it with the stem from another leaf and looked through the leaf, because her fingers tapped randomly on the black sequined purse while she developed a worried look, which in spite of everything, still went well with her white ruffled blouse. Purses and blouses like those had frightened me before, some mysterious power of theirs overwhelming the leaves clear out of my hands and making me think them insignificant, as well as silently criticizing my plain clothes. Indeed, at first the judgement of the two varieties of dress had weighed greatly on the side of the former. This perspective was edged along by subtle insinuations of elders and other ignorants that the frilly were nice clothes. Nice, not nice. If the former were the one, then the latter the other. I believed this once. For two minutes.

In the first minute it seemed to be wholly true when I looked at a

beautiful woman in a silk dress with makeup on her face. But in the next minute she tried to move along with the earth, because her fate was not to be a mute model out of *Glamour* but at birth the stars had proclaimed she was of another simpler world. Her motion was of course in combat with the dress--she almost tore it once. Then in the third and terminal minute, the purportedly 'good' mascara developed a proclivity toward idiocy when it tried unsuccessfully to hold together her sad eyes. From then on I knew what was good and what was bad, and I did not blame the innocent silk and mascara so much as realize that good is being who you are: flowing with the motion of the earth if it calls you, or artfully strolling with vivid ruffled beauty if such is the painting on your horizon.

I looked through the leaf trying to see what was there for my hesitant friend. I said, though she was leaving and reluctant to have me continue, "Well, peering through this leaf gives me a view of you like a crystal ball, but who needs the ball when she can have a leaf." She stood solemn. "And what it says is that you will be

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### About the Author

Debbie Mikuteit is a senior in Physics at UC Berkeley. She grew up in the suburbs of San Diego. She is co-coordinator of the Berkeley Gay Students' Union, and is active in the University of California Lesbian and Gay Intercampus Network

# LESBIAN FEMINIST PROSTITUTION

—an interview with a UCSD student who is, among other things, both a lesbian-feminist and a prostitute. She wishes to remain anonymous.

**Q:** How or why did you become a prostitute?

**A:** I hate to think of myself as a "prostitute," because it's really not part of my identity at all. Very few people here know about that part of me.

It happened gradually, and before I knew it I was totally dependent on it. I was real broke and was propositioned, and I figured, to hell with it. It got real easy. Now I can find tricks anywhere. There's probably not one woman alive that hasn't been offered money at least once, in one way or another. It's something to think about.

**Q:** How do you go about it?

**A:** I walk around busy streets a lot, and men drive by. Usually they just ask if I need a ride. I get in the car, and pretty soon the conversation comes around to sex. There's a lot of testing reactions and feeling out the situation. It doesn't take that much time, and San Diego's full of buyers. I think people would be surprised at how much it really goes on.

I'd say the majority of the men are married. Businessmen are real common. They're usually very respectable and have nice cars. But it depends on what part of town you're in. Of course, I present myself as respectable too and I think that helps.

I have a lot of standards. I never lower my rates, even if I really need the money. That sort of makes me feel more respectable.

**Q:** If it's for the money, then why don't you get a regular job?

**A:** There aren't jobs around where young women in their first year of college can make any decent money. I'm in the highest-paid profession. No taxes, I set my own hours and my own rates. I take good care of myself. Good jobs are hard to come by. I wanted to be a topless dancer but I'm not old enough. Some day I'll get a good job. My eyes are always open.

**Q:** You make good money, then?

**A:** Yeah, I do. I compared it to what some other women that I met said, and I wanted to laugh. I was damned proud of myself. I was getting about twice as much as they were. I probably could be rich, but I only do it enough to survive.

**Q:** Do you enjoy it at all?

**A:** It disgusts me. But it's more than just selling myself. The whole street life is included in the package. Sometimes I have some good talks with people. I've learned a lot about life and giving and sharing. Poor people really know how to love. UCSD is an elite class—I think a lot less of people here than of people out there struggling. I don't ever want to be rich because I don't like rich people and I don't want to be associated with them. I hate telling people I go to school here. I'm really in one class but I have the appearance of being in another. I've really had an internal class struggle being trapped between two worlds like that.

Seems like the less people have, the more of it they're willing to give to help you out. Now that I have street people as friends, I'll never again be without a place to stay or something to eat.

I guess I'm prejudiced because I don't like the way the education system's set up, but I've learned a hell of a lot more on the streets than at UCSD.

**Q:** I know you're active in school politics. Do people view you as being "Politically Incorrect"?

**A:** Of course they do. For this if they know, otherwise for other things I do. I think "Politically Correct" is a bunch of bullshit. How can any political philosophy be correct? Everyone should live by their own standards.

The people that label themselves "Politically Correct" are usually rich. Tell them to be cold and hungry and have no place to live and then see what they think about politically incorrect. The theory only holds up if you've already got what you're fighting for.

I know what it's like on the bottom. I'm fighting for my freedom and theirs, and I fight damned hard. They don't know what oppression is. How can they win when they're so proud of themselves, and so unaware?

**Q:** What is your political philosophy?

**A:** I'm a lesbian-feminist. I know that sounds like a contradiction, but I couldn't survive if I cared what anyone thought. I know what I believe, and what's right, and that's all that counts.

**Q:** It does sound like a contradiction. How does that work?

**A:** There are a lot of people out there calling themselves feminists who would spit in my face. To me, though, feminism is not creating the perfect mold and having everyone fit into it, it's allowing women—people—to make their own molds. A lot of traditional feminist theory is very moralistic and restrictive. Like the big anti-pornography thing. They're going after the effect rather than the cause. They're actually inhibiting female sexual freedom.

**Q:** Does being a prostitute affect how you feel about men?

**A:** Well, sadly, yes it does. It's really hard to respect people who treat me the way men do. It might seem like I'm asking for it, but it's the situation and culture, not just me.

As far as how I feel about men sexually, I luckily have never found fulfillment in them. I was gay long before I started hooking. Men are just a means to earn money for me. Other than that I like to have as little to do with them as possible.

**Q:** Is it difficult to hide your lesbianism on the streets?

**A:** Usually I don't bother. Lots of times I tell the men I'm a lesbian, and it just makes them want to prove their manhood and cure me. They could

never do that. I used to think I was a little bit bisexual, but now I know I could never love a man or sleep with one voluntarily.

Anyway, I'm proud to be a lesbian and those men aren't worth hiding it from. I happen to think a lot more of myself than I do of them.

**Q:** Does it scare you?

**A:** Sometimes it scares the hell out of me. Not just that I'll get a disease or get mugged, beaten or killed, but it scares me that this is what I am. I never thought I'd be involved in something like this. I guess what I'm really scared of is losing the rest of myself—the parts that make me strong—to the portion of society that's dragging me down.

**Q:** What about getting arrested?

**A:** Well I know it's illegal and all, but it doesn't seem like it should be. Nobody gets hurt. It's not that different from a boyfriend paying for a date then the woman feels pressured to let him maul her, or a wife staying with her husband only because she knows she can't support herself on her own.

Anyway, I've been pretty lucky—

## Consequences...

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successful, very much so, but only if you quickly and without delay dash over to the copy center and pick up those xeroxes because they are lonely waiting on you." Looking back I see I was getting impudent toward the conclusion of the conversation, out of frustration at seeing her go. "You better hurry because I see God's wrath upon you if you don't amble over and collect up those papers, for they had taken your sincere promise of everlasting love and now they're hungry for your affection." Simply, I was jealous. I continued, "And they do not get it while you stand here looking at me on the opposite side of a leaf." I gave her some understanding that I knew how she felt.

She agreed with a recollection of her purse into tighter hands, and a nervous tug on her blouse. I was fascinated—ironically—by the ruffles and feminine beauty she wore which I'd loathed before. Now they did not scare me, but grew seductive. I saw how her delightful smile harmoniously blended into her person. She was from another horizon. Leaves green brown orange or crumpled rumped will do for me, but maybe she is meant for flower petals. I did not enjoy flowers as much as would be expected for a woman but when I looked at her again I suddenly knew the beauty of the flower, and indeed I think I would call her eyes violets except she resisted my naming them, creating that aching chasm of difference which splits an earth in two. Eyes turning from eyes. How could it be? It is murder in the immediate family. It is a rude cancellation of the "depth and breadth and height...of being." It is however a sobering confirmation of some sort of sorrowful contentment and—"I shall love thee better after death."

I've never been arrested. I'm mostly pretty careful. You're okay as long as you always wait for them to proposition you instead of the other way around. Although I do know one woman who was entrapped but of course it was the cop's word against hers.

I find it amusing that selling sex is illegal but buying it isn't.

**Q:** You seem to be very confident and self-assured. Does it affect how you feel about yourself?

**A:** At first I felt really ashamed, like I was worth less than garbage, for doing that to myself. But I've learned not to live by other people's values. I know I'm a good person no matter what anybody thinks. Having to deal with this makes me stronger. Kind of along the same lines as coming out as a lesbian made me question a whole lot of things, and I ended up as a stronger individual.

I don't let being a prostitute get me down any more. It's not something I'm proud of, like being gay, but I deal with it. It doesn't make me evil, it's just part of our culture and being a woman in it.

Abruptly she said, "See you later, I guess." And then, to decorate her departure and lessen its harshness, mumbled something about the value of platonic friendship. I knew from her distance that she meant the necessity thereof. Tact is painful. She could have kicked me instead.

"Remember to think about the leaves," I said gently, respectful of her going and accepting of the death it brought to me. Then she glistened with a great smile because she knew I was not angry. We hugged; I pressed my body carefully to hers, feigning platonic expression. She turned and walked away.

Away, away.

In the sky the leaves were falling, fluttering down on us as we separated. "What is it like?" I think she had wanted to know before, but at that time circumstances had us meeting too frequently for her to be comfortable with the suspected answer. She thought it contained things to turn her modest eyes down every time she glanced at me, and that a common occurrence, given that we lived together. So after she heard The News about me which indicated what I might be thinking, she arranged that we should see each other less (i.e., I packed up and out), and then she was open to hearing it all. Then she found that what I might have been thinking not only was I thinking, but also feeling, dancing, and dreaming.

Of course, before she ever asked me, I tortured myself with those questions. "What is it like? What am I like?" I asked several times. Several hundred times. Every day I asked, curious of the fascination I felt for some women, and then more furiously at night I asked when I wished my pillow would turn into one of them. It puzzled me for quite a while, lingering to gather depth and form, like the detailed thoughts of

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## The Changing Nature of Homosexual Identity ... continued

precluding any understanding of the sexual or emotional currents in their lives. The result, in Marshall's words: *This absence of clear public conception inevitably meant that many persons with homosexual feelings were prevented from identifying themselves as 'homosexual'. Indeed, the very idea of a homosexual relationship was often difficult to contemplate, even for those who were later to adopt a homosexual identity.*<sup>4</sup>

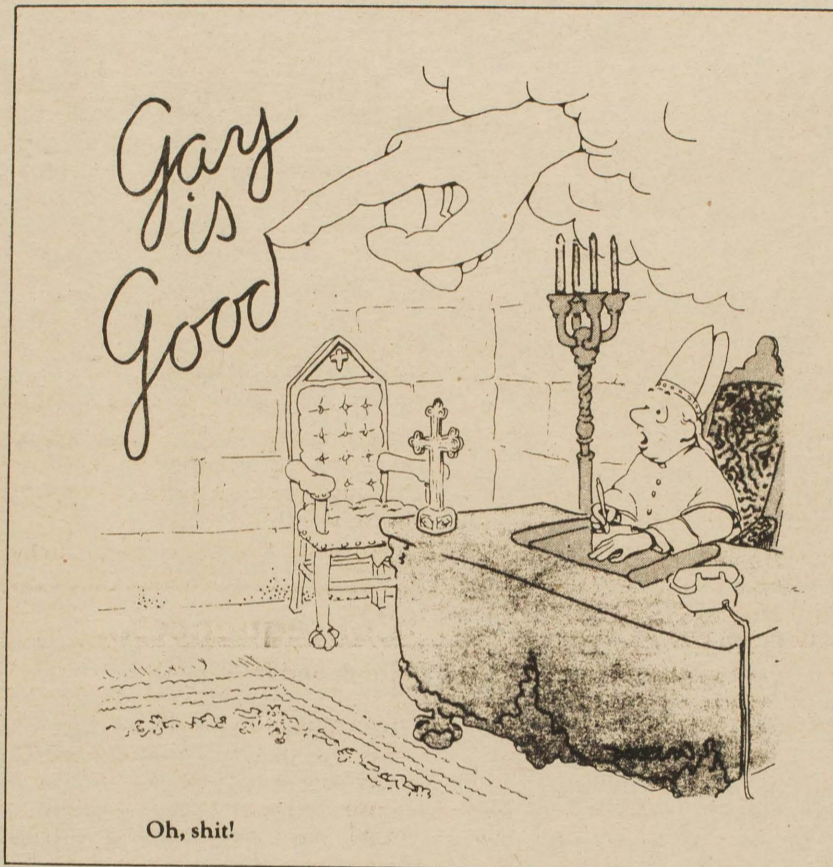
By the early part of the 20th century the works of Freud, Ellis, and many others recognizing the unique sexuality of same-sex relationships had firmly established homosexuality as a separate and distinct, though misunderstood, sexuality. However, the specific characteristics which were associated with homosexuality (e.g. effeminacy) by both researchers and the public at large were problematic. Many homosexuals who did not identify with these characteristics consequently did not identify themselves as homosexuals. Ironically, at this point, the U.S. government stepped in to give the concept of homosexual identity its biggest boost to date. As described by Dennis Altman in **The Homosexualization of America:** *During World War II, great effort was expended to exclude homosexuals from the military, and thousands of men and women were first classified as homosexuals by military medical examiners. For many people this was the determining factor that led them to conceive of themselves as homosexual, a fact of considerable importance in the post-war movement of homosexuals to certain large cities....*<sup>5</sup> **Altman also notes that the U.S. is one of two nations to ever systematically classify homosexuals, the other being Nazi Germany.**

This effectively completed the shift in the 'authoritative' view of homosexuality from one of behavior to one of identity, an important step in the development of the community, inasmuch as it (forced) opponents into a position where they can be seen as attacking the civil rights of homosexual citizens rather than attacking specific and (as they see it) antisocial behavior.<sup>6</sup> With this identity, homosexuals become a people, moreover, an **oppressed** people in their own minds. Nonetheless, a lot of this perceived oppression was internalized, and the homosexual community remained a clandestine one, a refuge from, rather than an involved segment of, 'straight' society as a whole. Kenneth Plummer observes that at the early meetings of the gay movement in England...the realization that one was collectively oppressed rather than individually disturbed set new and urgent questions. What forces were at work in our oppression? For how long had this been going on? Why had nobody been done anything about it before? Why did the majority of gays still refuse to 'fight'? The answer to many of these questions was that many of the homosexuals of the time had internalized a great deal of the negative rhetoric about homosexuality. Many of them were raised in a time before 'the community' was known to exist. In short, they did not identify with a positive homosexual identity. It took an explosive affirmation of the term 'gay' for many of these men to make the transition to 'gay is good'.

### From Homosexual to Gay

In June of 1969, a decisive turning point in the history of the gay community took place. A routine police raid on a Christopher Street (New York City) gay bar turned into a violent assertion of gay identity. Instead of allowing themselves to be victimized by police, the patrons of the Stonewall Bar fought back. The rock and bottle-throwing battle turned into three days of rioting by the gay community, and caused both gays and straights to reevaluate their perception 'the community'. These events, still celebrated internation-

great, the latter being an externally imposed label with negative connotations, and the former an internally imposed label with positive connotations, a self-assumed identity. It has been reported, though, that this perception has not been transmitted to the younger generations: *Radicalism in the movement has declined. Politics have given way to social and sexual concerns, and since this group has never had to bear the painful associations with the word 'homosexual', they find no need to make sharp distinctions between this word and 'gay', and tend to use the*



ally during an annual Gay Pride Week gave rise to the feeling and slogan that "Gay is Good", and are marked by historians as the birth of the Gay Liberation Movement. These events provided the most positive identity yet for gays, as evidenced by the observations of James W. Chesebro and Kenneth L. Klenk in **Gayspeak:** *Since the Stonewall riots...some gay males have sought societal support for an alternative conception of their identity and meanings associated with same-sex relationships. These individuals typically identify themselves as gay, assert a commitment to gay ideology, and overtly espouse a sense of pride and power in being gay. Indeed, males identifying themselves as homosexuals have been distinguished from those viewing themselves as gay...Carmen de Monteflores and Stephen J. Shultz have reported that the homosexual male "internalizes negative stereotypes" while the gay male "rejects the negative societal stereotypes associated with being homosexual" and describes himself as healthy.*<sup>8</sup>

This observation provides a good perspective for understanding the reluctance of pre-Stonewall homosexuals to 'come out', inasmuch as it involved assuming what they perceived to be a negative identity. In gays who came out in the period immediately surrounding Stonewall, there is a more positive identity, a greater political awareness, and a tendency toward radicalism. The distinction for them between 'gay' and 'homosexual' is

same (positive) conceptual construct for both.<sup>9</sup>

### Today and the Future: the Establishment Gay

The deradicalization of the gay community is no surprise. In its day, radicalism served to mobilize and focus the energies of a repressed community. It made the community visible so that gays who were closeted could see that they weren't alone, and so that straights, who ignored the community, would be forced to admit it existed. Says Paul Robinson, *visibility is important, psychologically, because of the profound role played by its opposite in the life of every homosexual--that is, secretiveness.*<sup>10</sup> But secretiveness is no longer the dominant characteristic of a gay lifestyle. The physical gay community provides a space in which gay people can be comfortable, where they do not feel compelled to hide their identity or modify their behavior. The contemporary gay can go through his daily life with a sense of his community's existence and continuance. Further, among younger men, the existence of the gay community predates their own awareness and participation thereof and therein; as such, its institutions are perceived as permanent and traditional entities. Radicalism has served its purpose; the gay community is 'Establishment'. Gay and Lesbian Organizations are permitted to exist and sometimes sanctioned by universities. (For example, consider LAGO at UCSD

and **Sappho Speaks**, both funded by the Associated Students.) Most major cities have gay advocates offices. Witness also the courting of the gay vote in last year's San Diego mayoral election, as well as in the current campaign for the 1984 vote.

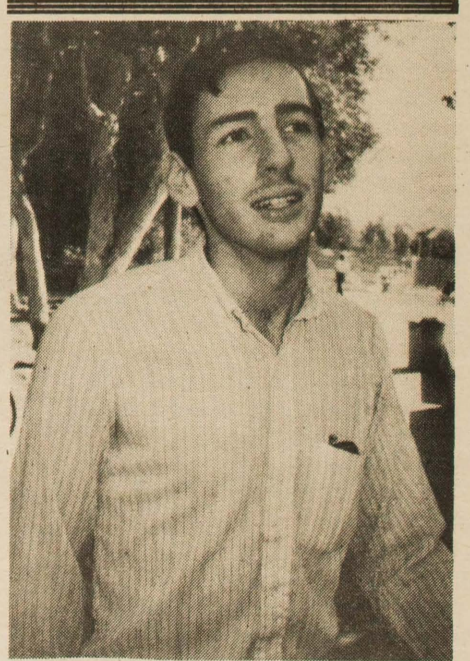
The impact of institutionalization on identity is tremendous. No longer does the issue of a person's sexuality rest primarily upon negative societal perceptions. No longer must a homosexual identify with a group that is 'deviant' or 'criminal' or 'radical' in its definition. By its own definition, the gay community is an alternative to straight society rather than an opposition to it. The community has co-opted many of the values of the dominant culture, while still maintaining currents of progressive ideals. The result is that homosexuals who are coming out--becoming 'gay'--need not radically realign their values to do so. Radicalism is not necessarily part of the gay identity, and that identity is therefore more natural to assume for many. Thus, someone coming out does not feel that to exercise his gay identity he needs to adopt radical ideologies.

The same applies to stereotypical behaviors, such as swishing or limp-wristing. The young gay man who was the star quarterback or the epitome of 'masculinity' need not feel as if he has to adopt such behaviors as he comes out. The gay community no longer requires such explicit 'markers'. A gay person can more freely express his individuality without the aid of supportive stereotypical behaviors.

### Observations

We of the gay community have always been both blessed and cursed as a minority by the fact that most of us have been raised within the boundaries of the dominant culture. Cursed, because we have all been denied the presence of others with whom we could identify; blessed, because unlike many minorities, we have been raised within the system,

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### About the Author

Stephen Russell is a Communication major at UCSD. He has been active in politics at UCSD and in the gay community. He has worked in film, video, and radio, and anticipates a future in the media/communications field.

# LAGORythems

## DANCE SET FOR FEB. 3

LAGO hosts its quarterly Non-Sexist Dance on Friday, February 3, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m.

What does "non-sexist" mean? It means, simply, that anyone can dance with anyone else, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. A tradition dating back three years at UCSD, it has never failed to supply fun and a pleasant atmosphere. It has earned a reputation as "the best dance on campus."

## GAY SERVICES FUNDED

Counseling and Psychological Services, in conjunction with the Lesbian and Gay Organization, have been funded to provide services for UCSD students. The services include: a Speaker's Bureau, in which gay and lesbian students provide a panel to address classes, dormitory resident advisors, and other campus groups on relevant issues, a support group for people who are gay or exploring their sexuality, peer counseling, a telephone hotline service for those wishing confidential counseling.

The telephone hotline and the peer counseling program are still in the planning stages. For more information, call LAGO at 452-6969. If no one is there, leave a message on the answering machine and someone will get back to you.

## DIARY

continued

turned into song which I sang for her and almost for her beloved man. But then I looked about at what was going on when I got back from the traveling. I glanced at my hands and still saw the veins. But now it seemed other folks noticed it too. I had changed, from an awkward child for whom regret and wishing had been continual into a being whose steps fell with all this past into a declarative present, toward solid rebellious future.

Now I don't want muscle so I can grin hulkingly stupidly, and not big cars or money to occupy time between sleeping. Not either success in a job where I can contribute to society by participation in the machine of it. I am the rebel, but it is often unseen or subtle demonstration which I use. Yes I will be found working in some regular place, I may clean the house or walk down the ordinary street. Then I might seem common. But there is a difference between your confused cooperation and my reserved going along. I am the insolent. I do not find the usual treasures in the workplace; I'm always there in spite of myself. I never wholly sit down when seated. I am not cleaning house when I go through the actions, but instead insolently loving the things I touch. If I am ambling down the street it is not like you walking because I am only secondarily going from one place to another, and primarily I feel the social breezes or natural harmonies around me in response to defiant gut gentle footsteps. If I go to study or work I am not drawn to a thing I abhor by the necessity of the action. Rather, I find rebelliously that my dreams arise grinning at me from the musical corners of every task I undertake. My eye does not look away in fear like yours but challenges the ones it meets with the sturdy patience of a hawk, or like a swaying

plant in the noon wind it laughs softly. No, I am not the unimaginative predictable. Never ordinary. I bathe in the grass as I lay in it. I embrace the night and the moon and smile at death. I make love to you, unsuspecting women, in the short time while you glance at me and am done before you can look away. I will not be stopped.

What is this insistent insolence? At first angry response, and later transcendent into freedom from the turmoil. It is writing that before feared taking up the pen, and now drives words beyond the page. Insolence is growing into the thing they thought they'd killed when they stomped the seeds out of it. It is not excessive complaint, but acutely timed silences and loaded glances. It is beginning to feel again, and this time really. Insolence walks solidly with all its collected aloneness poured into one shuddering footstep, risking going to places unknown, enjoying the air while getting there; making the way for a long and contented peace.



## Sappho Speaks

Editors:  
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Sappho Speaks  
B-023, UCSD  
La Jolla, CA 92093



## LESBIAN SISTERHOOD

The Lesbian Sisterhood will begin meeting each Monday starting February 6 from 4 until 5:30 p.m. in the Women's Resource Center. The group will be an informal rap/discussion format.

## GAY MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

The gay men's support group continues to meet every Wednesday at 7 p.m. in TCHB 141.

The group is an open (meaning that people can come and go at any time during the quarter) informal rap/discussion group. Gay men or those questioning their sexuality can meet to talk with their peers about issues concerning them. The group is led by men who have had facilitator training through Counseling and Psychological Services.

## SOCIAL HOUR

This quarter, LAGO has added a social hour every Tuesday evening from 8 until 10 p.m. in TCHB (Third College Humanities Building) 141. It is a place where UCSD's lesbian and gay community can meet, talk, and set their own agenda for fun. LAGO's programming previously had no provision for unstructured meeting time.

Response has been good in the initial weeks. Later in the quarter, LAGO may ask speakers from San Diego's gay community to give short talks or conduct discussions on relevant topics for a portion of the social hour, but this will not be a regularly scheduled feature of social hour.

## Consequences...

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some wise man pondering a subtlety of life atop Mt. Olympus. Then when I met her the reply began to come. Slowly. Then more forcefully. And finally the answer was undeniable in all its intensity and the clarity of feeling it gave. I had moved with the feeling and expressed it as it came, not realizing the inevitable trouble in that exploration: my love for her. I laughed to myself in defiance of the difficult result because it could not have been otherwise, and I was glad for us both that it had happened. I had discovered one of the most elusive and important parts of myself. I also knew that all our tense exchanges, and especially our lighthearted ones, had given her some understanding of what it all meant to me. I am certain she has felt it well because she never attempted to shrug it off with a simple reply. Rather she was left straining for words; a rare thing for a writer, but something that will develop with time and a writer's need to reflect on

pain and merge all of herself into one great expressive being. If I saw her again I'd ask her about it.

Then I turned around...and laughed. It would not be so easy to get away from her at all. In my need to imitate the earth I had something of its eyes, and I could see that there she was, glowing freshness in the flowers by the side of the road. I laughed more each time she came up in a new place. I often joked by saying to myself, "I strongly suspect that you shall see her again," and then burst out laughing every time, when a few seconds later I was able to creatively establish her existence in this or that earthly artwork which carried some wonderful resemblance to her. If not in the way she looked, the things took after her because they also incited love; albeit of a more spiritual sort.

"You shall truly see her again." And if not her, why then it would most certainly be some other woman; I knew myself well enough by now to be sure of that basic similarity. Laughing, I knelt to the road covered with leaves and touched the petals of a flower, gloriously making its way out of the warm soil.

3 John Marshall  
"Pansies, Perverts, and Macho Men"  
*The Making of the Modern Homosexual,*

4 Ibid. p. 149

5 Dennis Altman  
*The Homosexualization of America*, 1982, p. 70

6 Ibid. p. 9

7 Kenneth Plummer  
"Building a Sociology of Homosexuality"  
*The Making of the Modern Homosexual,* 1981, p. 25

8 James W. Chesebro and Kenneth L. Klenk  
"Gay Masculinity in the Gay Disco"  
*GaySpeak*, 1981, p. 88

9 Fred E. Jandt and James Darsey  
"Coming Out as a Communicative Process"  
*GaySpeak*, 1981, p. 24

10 Paul Robinson  
"Invisible Man"  
*New Republic*, June 3, 1978, p. 10  
1981, pp. 135-6

## Homosexual Identity

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and many of our white male leaders have been trained as dominant members of society to know, understand, and run the system. It is my hope that we never become so satisfied with the status quo that we use this knowledge to maintain it, that those of us who have had to search so hard for our identity find it not only in solidarity with gays, but with all people who are oppressed by dominant culture.

## Sources

1 Jeffrey Weeks  
"Discourse, Desire, and Sexual Deviance"  
*The Making of the Modern Homosexual,* 1981, p. 81

2 Ibid. p. 83