Homosexuals are people, too

"The only "unnatural" sex acts are those which are physically impossible to perform.

- Alfred Kinsey

This is the second part of a two-part series on homosexuality written by four members of GAMIT (ރ期内). The first part appeared on April 11.

Is gay rights a new issue?

No, in 1967, the first gay liberation organization, The Stonewall Inn, was formed in New York. The current gay rights movement in America did not start as a reaction to Anita Bryant. Various homosexual organizations, such as the Mattachine Society, existed in the 1940's and 1950's, but the present concerns of gay rights started in 1969, following a raid on the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village by the police, which was met with unexpected resistance from the patrons of this gay bar. Much of the bulk of current gay political literature stems from the events of the seventies, before the start of the current anti-gay backlash, which has resulted in a revival of gay rights activities, and more generally, has caused homophobia to receive widespread media attention in the United States.

Can homosexuals be helped?

It all, then only with great difficulty. Many techniques have been tried, ranging from in-depth analysis to lobotomy, castration and many forms of torture. None have "succeeded" beyond producing an unconscious individual--a person who associates sexual feelings so closely with pain and punishment that any sexual expression becomes impossible.

Are gay people sick?

This question is motivated by two schools of thought on the causes of homosexuality. One contends that being gay is a genetic or a biological error or malfunction. The second believes that it involves emotional or psychological maladjustments.

Considering the former, the findings of most geneticists are that homosexuality is not inherited. There is also much agreement that any malfunction involving sexual organs or hormones does not lead in itself to a person being homosexual. However, there are efforts under way to determine whether the biological processes will offer clues to the cause of homosexuality in some individuals. The second is more controversial and is more generally subjected to misunderstanding. The American Psychological Association met in 1975 and decided by a slim majority that "homosexuality per se is not a pathological disorder." However, not everyone studying human behavior is in complete agreement.

Gay love relationships present an enigma to society; their success would indicate an error in society's judgements of homosexuality. Most of those that are successful either remain unknown to the public in order to protect the members, or are recognized away as something other than a gay relationship. Those that are unsuccessful or short lived have been portrayed as proof of some innate instability of homosexual feelings. Disregarding juvenile "crashes" and other such first attempts at love, the average lifetime of a heterosexual relationship is seven years, according to sociologist C.A. Tripp. Very often, the socialization and marriage holds couples together after the relationship has deteriorated, and the force of love is replaced by social or financial obligations. However, this is changing somewhat, causing an ever-increasing divorce rate in this country.

Because of the very strong anti-homosexual sentiments which prevail during youth, many homosexuals are forced into a related solitude, and do not find their "love life" until later in their lives when they begin to find some appreciation for their sexual feelings. One must be sure to pursue the meaning gay person may explore a variety of relationships, just as any properly maturing straight person.

They are really not very different from straight bars. A gay bar may have many appearances, from quiet homey to pulsating disco. Much more interesting than the appearance of a gay bar is its function. The gay bar is still the major organized, expressly gay, social institution. It is a public place where gays may feel free to be themselves without fear of persecution within a familiar environment. It is a place where gays are assured of finding other gays, again bypassing the need to search within a homophobic environment.

Are there really bisexuals?

Certainly. Kinsey and more recent sexologists have shown that sexual preference is not polarized along heterosexual-homosexual lines, but forms a continuum with exclusive heterosexuality or homosexuality at either end and bisexuality falling in the middle. Everyone has the capacity for bisexual behavior. Heterosexual men who despised of women may turn to homosexuality as an outlet, for example. There are many gay people who are married and mate to function sexually with their spouses.

Do gays have a tendency towards child molesting?

There is a general misconception that gay people are child molestors. In studies done of child molestors there was no evidence found to support this. For example an American Humane Association study found that to twelve times in one homosexual child molestation as homosexual. In 75% of the cases, the adult involved was a relative or acquaintance of the child and/or the parents. This doesn't mean that the same is true of being a partner. It is often brought up in custody disputes that gay parents should not keep the children because they will become homosexuals. We know of no evidence to support this allegation.

The answer to this question depends greatly on the relationship between parents and offspring and values held by the family. The responses to a child being gay vary from range of "It's O.K. as long as you are happy," to "I am a Christian, and I can't accept homosexuality," to "My lawyer will tell you about your mother battery," to "I feel sorry for your sister she may lose her husband," or "My lawyer will tell you about your father being gay."

Most often, however, the situation has become one of extremes. After a period of time there may be a sufficient effort to accept the situation. The National Organization of Parishes of Gays is geared to help parents and their children to deal with situations arising out of homosexuality. They point out that the most important thing a parent can do is "to love the child that you love him or her."

Opinion cont.

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