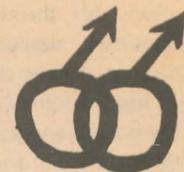




HOMOSEXUALS



ARE EVERYWHERE

How homosexuals are treated in this society

Lesbians and male homosexuals are everywhere . . . and nowhere. We are the invisible section of the workforce who must hide, because to reveal ourselves to the world as homosexuals would mean instant sacking and constant persecution. And why? Apparently because of what we do in bed.

But there's more to it — and here the bosses come into the picture: to provide themselves with a stable workforce they like to have wholesome and healthy families. No wonder, because the family woman and man only have time for raising kids, paying off the home and the car. And at the same time, homosexuals are seen as different from what is seen as healthy and normal. And so they have to pretend to be heterosexuals and working in fear.

The homosexual who doesn't pretend poses an immediate threat to the bosses' notions of a stable workforce. That means if conditions worsen we are in an easier position than others to strike by not being tied to a family and not fearing discovery.

Of course the boss just may have a "gentlemanly" disgust of homosexuality and solely on the basis of this we get the boot. If you accept that bosses can discriminate against and sack homosexuals, then you are accepting their right to sack anyone for any reason. Homosexuals in certain jobs (such as teachers and soldiers), are particularly feared because of the importance of these jobs. Teachers, for example, are hired by the Education Department to sell their labour power and their heterosexuality to teach future generations to be heterosexuals.

Outside the workplace, we — like everyone else — pay taxes, but what do we get? More schools to educate homosexuals to become pretend heterosexuals, . . . a police force which with one hand takes protection money from the commercial homosexual bars and with the other, beats, harasses and murders us, . . . judges who ignore the enormity of crimes against homosexuals, . . . and public libraries, colleges and universities, which ignore homosexuality as if it never existed. Then there's housing. Many landlords

act in the same way as bosses and evict homosexuals. This forces many homosexuals to pay higher rents just because they are homosexuals.

Of course this prejudice against homosexuals is not just restricted to the bosses and the state. Everyone has this prejudice to some extent, even if it's not in their interest, and even if they don't know why. Homosexuals feel this prejudice at work, with housing, in the newspapers, radio and TV, and in countless bashings and murders.

We demand the right to work and to live free of state and big business interests.

Sexuality is socially dictated

One of Australia's best-kept myths is that to be a man is to be aggressive, tough, a hard drinker and a woman-chaser. His woman is supposed to be a good cook, an efficient housekeeper, an uncomplaining mother and faithful — in short, an unpaid servant for the man. From childhood, most people are shown and told that this is the way women and men naturally are and are naturally meant to be.

Along with this view goes the opposite: that men who are not like this are not really men, that women who are not like this are not really women; or male homosexuals and lesbians are like they are because they caught it, like a disease, from others who already had it.

Yet every serious scientific study of human sexuality makes nonsense of these beliefs about homosexuality.

There have been many societies in which masculinity and femininity were in no way identified with the views many people hold today.

How important are physical differences between men and women in making us who we are and how we behave?

Who we are and how we behave as adults is determined not only by our sex, but also by what we have been used to and been taught, especially in childhood. For every child, there is the possibility of it growing

into a person who will feel sexual and emotional attraction to persons of his or her own sex, or for the opposite sex.

Lesbians and male homosexuals are people who know they are attracted to their own sex. The social, legal and political discrimination against us cannot change who we are; nor can doctors or psychiatrists. It is a natural way for us to be.

Most people in Australia are heterosexuals, but they do not have to be. Many people feel attracted to their own sex, and there is no reason why everyone can't have homosexual relationships.

Just as workers experience the oppression of the bosses, so homosexuals experience oppression in Australian society.

Homosexuals — many of whom are workers — are oppressed under capitalism, for we are seen to threaten the isolated, individualistic, consumption-gear family units.

It is in the interests of the bosses that as many people as possible continue to isolate, harass and put down lesbians and male homosexuals.

Relation between persecution of women and homosexuals

The way we see it, this society as well as being run by bosses, is a society dominated by men. This is achieved by teaching people that biological differences make it inevitable for women to be feminine — that is passive and weak and suited only to easy and light work, and for men to be masculine — that is, aggressive, strong and capable. We are taught these differences from the earliest of ages through various ways like schools, but in particular in our families.

We are also taught that men and women are 'equal but different'. Yet, just looking at the attitude of this society to woman's work in the home, we see that this is totally unpaid and is made to seem only light and easy, certainly not comparable to the work of men. Feminine ways of behaving inevitably place

Homosexuals protest at St. Mary's Cathedral in 1975 when a teacher was sacked by the Catholic Board of Education for appearing in a TV interview as a homosexual.



women lower than men; for women to be feminine means for them to be always put down by the aggressive, masculine man. This is important mainly because women are needed to remain in the home to have children who will later become workers for the bosses, and so that they may look after the men, the majority of today's paid workforce.

How does discrimination against homosexuals fit into all this? We suffer discrimination in a society dominated by men because we are unable to behave like 'normal' women and men. By sleeping with women, lesbians do not reproduce children, and are in some ways independent of men. Since this is not the way women are supposed to behave in this society — that is they should not be independent — lesbians, we are told, must be half-men, or must want to be men. Similarly, male homosexuals by not reproducing are seen to be like women. This need not be feminine mannerisms like limp wrists or lisps, the act of sleeping with a man is, in itself, 'feminine'.

The assumption that if a woman wants to sleep with a woman she must want to be a man, and that if a man sleeps with a man he must want to be a woman, creates the well-known 'supposed' way of behaving for homosexuals — the 'pansy' male and the 'dyke' female. In a society where there is no freedom of sexual expression outside of masculine and feminine ways of behaving, it is unavoidable that homosexuals, to some extent at least, imitate heterosexual ways of behaving. The threat is, however, in the reversal — since men who seem to act like women and women who seem to act like men (whether socially or in bed) give the lie to the myth that feminine and masculine ways of behaving are natural and born with us. They show that these ways of behaving are learnt, and are enforced: by laws, the courts and by society at large. For society, homosexual relationships always mean a challenge to ways of behaving that inevitably put women under men. If a male homosexual can behave like a woman without being a woman, then this way of behaving cannot be due to nature or biology, but rather to one's personality, which is moulded by this society. We are the products of what we are taught from childhood, at home, in schools, through the papers, radio and television.

In short, we are discriminated against as homosexual women and men because by being unable to conform to heterosexual ways of behaving, we are thought to be a threat to the ideas that oppress women — which the family, and therefore capitalism, need to survive.

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THOSE FUCKING POOFTAS? DON'T THEY KNOW THEY'RE SICK? THE FILTHY BASTARDS! CATCH THEM NEAR MY KIDS. I'VE BROUGHT MY KIDS UP AS DECENT PEOPLE — I'D WRING THEIR FUCKING NECKS IF I FOUND THEM GOING TO SOCIALIST HOMOSEXUAL MEETINGS, THE UNGRATEFUL BRATS, AND WHAT WOULD THEY WANT TO GO THERE FOR? THEY KNOW THEY CAN COME TO ME IF THEY'VE GOT A PROBLEM. THINK I'LL GO AND SEARCH THEIR ROOMS, THE LYING LITTLE BASTARDS. NEVER COULD TRUST THEM, JUST LIKE THEIR SLUT OF A MOTHER!



Workers and homosexuals need to fight the bosses together

Once, life in Australia did seem "normal". But those days are now gone. In the last few years, hard times have been more apparent, the people's hopes have been raised by the Labor government; and dashed by the events of November-December 1975.

Life still seems pretty "normal", even though there is high inflation, high unemployment, and a reduction in wages. Every day, people are getting into difficulties over fights with their bosses. Every

day there are people being pushed around by police on drunkenness, drugs and traffic offences. Every day landlords put pressure on people for rent, or it's Waltons for payments, or the bank. Children struggle through schools. People get sick and have hassles with doctors and hospitals. Yet things hold together somehow.

One of the main reasons for this is that people obey authority even when the boss, landlord, doctor, policeman is outright nasty and mean, or just stupid. We are taught to do this in the family. (If we don't learn, we end up in jail later.)

The main way we are taught is through being told how to be men and how to be women. We are taught whole ways of behaving according to our sex, from when we are very small. Men have to be strong, independent, responsible and earn a living to take care of women and children. Women have to be good mothers, good in bed and dependent. This way we learn that there are bosses and there always will be; we learn that some people are inferior (women, blacks, migrants) and have to be controlled or taken care of.

And more important, in families, the women work hard to keep the male workers strong and happy each day to work for the boss. But the boss does not pay them for this, and women are left isolated in the house. Profits are based on the work of men and women.

So the family is very important for keeping things "normal".

The authorities see lesbians and male homosexuals as not fitting into families. Lesbians do not need men for sex, and this really upsets ideas of male dominance. Homosexual men are thought to be like women; they undermine male dominance. If lesbians and homosexual men were just let go, then the "normal" ideas of superiority and inferiority would eventually collapse. It would be harder especially for bosses to control their workers, and the labour that women normally do in the houses for nothing would be taken out of the houses and paid for (cooking, laundry, child care).

This is why lesbians and homosexual men are attacked by the police and the courts, by the Festival of Light and the churches, by psychiatrists and teachers. This makes our lives very hard. Just so that things can stay "normal".

The time has come for the homosexual movement and workers' movement to work closer together and offer a more "all-round" attack against the "normal" things, the bosses' society. There are many workers who are homosexual, but who have to keep it secret. The more that we support each other, the closer we will get to the time when there will no longer be superior and inferior people, and no more bosses to fight.

What can you do?

If you support the ideas raised in this broadsheet and wish to support homosexuals in our struggle, there are a number of things you can do.

We urge you to vote in favour of motions within your trade union, supporting the rights of homosexuals. You could encourage the discussion of homosexuality among other union members and extend invitations to militant homosexuals to address meetings. Support any homosexuals within the union who are subject to victimisation.

Many workers use accusations of homosexuality to discredit their bosses. This is wrong. Attacks on bosses should be limited to their political and industrial activities, not their personal activities. It is easy to insult people by calling them "poofters" or "lesos", but remember that many workers also fit into these categories. Use of such personal attacks would only divide homosexual workers from the union. Telling "poofter" and "leso" jokes is bad for the same reason.

A union's obligation is to protect the rights and interests of its members. Just as some unions are working towards the ending of prejudices against women and blacks among their members, so too should they extend the same assistance towards homosexual workers. Otherwise many workers will continue to feel alienated, at their workplace and from their union and other workers.

We demand:

- an end to all discrimination against homosexuals in jobs and housing!
- an end to the treatment of homosexuality as a disease or sickness!

- an end to exclusively heterosexual education in schools!
- an end to all restrictions which prevent homosexuals from caring for their own children or adopting children!
- repeal of all anti-homosexual laws!
- repeal of all laws relating to the age of consent for girls and boys!



How to get in touch with homosexuals

PERSONAL ADVICE

SYDNEY Phone a Friend, [02] 660 0061
MELBOURNE Gay Line, [03] 663 4555

POLITICAL ACTION

SYDNEY

Socialist Lesbians / Male Homosexuals, P.O. Box 153, Broadway, 2007.

Lesbian-Feminist Collective, 62 Regent Street, Chippendale, 2008. Phone 695 281

Gay Liberation, Box 5, Wentworth Building, Sydney University, 2006.

CAMP, 33a Glebe Point Road, Glebe, 2037. Phone 660-0061.

WOLLONGONG

Gay Society, P.O. Box 10, Warrawong, 2502.

MELBOURNE

Lesbian Political Action Group, 100 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, 3000. Phone 662-1037.

Gay Liberation, P.O. Box 35, Fitzroy, 3065. Phone 41-4926.

ADELAIDE

Doctor Duncan Revolution Bookshop, 140 King William Road, Hyde Park, Phone 272-5757.

Gay Men's Centre, 206 Gouger Street, Adelaide, 5000.

HOMOSEXUAL PUBLICATIONS

Speaking Volumes, 140 King William Road, Hyde Park, South Australia 5061 — \$2.50 (make cheques etc, out to *Feminist and Gay Liberation Resources*).
Manifesto of the Socialist Homosexuals, PO Box 153, Broadway NSW 2007 — free.

Camp Ink, GPO Box 5074, Sydney NSW 2001.

LEGAL HELP

SYDNEY

Council for Civil Liberties, 660 7582
Australian Legal Aid Office, 233 0233
Rape Crisis Centre, 699-9010.

MELBOURNE

Council for Civil Liberties, 347 6302
Aust. Legal Aid Committee, 61 2021

ADELAIDE

Council for Civil Liberties, 425 118
Australian Legal Aid Office, 517 400

Published by the Socialist Lesbians / Male Homosexuals, P.O. Box 153, Broadway, NSW, 2007. February 1977.