

The

# Lambda



"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

--- Henry David Thoreau

THE LAMBDA

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## UT ADMINISTRATION REJECTS GAY LIB AGAIN SGA Commissions Gay Board

The UT Administrative Council met on Tuesday, June 1st, to hear the UT Gay Liberation Front's second appeal to be granted official recognition by that body. In an unprecedented denial, the Council voted to sustain their earlier opinion that to grant us recognition would be to offend that undefinable "public policy" of the State of Tennessee. Their denial is unprecedented in that at no time has an organization been recommended twice by the University Student Activities and Organization Board (USAOB) only to be vetoed twice by the Council. The Student Government has all along supported our bid for recognition, and, while the Administration has been led to believe that our purpose is illegal, neither the students nor the Vox Populi Party (which won the recent campus elections with the biggest margin of any party on this campus ever) supports the weak foundations on which the idea of our illegality rests.

As a result of our latest denial by the Administrative Council, the Student Senate voted to give us recognition by creating a Gay Lib Affairs Board, which would allow us to function as a legitimate on-campus group as a wing of the Student Senate. A problem arose, however, when Chancellor Weaver stated that the Student Senate did not have the power to make such a move and threatened to abolish the entire Student Government.

We of Gay Lib feel that we have worked entirely within the system, yet we have been met with rejection, by many who have allowed their prejudices and their irrationality to make their decision. Those of us who represented GLF at the Administrative Council had faith in its members to be fair and impartial, but it is obvious that they were the victims of two things: (1) the persistent argument by the university's assistant general counsel that we are illegal, and (2) by a fear of what the people of the state will think.

For a closer analysis of what happened before the Council, see **SECOND ROUND RESULTS IN WELL-FOUGHT BATTLE** on page 3.

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## GAY LIB "STRAIGHT NIGHT" SHATTERS STEREOTYPE

The changes in the attitudes of the UT heterosexual community toward homosexuals and gay liberation was the topic of discussion at a recent gay lib meeting. "Straight night" was the designation for the May 27th meeting of UTGLF.

Members of the organization invited sympathetic straight friends to the meeting. Some of the sympathizers included a graduate student in psychology, a faculty representative from education and guidance, and the mother and sister of a gay lib member. Many of the "straights" made the observation that their opinions about homosexuals have been enlightened as a result of GLF. One person commented that he had never previously known an admitted homosexual. His conception of the homosexual had been limited to the stereotype images. It was unanimously acknowledged that UTGLF has helped the University Community to see the homosexual as a multifaceted individual--not just a sexual individual. He has mind and soul as well as body. Sex is NOT his entire identity.

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GAY LITERATURE: Homosexuality Is a "Way of Life."

((Editor's note: The following two reviews come from material which has been recommended to GLF by interested people outside the group. At a time when The University of Tennessee Administration is running counter to the trend of the entire Western World, we feel it is essential that all thinking people acquaint themselves with the growing volume of literature which supports every human being's inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness.))

WHAT EVERY HOMOSEXUAL KNOWS

by R. O. D. Benson

New York: Ace Publishing Co., 1965

Benson proclaims his analysis of homosexuality to be "a step-by-step examination of the physiology and psychology of homosexuality, and man's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." And this short book is just that. It is not clinical, just thoroughly logical.

Benson's thesis is essentially this: The universe is infinite. Man is finite, but also unique. It is the uniqueness of the individual combined with the infiniteness of the universe which makes for the many, varied interpretations men have of their roles as human beings. Homosexuality is simply the way some people (men and women) choose to express their humanity. Just as some people are their most creative through heterosexuality and/or parenthood, so are some others through loving members of their same sex.

In proving his point that every person must have the right to create his own destiny, the author builds his case on a breaking down of the "arguments" which have been used against homosexuality for years.

From the "It's a 'crime against nature'" refutation, Benson points out that homosexuality is in fact a perfectly natural phenomenon. No hierarchy of values is acceptable to all people; but those who have irrationally condemned homosexuality have implied that, just because they do not like it, it is unnatural. But if one is to make the statement that "God never intended for two people of the same sex to have sexual activity together," he should note that it is man who interprets nature and seeks out his own pleasure devices. It is also man who modifies biological functions and structures (an obvious example--circumcision). Most people have recognized, as a further example, the pleasure derived from oral-genital activity in heterosexual activity. So--and certainly this is a modification of biological structure--why not recognize that some people derive more pleasure from homosexual relations?

Moving from the "Nature Argument" to the Biblical one, Benson points out that, yes, the Bible does say, "If a man lies with a man as with a woman, it is an abhorrence" (Lev. 18), BUT (again it is man who has interpreted Biblical stricture) the Bible also says:

- (1) If a man commits adultery, both adulterer and adulteress shall be put to death (Lev. 20)
- (2) That a brother must marry his dead brother's wife before the widow marries outside the family (Deut. 25)
- (3) It is abhorrent to marry again someone one has already divorced. (Deut. 24).

WHY IS IT, THEN, THAT THE HETEROSEXUAL HAS REJECTED ALL THE LAWS THAT PERTAIN TO HIM, WHILE DECLARING THAT THE BIBLE'S STAND AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY IS "PERFECTLY CLEAR"?

Benson refutes any claim that the homosexual is sick. The heterosexual society has established the norm and, thereby, declared that any aberration from it signifies sickness. The heterosexual feels that what is best for him is best for all society. An interesting note on this line is the author's observation that the impotent demand impotence for all (note the man who is too weak to stand up to his boss, so he comes home and reduces his wife to his own level of impotence by criticizing verbally the wife's household abilities, her discipline of the children, her physical appearance, or even her lovemaking abilities.) The heterosexual who hates the homosexual may be unhappy sexually, yet he cannot admit that others find happiness in such a "weird" way. The homosexual has rarely been ridiculed by the well-adjusted and sexually, socially, and emotionally potent heterosexual. The heterosexual who is comfortable and satisfied with his own sexuality does not feel threatened by and does not fear the homosexual community.

Finally, there are those who are incapable of listening to reason. For the person who fears the homosexual community and the possibility of its converting the heterosexual, Benson answers that what a person already is will shape his life. And for the parents and "in loco parentis" educators who ask, "What can we do to protect our children," Benson points out that the child protection argument is the oldest defense on record. Has the person who hides behind this line absolutely no faith in the individual's ability to learn for himself and choose for himself?

"The Counselor and Gay Liberation"  
 by Raymond R. Killinger  
Personnel and Guidance Journal  
 May 1971 (pp. 715-719)

((Editor's note: This article was recommended to GLF by Gail McClain, graduate student in counseling. The article has been distributed to students in counseling and discussed with them by GLF members. The attitudes expressed in the article have been received quite favorably by counseling students.)))

"'Say it outloud' has become the watchword of young people who have learned to express their sexual preference in an open, refreshingly candid manner . . . To the liberated gays, the old straight-gay dichotomy is becoming archaic. They have lost, or are trying to lose, the need to suppress the homosexual portion of their psyche. They reject the Puritan ethic as sick, seeing it not just as anti-sexual but as anti-life, anti-freedom, and anti-love.

"Getting the law out of the bedroom is another challenge that gay liberation is facing head on. Most European countries have recently removed the legal prohibitions against sexual acts in private between consenting adults, and the American Bar Association has formulated a model penal code which would provide the same kind of freedom for gays and straights alike. . . ."

Killinger points out that America has generally been noted for its blindness to problems until the problems have reached the streets, and riots have ensued. "As usual, America reacts with its best common sense in the aftermath of a needless, destructive crisis.

"Whether straight society deals realistically with this situation will depend upon its acceptance of what anthropologists tell us: that our rigidly negative attitude toward homosexuality is, culturally speaking, a minority opinion. Society is a living composite of many parts, with a bewildering number of differences. To remove one naturally occurring part of the system is to jeopardize its whole fabric. Gay lib apparently advocates what Jesus, Mohammed, and Buddha were basically talking: love and acceptance. It's really a self-serving thing. . . ."

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#### SECOND ROUND RESULTS IN WELL-FOUGHT BATTLE

The U-T Administrative Council is a jury like body called to meet only on specific occasions when an appeal is to be heard. Composed of the deans of all the colleges, four faculty members, and chaired by Dr. Howard Aldmon, vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, the Council is ideally supposed to deliberate as fairly and impartially as would a jury. Here is where the problem arose, for advising the council on legal points was Arthur B. Stowers, the university's own assistant general counsel. In the name of fairness it would have been better if a disinterested counsel could have been obtained, for obviously Stowers represents a most biased point of view.

It was Stowers who had the burden of proving his charges against us. These charges are as follows: (1) That the "Crimes against Nature" Statute applies to homosexuality, (2) That our Statement of Purpose sets out activities which fall under sections of the Tennessee Code pertaining to aiding and abetting, (3) That GLF is a conspiracy to commit a felony on the person of another and/or to encourage another to remain a part of a conspiracy, and (4) That GLF violates the "public policy" (which remains to be defined clearly) of the state.

GLF secured the services of a very able lawyer, Mr. Charles Susano. It was Mr. Susano's first observation that the University simply did not have a case, that at no point in our Constitution are there any illegal activities set out. It was also noted by him that the United States Constitution allows for the peaceful assembly of any citizens who want to work within the legal framework to repeal laws. The battle ensued, however, when Mr. Stowers stated that his primary objection was to Clause "C" in our Statement of Purpose. This sets forth as one of our aims the creation of a more healthy social environment where homosexuals can meet freely. By his own admission, Stowers is incapable of conceiving of a group of homosexuals congregating to do anything other than plan for sexual encounters. It remained for us to prove that his misconceptions are the result of stereotyped views based on ignorance.

Richard Leggett, USAOB Chairman and graduate teaching assistant in philosophy, spoke concerning what a university (as a beacon lighting the way) should be. He pointed out that when GLF came up for approval the first time, USAOB studied the laws extensively and came to the conclusion that GLF violated no law. The high point of Stowers questioning of Leggett came when Stowers asked him what the USAOB would have done if the word "homosexual" were replaced by the word "RAPISTS" in our constitution---making us the Rapists Liberation Front, designed to end the discrimination against avowed rapists. Leggett made an effort to point out the distinction between the two.

(( continued on page 4 ))

## SECOND ROUND... (continued from page 3)

GLF's second speaker was Kyle McDaniel. He pointed out that the offending clause was not a statement of our intent to sponsor wild orgies in the student center. As he and Susano pointed out, the gay community already has bars and parties; what we want now is an alternative to these, a situation which will allow us to work towards our most constructive ends.

The next speaker, Laura Hoffman gave a detailed report of all our activities of the past two quarters (our many speaking engagements, our gay-straight encounters, the Lambda) only to be told by Stowers that such testimony was irrelevant because it is no proof of what we "might do" in the future.

As official and unofficial faculty advisers respectively, our next two supporters were Dr. David Gumper and Dr. Charles Comeaux. Dr. Gumper reinforced our goal of ending discrimination and stressed UT's need of a GLF. Dr. Comeaux commented: Society has encouraged individual development; yet what has happened to the homosexual who searches his own consciousness and decides that he has found the best way to express his love and creativity?

Mr. Susano again attacked Stowers on the legal issue and aimed an attack directly at Stowers' belief that the university must exercise prior restraint. He felt that there was no justification for Stowers' barring us from future activity on the basis that at some time in the future we might break one of those nebulous laws. McDaniel asked that we have a chance to prove ourselves; then, if we prove to be a threat to the University (which certainly our past activity demonstrates that we will not), our recognition could be revoked.

Stowers is an obvious example of the prejudice and irrationality which is based on a fear of the unknown. He managed to convince the council that --- along with rapists, arsonists, and murderers--- the homosexual is a threat to the well-being of the state. And yet such groups as the USAOB, the Student Senate, YAF, the Student Counseling Center, ACLU, Student Religious Liberals, members of the Departments of Psychology and Philosophy, many individual faculty members, several undergraduate classes and individual students, and virtually all rational people on this campus have shown their faith in GLF by offering us their support.  
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