

# GAYLY FORWARD

February, 1974

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gay lib doesn't  
draw crowds

## the zapping of sister george'-----

January 23-26, the Iowa State Players produced "The Killing of Sister George," a play the two Gay organizations of Ames felt moved to protest. Both Lesbian Alliance and Gay Peoples Liberation Alliance published leaflets denouncing the play because it was presenting a misrepresentation of most lesbian relationships. This was necessary to clarify since the university has yet to produce a play in which homosexuals are presented as happy people. Eight to ten people helped leaflet almost every night--it was the first time for some of the people to come out so publically. Also extra help was welcomed from several people from the Women's Coalition and the Phoenix Party. The ISU Daily covered the happenings and included them with their own review of the play.

Public reaction to the leafletting seemed to range from sympathetic to apathetic to surprise. No outward hostility or harassment took place. Certain people were even interested enough to

who were handing out leaflets. Generally people were given something to think about.

"The Killing of Sister George" is a play about a sado-masochistic relationship between two women, in which the sadist (George) often takes out her frustrations and failures on her lover, an immature character called "Childie." At one point she makes her eat the butt of a cigar, and later on she tries to force her to drink her bath water. These are obviously bizarre examples, however the sado-masochism extends throughout their entire relationship; George is continually chastising Childie, forcing her to do all the housework and cooking. None of the play shows the characters as happy, in fact, everything seems to go wrong for the main character, George. Although "blatant" lesbianism is not played up as important, the fact remains that many people would assume the sadness, sickness, and sado-masochism of the characters is a RESULT of their lesbianism rather than INCIDENTAL to the fact they are Gay. Hopefully the leaflets helped alleviate

"Gay Liberation is not for me!"

"I know where my head is."

"I'm already liberated."

"I have to study those nights."

"I'm not oppressed."

"I'm just too busy!"

On and on go the excuses. The reasons for avoiding going to a Gay meeting make up an endless list; those of us in the Gay movement have heard them all, many times over. Since only a handful of the 4000 Gays which are statistically in the population of Ames show up for meetings, it must not be too difficult to find ways not to come! Much of the time these are simply rationalizations to avoid saying, "I'm too afraid to go to Gay Liberation." Perhaps, it's often sadly the case that it's easier to be unmotivated and apathetic. "If nobody's hassling me, then why should I care?"

Often fears involved in attending a Gay meeting are unfounded and rooted in an individual's general sense of paranoia about gayness, a feeling almost universal



## APA indecisive now!

IN DECEMBER, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its "mental disorders" list, which had the effect of saying that homosexuality is no longer a "sickness." However, they did create a new category, called "sexual orientation disturbance" which was for people who are oriented primarily towards members of the same sex and who are unhappy or maladjusted because of it. This was a bit of a cop out, since these people who are unhappy about being Gay are victims of a sick society, and this is what makes them sick. It's not their orientation, but how others view their orientation that creates the hassles!

A recent development in this story has taken place in just the past month. Dr. Charles Socarides, nemesis of Gay Liberation, and proponent of the "all homosexuals are sick" theory, and a member of the American Psychiatric Association, has petitioned the organization with 200 signatures needed to reconsider the change, and to try to get homosexuality back on the mental disorders list. The entire organization will be polled, sometime in the future about the fate of the nomenclature change.

## ACLU enters child custody battle

The American Civil Liberties Union has entered a legal battle in Newark, Ohio, involving Sally Hall, a lesbian, her former husband David, and custody of their daughter Martha Ann, by supplying Ms. Hall with a lawyer. The two parents were divorced in 1969 and custody was given to the mother; Martha was allowed to visit her father on week-ends. Now Ms. Hall and her lover are planning to move to Connecticut, and Mr. Hall is requesting complete custody on the grounds that his ex-wife cannot be a good mother because she is Gay. This is an important precedent as it's the first time the A.C.L.U. has entered a child custody battle on behalf of an admitted lesbian.

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or another. These are a result of living in such a hostile, anti-Gay society. Those people who have overcome their paranoia enough to come to a Gay meeting have taken a big step. Society does not want groups that it considers a "threat" to organize because these groups might find faults or weaknesses in the social structure itself. As long as these groups are separated, the principle of "Divide and conquer" is at work, even though this is a subtle example.

Also many people are afraid to attend a Gay meeting because they are afraid they will have to "come out" publicly immediately. This objection is not based on fact; over 100 people have attended at least one meeting of one of the Gay organizations in the past three

have come out to any extent publically. Those of us who are out can usually remember the hassles involved in getting to where we are now, and we can usually lend a sympathetic ear to the hassles of others. One has to believe the benefits derived from being openly Gay would outweigh the bad effects before it is worthwhile to be open. And many people are just not ready to cope with the hassles--supposed or real--that might happen.

Some people are afraid if they associate with "known" homosexuals that they too will then be labelled; this would result in loss of one's "friends," prestige, and result in chastisement. This is a possible risk. Gays who do come to our meetings can avoid associating with those of us who are openly Gay outside of the meetings if they so desire. The meetings in themselves can fulfill the basic need for some people by giving them someone to talk to. This is the supportive role of Gay Liberation, which is just as important as the political and social roles. Together they help create a sense of sisterhood among Gays.

If a Gay person says "I'm no oppressed," or "I just don't care" to you, why not retort

(Continued)

Lesbian Alliance  
PO Box 1237  
ISU Station  
Ames, Iowa 50010

Gay Peoples Liberation  
Alliance  
PO Box 1001  
ISU Station



And I'm tired of revolution  
anyhow because it seems  
one must keep on going,  
keep on moving, never  
resting for fear that you  
might realize just how  
far you haven't gone or  
how really very close  
revolution is.

Well, I just thought I'd tell  
you I'm glad it's over--glad  
that I'll miss you and what  
I really do care,  
and that someday I'll have  
a friendship, maybe with you  
that will be as complete as  
anything ever can be  
In loving and caring, truth and  
honesty.

And then we'll realize  
that this whole fuckin'  
mess wasn't in vain  
Take my love with you to  
Washington--gram, get things  
sorted out and intensify  
the search for yourself

Plus one more thing, honey--  
write and let me know  
how you are

Please

--Alanna

# GAYLY FORWARD no. 1...WHAT DO YOU THINK...?!?

This is the first issue of GAYLY FORWARD. Though it may be haphazard, non-professional, too radical or not radical enough, irrelevant, not newsworthy, or any of a number of other possible criticisms, it is hopefully an important step for the consciousness of the Gay Community of Ames and Central Iowa. This is the first Gay newsletter (that we know of) to have come out of Ames--Lesbian Liberation in Des Moines put out several issues of a newsletter last year, but we haven't heard from them for quite some time. Hopefully we will prosper and have future editions, with luck at least once a month. If you are interested in receiving copies of future editions of GAYLY FORWARD, send your name and address (we request confidentiality of readers) to P.O. Box 1252, 1501st Ames, Iowa 50010. Self-addressed, stamped long envelopes are appreciated.

If you are a Sister or Brother, Gay, Straight, Bisexual, Asexual, drag queen, Polymorphous Perverse, unlabellable, dead or alive, or none of the above and have an opinion about this newsletter/paper/whatever it is, send it to the above address. Letters to the editor will remain unsigned if you request it. Also feel free to submit articles, poems, jokes, cartoons (though we might not be able to print them with present facilities), feelings, happenings, ideas, criticisms, and/or other paraphernalia or propaganda. Donations for the continued existence of the paper are also very welcome. If you would like to donate your services to help with future editions, that is also needed.