

CAUCUS OF GAY, LESBIAN, AND BISEXUAL MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Volume VII, Number One

Summer 1981

REPORT FROM HOUSTON

Twenty members of the Caucus, plus lovers and friends, met in Houston from May 8 to 10, 1981, in conjunction with the convention of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis. This meeting served as an alternative for supporters of the ERA who wished to boycott this year's APA meeting in New Orleans.

The American Academy program featured many interesting panels related to women's issues. There was also an excellent paper on the concept of male gender identity. Supporters of ERA were invited to a cocktail party which was hosted by Dee Mosbacher and Nanette Gartrell.

Because of the relatively small number of people present, Caucus and Academy members were able to mingle frequently and informally. The relaxed, intimate atmosphere was a pleasant contrast to the usual hectic pace of APA meetings. It was good to talk with old friends such as Judd Marmor, John Spiegel, Lois and Bob Gould, Bob Naiman, Norm Levy, Elaine (Hilberman) Carmen, and Jean Bolen. Bob Spitzer joined a large group of Caucus members at dinner one evening, and on the last day's luncheon who should be sitting at the table immediately adjoining the Caucus members but Irving and Tobi Bieber!

Given the nature of this year's meeting and the limited number of members present, Caucus activities were considerably scaled down from last year. Our own sessions did provide the opportunity to catch up on a variety of important activities that local groups have been involved in over the past year and served to strengthen our solidarity. In place of new elections, the decision was made to re-name the current officers for one more year. They are: Dave Kessler, President; Jim Krajewski, President-Elect; Peggine Hackenbruck and Jaime Smith, Vice Presidents; Bob Schwartz, Treasurer; and Dave Seil, Secretary.

As we departed from Houston, we left with a clear conviction of positive accomplishment, the renewal of our commitment to the Caucus, and the realization that this year Houston, with all the ambiguities and ambivalences involved, was the right place for the Caucus to have been.

AMA REPORT REJECTED

An AMA report entitled "Health Care Needs of an Underserved Population" was withdrawn during Reference Committee hearings at the annual AMA meeting in Chicago in June. The report, which was prepared by the AMA's Council on Scientific Affairs, met with objections from several sources including Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights and the APA.

At the 1980 annual meeting of the AMA a resolution was adopted calling on the AMA to "study the health care needs of homosexuals and investigate methods by which this information may be conveyed to both physicians in practice and physicians in training." Objections were raised to the resulting 8 page report on the grounds that it demonstrated "heterosexual bias," suggested or emphasized pathological psychoanalytic concepts regarding the origin of homosexuality, unduly stressed changing sexual orientation, failed to consider the effects of homophobia, and failed to say anything about developing a positive gay identity.

The report will now be returned to the Council on Scientific Affairs to be rewritten. It is presumed that there will be an attempt to include gay physicians in some manner in this process.

Several problems were encountered in the attempts to have the report withdrawn. These included a lack of openly gay physicians within the AMA, a lack of knowledge of the operating and political structure of the AMA, and lack of a national organization to encourage a more wide-spread response to such issues. The potential impact of the APA on AMA actions was also not fully appreciated.

The APA, incidentally, also opposed the report, but apparently did so not because of the report's contents but because it used the term "counselor" rather than "psychiatrist." The entire effort pointed out the need for gay physicians to become involved in all phases of organized medicine from the level of the local medical societies to the level of the AMA.

Of continuing concern is a book quoted in the report. The publication, "Sexual Problems In Medical Practice," edited by Harold Lief, M.D., is scheduled for publication by the AMA this fall. Based on quotations from a chapter written by Warren Gaddipati, M.D. on the subject of homosexuality there is some question regarding the book's bias and scientific credibility. So far the AMA has refused to release a pre-publication copy of the chapter for review.

BAPHR MEDICAL SYMPOSIUM

A highly successful symposium on "Medical Aspects of Sexual Orientation" was held by Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights on the weekend of June 26-28, 1981. Over 100 physicians from across the U.S. and Canada attended the educational meeting, which was held at the headquarters of the San Francisco Medical Society. Topics for the meeting included a wide range of medical and psychological issues from the standpoint of both the gay patient and the gay physician. Participants earned nine hours of CME credit and heard about late-breaking and generally unpublicized information on newly discovered disease syndromes appearing in the gay male population.

Feedback was very positive, with many individuals expressing how personally meaningful it was to meet in such an open, respectful, and welcomed atmosphere.

A large contingent of physicians, including many Caucus members who had been present at the Symposium, marched with BAPHR in the annual Gay and Lesbian Freedom Day Parade that same weekend. The crowd at the parade was estimated at over 200,000 people.

NATIONAL GAY PHYSICIANS ORGANIZATION FORMING

Following the BAPHR Symposium, the afternoon of June 27, 1981 was devoted to discussion and planning for a national organization of gay physicians. A steering committee was formed and a decision was made to hold a meeting of this group in San Diego in conjunction with the meeting of the Institute on Hospital and Community Psychiatry, September 13-17, 1981.

Gay physicians are invited to participate with the steering committee in the formation of this national organization. Information concerning the progress of the planning will be disseminated in the BAPHRON, the Newsletter of Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights. Further information can be obtained by writing to BAPHR, P.O. Box 14546, San Francisco, California 94114.

1982 ANNUAL APA MEETING, TORONTO, CANADA, MAY 15-21

On June 27, 1981, in conjunction with the events listed immediately above, close to 20 Caucus officers and members met informally at Dave Kessler's home in San Francisco. They touched base with one another, reviewed recent developments of interest to the Caucus, and looked forward to the Toronto meeting of the APA next May.

Overall program coordinator for Caucus activities at that meeting will be Jim Krajieski. Stu Nichols will be handling arrangements for our business meetings, including inviting a luncheon speaker, while Peggie Hackenbruck will be in charge of social arrangements. Interest was expressed in having the Caucus organize and staff a booth in the Scientific Exhibits Section, and several members will be looking into the feasibility of this.

The Caucus was made aware of some ugly incidents in Toronto recently involving police harassment of gay meeting places. Further developments are being monitored for the Caucus by a member in Toronto, with a view to seeing what role the Caucus might play in support of the gay community there during the Convention.

With respect to the scientific program, please send a duplicate copy of any program submission applications to Jim Krajieski, 2001 Union Street, San Francisco, California 94123.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bob Schwartz notes that the annual dues for calendar year 1981-82 were due on May 1. As of June 10, about 40 people had responded, and about one-third had given more than the \$50 dues. It should be remembered that most of the Caucus treasury was spent for activities during the convention in San Francisco in 1980, and that subsequently we essentially had no budget. No money was spent in Houston, which means that we will be in much better financial shape this year to allow us to be active during the year as well as in Toronto, provided our membership responds to the dues request. (Please see the dues tear-off form at the end of this Newsletter.)

REGIONAL REPORTS

NEW YORK CITY: Stu Nichols reports that there are now two gay psychiatric groups in New York City, and the past year has seen a process of establishing appropriate roles for each. The

"Gay Psychiatrists of New York (GPNY) was established in July 1978, with an uncomfortable amalgam of sometimes conflicting social, supportive, educational, and political goals. In late 1979, a cadre of politically active GPNY members requested that the APA's New York District Branch form a "Task Force on Gay Issues." This Task Force began meeting in March 1980 and has assumed most of the political and educational interests of the former organization. Consequently, GPNY has experimented with a new format of rotating social, educational and business meetings. Excellent addresses were presented in the past year by Dr. Bruce Voeller on "A History of the Gay Movement and Psychiatry," and by Dr. Damien Martin on "Homophobia." Social events and consciousness raising groups continue to be the most popular activities. GPNY now has about 125 names on its mailing list.

The NYDB Task Force on Gay Issues (which was upgraded to Committee status in April) is composed of 16 members with diverse backgrounds, both gay and non-gay. Its major goal is educational. It hopes to stimulate more and better-balanced teaching of human sexuality, and is surveying what is being taught at present in local training institutions. The eventual goal is to develop recommendations for various types of programs with lists of qualified speakers and suggested reading assignments.

Emery Hetrick and Damien Martin wrote an excellent critical review of an article on "ex-gays" in the December issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry. The Committee unanimously approved this critique and urged that it be printed as a rebuttal in the Journal. (To date it has not yet appeared.) The Committee also objected to a lack of balance in several programs concerned with homosexuality which were brought to its attention. There has been a close and beneficial relationship with the leadership of the District Branch. The DB voted to support the effort to grant standing committee status to the APA Task Force on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues, and it has supported the increased involvement of gay psychiatrists within the profession. The Chairperson of the Committee was nominated for office in the NYDB this spring, and the March Scientific Sessions of the DB presented several controversial topics including an address on gay issues. Media exposure has been accomplished through articles in both the DB and Area II newsletters. In addition, comments on "Ego Dystonic Homosexuality" appeared recently in the Frontiers of Psychiatry in an article on DSM-III.

The Committee on Gay Issues is also compiling a list of agencies which provide services to the gay community for use by the practicing psychiatrist.

A third group has recently been formed which is multi-disciplinary--the "Gay Study Group" has been meeting monthly since March.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: Bob Schwartz writes that gay psychiatrists in Southern California have been meeting informally for about three years. There are about 40 people on the mailing list, and meetings are currently held quarterly. The current format allows time for socializing but also includes presentation on an announced topic with a speaker-moderator. A recent topic was "Well-adjusted . . . What are the Criteria?", and at the next meeting on September 27 there will be a discussion on the evaluation and treatment of the homosexual patient. Any Caucus members who are in Los Angeles at the time are very welcome to attend, and for further information call Bob at 213/467-4689.

SAN FRANCISCO: Jim Krajewski reports on his activities with the Committee on Homosexual Issues of the Northern California Psychiatric Society. Efforts have been directed towards bringing educational programs on homosexuality to medical school and psychiatric residency programs in the area. The Committee also asked the APA to rewrite the chapter on homosexuality in the PKSAP-IV Syllabus, and a revised version, prepared by Jim, should be appearing soon in Psychiatric News. Other activities have included those in relation to the AMA and with BAPHR, noted above.

Gay and Lesbian psychiatrists groups have been formed at San Francisco General Hospital and at the Psychiatric Residency Program of the University of California, San Francisco.

OTHERS: Peggie Hackenbruck reports the establishment of a gay mental health center in Oregon.

Jaime Smith reports that he has been very active as a gay psychiatrist in Vancouver, Canada and made a presentation on homosexuality at a Canadian Psychiatric Association meeting.

Dave Seil notes that the New England Gay Psychiatrists Association has been expanded into the more inclusive Gay and Lesbian Physicians of New England.

Other reports indicate that the Washington, D.C. group is "alive and well," and meets monthly around clinical issues. An organizational meeting of gay psychiatrists has been held in Atlanta.

PRESIDENT OF FLORIDA PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY ATTACKS APA FOR ENDORSING "SODOMY"

Phil Cushman of Gainesville sent along a copy of David W. Cheshire's presidential acceptance speech which appeared in a recent issue of the Florida Psychiatric Society's Mailgram. In it, Dr. Cheshire said that "for the past 10 years, American psychiatry has been beating the stuffing out of non-medical social issues . . . in its perverse, self destructive way American psychiatry has done some inappropriate things. It has endorsed 'sodomy.' It has done so with the perverse notion that, if you don't have anxiety about it, it's normal. We must bear the responsibility for failing to identify the behavior for what it is, and in that crucial period of life, help guide youth through their identity crisis."

In a later paragraph Dr. Cheshire went on to note that "on a national level, our scientific organization . . . has changed to a socio-political organization seemingly more interested in social causes than scientific medicine. None of us believes women are equal to men. We all know that they are superior to men, but we don't need a constitutional amendment to prove it." Phil wrote a fact-filled and hard-hitting reply, with copies to seven individuals and groups, including the President of the APA. In his concluding paragraph Phil states: "If President Cheshire's acceptance speech accurately reflects his knowledge of social and psychiatric issues, then his 'impact on American psychiatry' is going to be a throw-back to the first half of the last century when the only out-of-the-closet homosexuals were in mental institutions and when equality existed only among white, heterosexual, Anglo-Saxon males. I hope Dr. Cheshire will more carefully check his facts and more prudently choose his words in his future dealings with American psychiatry. I also hope he will remember that he represents all Florida Psychiatric Society members including those who may be female, Black, Hispanic or even gay."

Others who might wish to express themselves on this issue may write to Robert G. Steele, M.D., Editor, Florida Psychiatric Society Mailgram, P.O. Box 10002, Tallahassee, Florida 32302.

REPORT FROM APA COMMITTEE ON GAY, LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL ISSUES

Jim Paulsen reports that the Committee has been interested in three projects: (1) The questionnaire regarding the sexual orientation of APA members has been prepared but printing and distribution is being delayed by lack of funds.

(2) A study of homophobic psychiatrists is in the making. A questionnaire is to be distributed to patients who have had experiences with anti-gay psychiatrists.

(3) Action is being proposed to influence the World Health Organization and the International Classification of Diseases. In ICD-9, homosexuality is listed as an illness. Since ICD-10 will not be out until 1989, there is time to try to change this entry.

PERSONAL NOTES

Emery Hetrick and Damien Martin report that they appeared on the T.V. program, "Good Morning, New York," in December as a gay couple. They appeared again, in another program, helping to debate a presentation on the views of the Moral Majority. On June 22 Damien appeared on New York's PBS outlet talking about the Institute for the Protection of Lesbian and Gay Youth.

Stu Nichols reports the availability of an outline entitled "How to Organized a District Branch Committee on Gay Issues" which he will be happy to make available. Interested parties should write to him at 245 East 17th Street, New York, New York 10003.

Nanette Gartrell announces the availability of a 20 minute teaching tape, plus accompanying manual entitled "Gay Patients in the Medical Setting--a Teaching Guide for Primary Practitioners." Five cases of gay and lesbian patients seeking health care from non-gay health providers are included as are discussion questions about homophobia in the interviewers. A brief self assessment examination is also provided in the manual and discussed on the tape. These materials are available, for a limited time only, for the cost of the tape. Please specify tape size and brand name when ordering. Address orders and inquiries to Nanette at Department of Psychiatry, Beth Israel Hospital, 330 Brookline Avenue, Boston, MASS 02215.

READING NOTES

A brief note on three books that should be of interest to Caucus members:

1. Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality by John Boswell (University of Chicago Press, 1980). A surprise best seller by our keynote speaker in Chicago in 1979, witty,

and erudite history of gay people in Western Europe from the beginning of the Christian era to the 14th Century, winner of a National Book Award and now available in a paperback edition.

2. Homosexuality and American Psychiatry--the Politics of Diagnosis by Ronald Bayer (Basic Books, 1981). A detailed account of what led to the APA's 1973 decision to remove homosexuality from the list of mental disorders together with its implications. A fascinating, dramatic and suspenseful story including much information not hitherto available, and endorsed by such insiders as Dick Pillard, Judd Marmor, Bob Spitzer, and John Spiegel.

3. Sexual Preference: Its Development in Men and Women by Alan Bell, Martin Weinberg, and Sue Kiefer Hammersmith (Indiana University Press, November 1981). Not yet published but already causing controversy, this major new study of gay men and women by the Kinsey Institute finds little or no support for most of the traditional theories about the origins of homosexuality and concludes that a homosexual orientation usually seems to emerge from a deep seated predisposition, possibly biological in origin, that first appears as gender non-conformity in childhood. Sure to be vigorously attacked and defended.

RICHARD J. HANNEMANN

An obituary in the New York Times on June 18, 1981 informed the reader of the death of Richard Hannemann. Richard was the lover of Frank Rundle, the co-founder and leader for many years of the Gay Caucus. Richard died of a drug overdose, and had been personally troubled for some time. Nevertheless, he had invested himself and considerable energy in many of the Gay Caucus activities including the designing and publishing of the Newsletter and helping with the arrangements for the 1978, 1979, and 1980 meetings. His encouragement, support, and well-reasoned thoughts about political strategy were very helpful to Frank and contributed much to the successful nurturance of our developing organization.

Donations can be made in his name to St. Mark's Clinic, 88 University Place, New York, New York 10003.

Our deepest sympathies go out to Frank at this time. Those of you who would want to be in touch with him during this dark hour may do so by writing to him at 133 East 73rd Street, New York, New York 10021.

A ONE-MINUTE EDITORIAL

In this era of the Moral Majority and the Family Protection Act, gay psychiatrists don't need to be sensitized to the importance of organizing their resources to take effective action. The Caucus is our major professional forum, and has had a steadily increasing impact over the few years of its existence. We need to increase the power and range of that impact, and your membership, money, interest, commitment and time can help.

Join with over 160 of your colleagues who are already members of the Caucus. Band together with other gay psychiatrists in your area and start looking for what you would like to do. There is certainly no shortage of appropriate work to be done in relation to gay mental health treatment, training and research issues. And--send along items for inclusion in a future Newsletter.

Cordially,

Dave Kessler, President
401 Parnassus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94143

TO: Bob Schwartz
5645 Park Oak Place
Los Angeles, CA 90068

FROM: Name: _____
Address: _____

I enclose \$50 for membership renewal

Phone: _____

I enclose \$ _____ as a contribution to further the work of the Caucus.