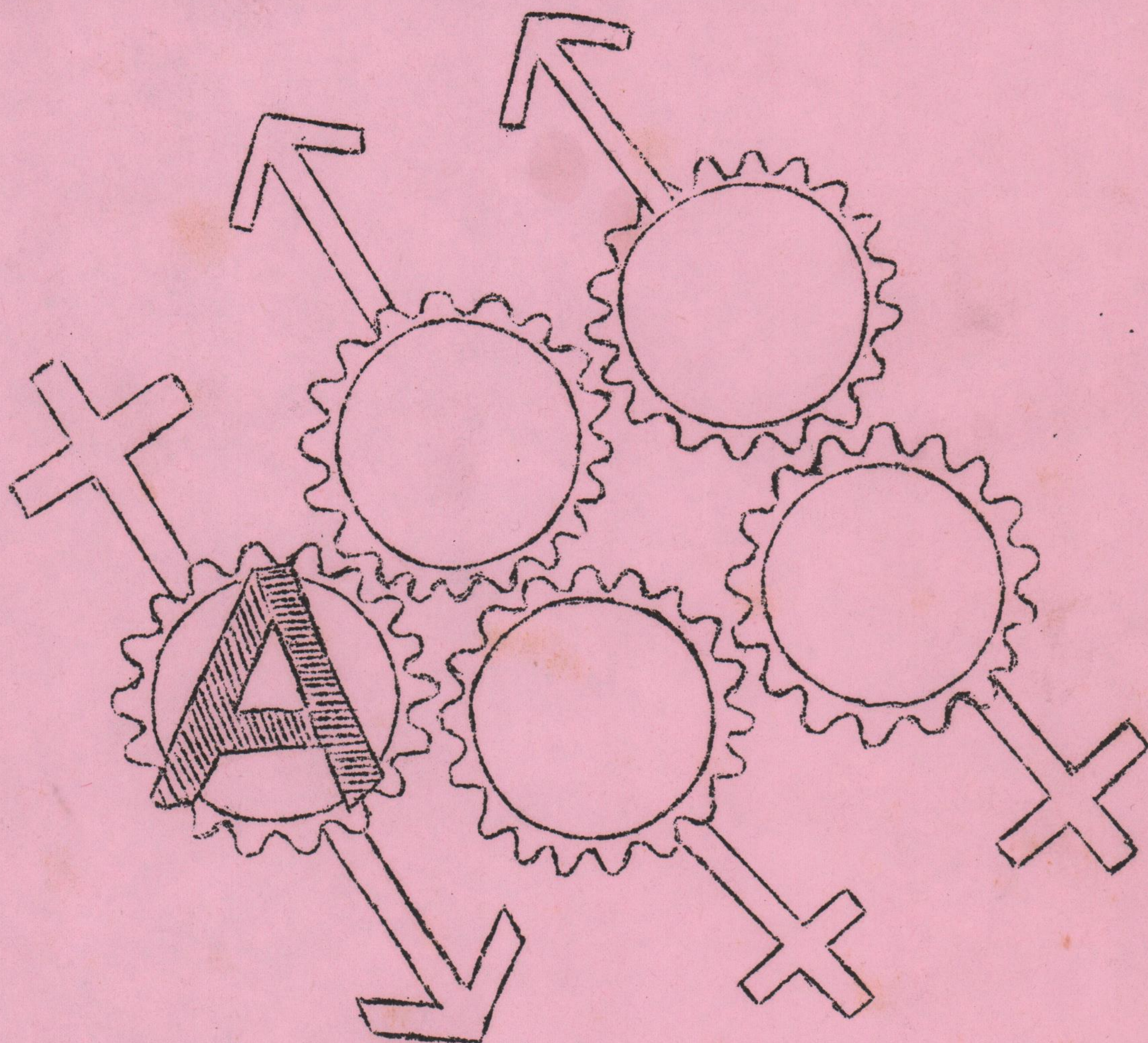


SEXUAL STRUGGLES

BULLETIN N^o 1



INCLUDING A POSTMORTEM OF THE
POSTPONED SEXUALITY CONFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

This Bulletin is a concrete result of a long lasting struggle to bring sexual politics into the anarchist arena. If it seems a trifle negative in some respects, it is because of the difficulties and isolation we have encountered as one of the few groups that we know of which has been putting a noticeable effort into challenging the subject WITHIN the movement. We are not just talking about the odd article in our journals (although even this would be an improvement), we would like to see the 'movement' get to grips with the subject and develop some kind of understanding of sexual oppression/repression and how it manifests itself, both within the class and in the movement. This should help us understand how this particular form of oppression can be combatted best (i.e. not just an occupation of the factories or a riot!). An examination of sexual struggles - what they consist of, how they relate to the class struggle etc. is vital to the task of effectively destroying capitalist society since the authoritarian conditioning of the family unit and the brutal repression of our uninhibited generalised sexuality (polymorphous perversisty) is one of the firmest foundations of the capitalist state.

We are printing 100 copies of this bulletin at an estimated cost of around £10 (donations welcome). We are hoping that it will provoke some response, either critical of our whole approach or, preferably, some kind of positive contribution to the debate. Either kind of response is infinitely better than none... so don't just sit there... pull your finger out!!

If you would like more copies of this bulletin please send a large S.A.E. to:- CTC, P.O. Box 294,

← **NEWCASTLE, STAFFS !!**

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A BRIEF HISTORY

The idea of a conference specifically devoted to sexual struggles has been floating around in the anarchist/revolutionary movement since April '84. This was after a discussion at the keele 'INTERCOM' conference which was generally considered to be inadequate. The discussion was heated but tended to revolve around the question 'did sexual struggles actually exist?' or were they merely the figment of the imaginations of wishful thinking libertarians. The discussion was inspired by an article entitled 'Gays and the Left' by A.F. of Careless Talk which appeared in the April edition of the 'Intercom' bulletin (copies available from us). The article examined how various 'leftist' groups had cynically exploited Gay Liberation before dropping it when it became too inconvenient. It also pointed to a trend amongst 'Libertarian' groups to ignore such issues in favour of workplace struggles. Unfortunately, any discussion of some of the important issues seemed to be side stepped. The conference resulted in a rift between comrades from 'Wildcat' who defended their concentration on 'workplace' struggles and the London comrades (Autonomists, LWG and Playtime) who asserted that sexual struggles did exist and that revolutionary groups should deal with them. We sided with London on the whole whilst still maintaining close links with 'Wildcat'. The final 'Intercom' bulletin (No 6) saw Wildcat's article: 'A Comment On the Discussion On Sexual Struggles' which analysed some of the output of the groups involved at the conference pointing out that any of their calls for struggle outside of the workplace were abstract and didn't refer to concrete examples. The article concluded with a challenge to prove that sexual struggles existed, that they had a revolutionary direction and that revolutionaries had a role to play in influencing them. This issue also included a further elaboration of the points raised in his first article by A.F. in response to a short letter; and a 'Letter to Dear Comrades' from the editor of Wolverine. The 'Intercom Project' was shut down in September at the Glasgow conference. This saw the most ludicrous attempt at a discussion of sexual struggles yet... it lasted $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour most of which time was taken up by polemics between Wildcat and Workers Playtime. It was perhaps this ultimate farce which made the two day conference seem essential.

Before 'Intercom' was finally killed off another series of conferences was born in London. This was the Autonomist/Class War conference in August to which Wildcat were not invited because of the previous events at the Intercom conference.

However despite this, the discussion was again considered to be unsatisfactory (by us at least) since it spent most of the time on prostitution and pornography ignoring other important areas of discussion. It was also remarked upon that the majority of people at the conference either said nothing at all or very little whilst the conference was in session. One outcome from both this conference and the collapse of the 'Intercom' network was a commitment from groups involved to increase the level of communication between groups... keeping each other informed as to what we're doing and as to what we think of each others material. The London conference also emphasised the importance of meeting groups face to face, not just at conferences but also by exchange visits. More seems to have come out of these commitments than usually does but it still doesn't seem enough.

Another positive thing that seems to be linked with these discussions is an upsurge of concern for sexual politics in our propaganda. As well as various leaflets and articles that bring aspects of sexual politics in and link them to other areas of struggle, there have been two issues of the Gay anarchist paper 'Wolverine' (a third is on its way), two major articles on women in the miners strike by Wildcat with an article on 'Aids - an excuse for oppression' in the next issue. Class War has carried several perspectives on Porn plus a pretty good article on sexuality. Some of these things are a direct result of these discussions at the conferences - others perhaps have helped to create the discussions.

Anyway, November saw the second 'Autonomist' conference, this time in Sheffield. Sexual struggles were discussed again and, although the discussion went far better than any of the previous three, it was agreed that we should have a two day conference specifically devoted to sexual struggles and that this conference should be held in Stoke. It was also agreed that groups should provide written contributions for a pre-conference discussion bulletin. November then saw the first general, concrete proposal to hold a conference and produce a bulletin. February saw conference details sent out, the date was agreed as the 3/4th of May with a deadline for bulletin contributions to be April 5th. This information was sent out to more than 20 groups and individuals throughout the country. The date for the conference was changed at the request of 'Class War' to the 18/19th May and the new deadline became April 12th. We received a monumental sum of zero replies. We were not the kind of group to take 'no reply' for an answer... so we extended the deadline to May 5th and sent out a reasonably aggressive letter with a provisional (!!) agenda and a threat to cancel or postpone the conference if we didn't receive a healthy number of replies by the NEW deadline. Of the groups addressed we received positive responses from LIVERPOOL, CREWE, EDINBURGH, WILDCAT, and BRADFORD all of whom we would like to thank for their courtesy. Edinburgh approved of the idea of workshops and suggested a separate womens space, Wildcat gave us a copy of their article on aids. Class War told us they would not be attending the conference (their letter is reproduced elsewhere) and a copy of an article which will be appearing in the next Wolverine - photocopies should be available from us or from Wolverine if the next issue isn't out yet. We thought that after so much effort, five replies and two articles was pretty dismal, particularly as both the articles were more propaganda pieces rather than discussion pieces. Both will easily be available elsewhere soon which would make their inclusion in a bulletin a bit of a waste of time, money and effort.

SO WHAT THE FUCK HAPPENED?

It wasn't an easy decision on our part to cancel this conference... in fact it nearly split the group. We all feel that such a conference is an important if not crucial way of getting some kind of discussion going within the movement as a whole on subjects which are usually just glossed over. The planned format of the conference was elaborated with the intention of allowing some written discussion beforehand along with reference made to significant sources of relevant ideas.

This wasn't to create any 'academic specialism' but to avoid it. Part of the reason meeting tend to be dominated by a more verbal minority is that the more extrovert (usually male) comrades define the terms of the discussion, making those less confident about speaking feel ignorant and superfluous to the discussion. Instead of actively taking part in creating the discussion they merely observe whats happening, taking sides with those who most closely represent their own views. This can't be stopped by getting those who usually speak to shut up as some have maintained, but it can be at least partially overcome by splitting into smaller groups. We hoped that by splitting the conference into three groups to discuss various workshop topics would help people feel more confident about talking generally and, more particularly about things which affected their sexuality.

These ideas as to format were not 'imposed' on the conference by Careless Talk as a group but were arrived at at various of the conferences and backed up by more informal discussions with some of the groups involved. The specific agenda which was sent out was a PROVISIONAL agenda drawn up by a member of CTC with the intention of initiating/provoking some kind of response from the groups invited. This didn't work - the five groups which agreed to attend the conference gave sparse comment on what they thought of the suggested format and topics mentioned. The Class War correspondent waited to the last minute to slag into us (see elsewhere in this bulletin). We recieved no evidence that other groups in 'the movement' had anything to contribute to the conference. As the extended deadline approached we became more and more convinced that the interest of the 'revolutionary' movement in sexuality and sexual politics was nothing but a figment of our imaginations. If the conference was to go ahead we had no reason to expect more than 20 people to turn up and we had no evidence that these people would be informed on, or interested in any of the subjects mentioned.

HOW IT BECAME NECESSARY TO DESTROY THE CONFERENCE IN ORDER TO SAVE IT!

In short we had no evidence that this conference would not be an ill informed farce.... a poor substitute for our desired conference on sexual struggles.... merely a long drawn out replay of the previous inconclusive and uninformative discussions we had had. We were also convinced that such a conference would either let people think that they had 'dealt' with the issue or make them think that the issue couldn't really be dealt with...ie: "The conference was unsatisfactory BECAUSE the subject cannot be discussed." (!!)

It was therefore decided - after much argument and a 4/2 vote - that the conference should be postponed until there was more evidence of interest from the 'movement'. We are prepared to host the conference either in the summer or autumn of this year ('85). This bulletin is a contribution towards the discussion we feel ought to be going on between groups and individuals in the 'movement'. We think this discussion is not only important in terms of creating a social/sexual revolution but also (in the short term!) of helping to create a real revolutionary movement, (ie one that doesn't need inverted comma's!). It is also relevant to the way we conduct our everyday lives - to the way revolutionary groups function and don't function. Some groups that claim to be anarchist have members who are unashamedly sexist and anti-gay, others have more subtle forms of sexism - members who moderate their language to HIDE their sexism, members who have learned to TOLERATE (barely!) homosexuality etc. Dealing (even partially) with these problems, not to mention trying to destroy guilt and jealousy with regards to sexuality, or 'anarchist tactics towards the destruction of sex-roles' etc obviously cannot be done over a weekend conference. We can use such a conference as part of a process. We need an exchange of ideas, a build up in communication so that we can treat the conference as a climax, resolving quickly and in a short space of time some of the issues and positions which had already been raised. This (as we hope to see it) would not be the end... a healthy revolutionary movement should be capable of multiple climaxes (!!!) and we would hope the written discussion would continue with renewed vigor dragging in more and more people, leading up to (when necessary) another conference.

Such a process of exploration and discussion of sexual politics/sexual struggles should lead to a greater theoretical understanding of the issues by the movement as a whole. This would hopefully be reflected in our journals and in our actions ... both amongst ourselves and towards the rest of the class.

A few days after the deadline after we had already made the decision to postpone we recieved notification of attendance from TV-AM and a member of 'class war'.... although it was highly encouraging to recieve evidence of more widespread interest it didn't significantly alter the balance in favour of postponing the conference particularly since they arrived some time after the final deadline.

LETTER FROM CLASS WAR WOLVERINE.

Here are a few comments on the proposed sexuality conference. I have been asked to tell you that 'Class War' as a group shall not be attending. The reasons for not attending are due to the fact that C.T. cannot cope sufficiently well enough with a large number of people at a stoke conference. The accomodation problem that was apparent at the last conference has deterred people from attending this forthcoming sexuality conference.(1). I have also been asked to relate to you that if the conference is cancelled because of the accomodation problems then it might be worthwhile thinking about shifting the venue, to be hosted by a group who can take on the large number of people expected. If we suggested London as a better venue it is because we think that we can cope a lot better than other smaller groups in provincial towns.(2). Obviously, none of us like the idea of things being centred in London, but if London (or any other large city based group) can adequately handle catering for large-ish conferences then there is an argument for giving these places priority consideration as far as proposed conferences go.(3).

Now I'd like to add my own personal criticisms, and I stress my own personal views. I think one of the reasons that people aren't going is because it's a conference about sexual struggles, they'd rather it be left in the bedrooms than brought in to a conference arena. You say that a conference on sexual struggles is long overdue. If there isn't a social basis in which people feel that they can overcome their fears about their sexuality and relating this to a struggle then it is evident that the debate, far from being overdue, hasn't been manifest outside of a conference or our political mileiu.(4). I can go on at length to the comrades about the politics of Wolverine for instance. However, if there isn't a basis for them wanting to know about its (Wolverine's) politics then they don't want to listen. They might pick up some of the slogans but actually understanding the thing is another thing altogether. I think that the comrades are aware that they might find themselves in a difficult position as far as sexual politics go (and so they should!), so there is that level of reticence, and it does seem in a way that you've ignored this basic understanding in favour of a formalised artificial debate.(5).

The actual level in which you've pitched the sexual struggle conference at, it just takes the form of leftist ideology. Whats this breaking up into workshops crap? Is this designed so that we become our own specialists? I am personally disgusted by what you assume should be the Gay Liberation 'workshop'. Gays do face problems as far as attacks, the media, and the hysteria about aids goes, but these are the problems that gays face daily. Gay Liberation is not about the hardships gays endure but the concept of liberatory sexuality for humanity vis a vis homosexuality. Another workshop is 'Paedophilia - what about the age of consent', if this subject is to be leveled around the age of consent then you don't know what the fuck you're talking about! The age of consent is an arbitrary definition of adolescence and adolescent sexuality, paedophilia is the concept of relationships between adults and children (sic) vis a vis sexuality.(6).

A debate around Transsexuality/transvestisism is about 13 years out of date. It may have been a debate within the GLF (Radical drag queens/Brixton faeries) but it isn't a debate among gays now so what should be a debate amongst 'revolutionaries' now completely baffles me (unless of course you can convince me that some of the male comrades will be wearing sequined numbers). If you can tell me the relevance of a debate centered around individual choice, that happened over a decade ago, then I'll tell you about bankrupt politics.(7).

And then there's the sexism debate. Most women in the movement get real shit from misogynistic men (straight and gay). It's fairly difficult to assess this level of incitement from a conference but we know that it goes on in our groups and as men we must realise that we put women in and challenge that in ourselves and groups. Often it is not so much the defect of a given individual but of a group, as an entity, totalising the sum sexism of its individuals. Now if I said that I had an understanding of how sexism works and is maintained, that still couldn't change anything. I could adopt a different posture but my position could be the same. Similarly, as far as sexism goes, you suggest that the conference will give a clue "how to overcome it". It seems that, given the other material at the conference, you seriously don't want to grips with sexism but want to avoid it as much as possible with as least fuss and bother as possible.(8).

(continued over)

The other debates do appear to be interesting but it does leave the problem if individuals want to attend two discussions. Again this means that not every one is involved in the same debate and is not aware of the dynamics within certain debates. This is like package deal leftism which states that certain issues are the privilege of certain groups.(9).

There is a need for a sexuality/sexual struggle conference but it needs to address the problems that comrades are asking. The proposed stoke conference does not take light of this and suggests instead a variety of subjects but for all intents and purposes relegates any discussion of sexuality to academic consumption.10 I've sent you this letter in a comradely gesture and hope you will understand my criticisms. I enclose with this letter an article that will appear in the next Wolverine as a contribution towards the conference (tear it to bits if you wish).(11)

fraternally yours,

S. (of Wolverine)

Note. We have put numbers after certain points raised in this letter. These points are specifically dealt with in the numbered sections of the reply below. We have also broken the letter up into smaller paragraphs than it was in originally.

A REPLY.....



NO HOLDS BARRED
CONSTRUCTIVE
CRITIQUE!

PRACTICAL ASPECTS

- 1) There was NO accomodation problem at the last conference. Most people had either a mattress or cushions. Lots of cushions, a bed and a Karry-mat were left unused at one of the houses in Newcastle...mainly because most comrades were too pissed or lazy to undertake the 15 minute walk across town. We also had the option of booking the Quiet Room at Keele for £20. This would have enabled us to cope with more than 100 COMFORTABLY. The only problem in organising a conference for anarchists is that groups seem to make it a matter of principle not to inform anyone how many people will be attending. This led us to cater for 80 people when only 40 turned up, leading to a £15 loss plus half the food being wasted at the last conference.
- 2) It is a matter of fact that the accomodation provided at the original LONDON Autonomist/Class War conference was worse for some people than the stoke accomodation (ie 3 on a bare floor with very high transport costs to and from the conference). It is also a fact that catering has been NON EXISTENT. The reason we cooked a lot of food was because we were pissed off with conferences where a few more extravagant comrades get a meal in an expensive restaurant leaving us to go tramping for miles in search of a chip shop. Vegans and vegetarians are often left for days with nothing but chips, beer and coffee.
- 3) If none of you like the idea of conferences being held in London why have you suggested that not only the next general conference, but also this and perhaps all future conferences be held there without a shred of evidence that a conference in London has any significant advantage over one in the 'provinces'. Remember that these advantages have got to off-set (a) the danger of LONDON-ISM which is already present in some sections of the movement; (b) expensive and moderately vile beer (!!) and (c) expensive transport. Large anarchist meetings (over 40) have taken place in Stoke, Liverpool, Crewe, Glasgow, Sheffield, Manchester, Nottingham etc without being noticably inferior to those which have occurred in London.
- 4) It is concievable that the movement is not yet ready for a discussion on Sexual Politics and merely wants to 'keep it in the bedroom'. However since this situation is obviously unsatisfactory the only solution is to attack reactionary ideas about the place of sexuality and either push the 'movement' into some kind of understanding of sexuality or, if this doesn't occur, reject the movement as a whole as a reactionary sham and associate only with those elements which are prepared to get to grips with the subject. A movement which is not interested in effectively challenging sexual oppression to the best of its ability is even more obnoxious and reactionary to us than a movement unwilling to challenge racial oppression. The response we have had to this conference, including this letter is the best evidence we have had yet that the 'movement' isn't interested in discussing the issue.

5) We have requested repeatedly for contributions and suggestions as to the format of the conference and subjects to be discussed. As we recieved NONE we created a PROVISIONAL agenda. This was sent out in the hope that it would be criticised and changed to meet peoples desires. The workshop format is to give people confidence to speak in a smaller group and to give enough time for topics to be discussed thouroughly at least by some. We envisaged the conference being split into three groups each discussing three topics. The possibility of individuals moving to different groups to catch other topics would depend largely on administration and upon what people would want to talk about. We saw the possibility of groups discussing overlapping subjects, subjects not mentioned on our agenda etc. depending on who turned up. We thought it would be more satisfactory if people informed us of their interests before the conference so that people could come prepared and also so that the discussions could be arranged and organised to suit the most people. It was also planned (and written on the agenda) that all the topics would be gone over again by everyone on Sunday. If you thought the suggested agenda was inadequate, you should have rejected it, proposed changes etc, rather than waiting until the last minute to reject the conference as a whole.

THEORETICAL ASPECTS.

6) You may have noticed that the notes besides each topic on the agenda are very rough. We do say 'what about the age of consent' but this was with the aim of provoking some thought (is it too much to ask!?) on the difficulty of protecting children from being sexually exploited. Obviously we reject the age of consent and realise that 'protecting' can be as damaging to a child's sexual development as an exploitative paedophilic relationship can sometime be. Adults can use various forms of emotional blackmail as well as physical force or threats of force to effectively rape a pre-pubescent child. In the case of the parent of the child their acquired authority (based on force) is often enough to make them cooperate without the explicit use of force or threats. It should also be born in mind that exploitative relationships take place between adults... and that this is quite often a direct result of their "protection" from sex and sexuality when they were young. This 'protection' on the whole seems to result in prolonged sexual immaturity.

7) To say that the debate around transvestitism/transsexuality is 13 years out of date is as cretinous as to say that the debate on womens liberation died with the suffragettes! Just because something is not a debate amongst gays now doesn't mean revolutionaries shouldn't discuss it. Social revolution and the abolition of sex roles is not a debate amongst gays now.... so fucking what?! As a transvestite of sorts myself I find your remark about 'male comrades in sequined numbers' grossly offensive. By the same argument Gay liberation would only become an issue amongst revolutionaries if comrades of the same sex started screwing away with one another in the middle of the conference floor. Such a reactionary attitude from the editor of Wolverine I find disappointing. The fact that you see the debate as centred around individual choice and fail to see any further implications relating to sex roles and our general sexuality seems both short sighted and reactionary. If a comrade was to dismiss the topic of Gay liberation as purely a matter of 'individual choice' and not worthy of discussion by revolutionaries today I hope it would make your hackles rise!

If you can tell me about the relevance of your reactionary polemic disguised as analysis, I'll tell you about prejudice masquarading as a dismissal of the irrelevant!! Since the destruction of artificial sex role, and indeed all roles, is a primary aim of the social revolution a critical understanding of those who merely tend to reverse these roles is highly relevant. A prelude to the destruction of roles is a refusal to be trapped in them, ie to seek to undermine them by refusing to conform with our assigned patterns of behaviour.

8) You say that if you had an understanding of how sexism works and is maintained that it still wouldn't change anything... and yet you accuse us of not wanting to get to grips with it! We never claimed that discussing sexism at the conference would solve sexism. We agree that sexism within a group exists separately from the particular sexism of the individual members as a sum of those sexism. This makes it more difficult to grasp firmly what is going on and combat it as effectively as possible. We think, however, that understanding this and other ways in which sexism manifests itself is crucial in the attempt to stamp out all forms of sexism/hetro-sexism etc. We do not share your resignation that things are unchangeable but neither do we have the naive attitude that sexism can be overcome at one conference. Progress can be made.

EXTRACT FROM :- 'TOWARDS
A GAY COMMUNISM'

Underlying the presence in every individual of an erotic trend directed towards persons of the same sex, psychoanalysis has established an infantile 'perverse' polymorphism. Among the forces that inhibit and restrict the direction of the sexual drive are, above all, 'the structures of morality and authority erected by society'. The repressive society and the dominant morality consider only heterosexual as 'normal' and only genital heterosexual at that. Society forces on children an educastration, the objective of which is the transformation of the infant, in tendency polymorphous and 'perverse', into a heterosexual adult, erotically mutilated but conforming to the Norm.

I shall use the term 'trans-sexuality' to refer to the infantile polymorphous and 'undifferentiated' erotic disposition, which society suppresses and which, in adult life, every human being carries within themselves either in a latent state, or else confined in the depths of the unconscious under the yoke of repression. 'Trans-sexuality' seems to me the best word for expressing, at one and the same time, both the plurality of the erotic tendencies and the original and deep hermaphroditism of every individual.

We call 'transsexuals' those adults who consciously live out their own hermaphroditism, and who recognise in themselves, in their body and mind, the presence of the 'opposite' sex. Persecuted by a society that cannot accept any confusions between the sexes, they frequently tend to reduce their effective trans-sexuality to an apparant monosexuality, seeking to identify with the opposite 'normal' gender to their genital definition. Thus a female transsexual feels herself to be a man, opting for the male gender role, while a male transsexual feels himself a woman. Society induces these manifest transsexuals to feel monosexual and to conceal their real hermaphroditism. To tell the truth, however, this is exactly how society behaves with all of us. In fact we are all, deep down, trans-sexuals, we have all been trans-sexual infants, and we have been forced to identify with a specific monosexual role, masculine or feminine. In the case of manifest transsexuals, or those rare persons who have not repressed their trans-sexuality in growing up, the social constraint produces the opposite effect from what it does in 'normal' people, in as much as a male person tends to identify with the feminine role, and vice versa.

As we shall see, manifest transexualism does not necessarily involve a propensity for homosexuality. There are many heterosexual transexuals. But when for example, these are males who feel themselves to be women, but who also sexually desire other women, their heterosexuality is then, in a certain sense, homosexuality. Far from being particularly absurd, transexualism overthrows the present separate and counterposed categories of that sexuality considered 'normal', which it shows up, rather as a ridiculous constraint.

In conclusion, we can say that neither manifest homosexuality nor heterosexual-
uality necessarily correspond to any specific mental, somatic, or hormonal
characteristics; both the gay desire and the desire for the other sex are
expressions of our underlying trans-sexual being, in tendency polymorphous, but
constrained by oppression to adapt to a monosexuality that mutilates it. But
the repressive society only considers one type of monosexuality as 'normal', the
heterosexual kind, and imposes educastration with a view to maintaining an exclus-
ively heterosexual conditioning. The Norm therefore, is heterosexual.

The above is from the introduction of 'Towards a Gay Communism' it consists of bits of Meili's book 'Homosexuality and Liberation' edited together to convey his definition of 'trans-sexualism'. Both the book and the pamphlet are pretty wierd and don't provide a particularly coherent basis for a theory of sexuality. However the pamphlet is certainly a valuable contribution towards discussion and this seems to be the reason 'Pirate Productions' have republished it. They conclude their introduction saying:- 'It would be good if its republication generated some discussion - although we're not too optimistic about it. In any event however we remain in agreement with Mieli's basic message - actions speak louder than words!'

NOTES TOWARDS THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF 'SEX ROLES'

A role is created by the repetition of certain patterns of behaviour. A stereotype is an intensification of a role, often to the point of caricature. We should all have a critique of the more blatant aspects of sex role oppression, for example, that a woman should be passive, nurturing, sensual and feminine whilst she does the house-work and looks after the kids...; and that a man should be active, competitive, hard, unfeeling and masculine whilst trying to be the breadwinner and using his image as a threat to keep the kids in line.

However, although these stereotypes are to some extent being broken down by many people today, the underlying sex roles remain unchallenged. They are reinforced and maintained everyday in the Gay movement, the Womens movement and (perhaps most of all) in the revolutionary 'movement'. They are reinforced not just by clothing but by mannerisms, postures, attitudes and assumptions - our perceptions as to what is desirable, 'natural' or even possible(!) have been totally fucked up by the authoritarian conditioning of the family unit (backed up by school, the media, work and the rest of this fucked up society). We are governed inside by reactions of ridicule, disgust, guilt and jealousy which have been conditioned into us too deeply to challenge easily. These feelings help to suppress the human urge for pleasure so that we end up as manageable cogs supporting the system.

"Collectively it is quite possible to abolish roles. The spontaneous creativity and festive atmosphere given free reign in revolutionary moments affords ample evidence of this. When people are overtaken by 'joie de vivre' they are lost to leadership and stagemanagement of any kind... uncontained collective pleasure can only go from victory to victory." R. Vaneigem

The more obvious aspects of sex role oppression have been challenged effectively in the most intense moments of the class war. The myth of the 'passive' or 'soft' Gay was smashed with the Stonewall riots in America where Gays fought back collectively and violently against police repression. This event was to be the inspiration for the Gay Liberation movement which virtually arose from it. It is worth noting that whatever other illusions and faults they may have had organisations such as the GLF distanced themselves from organisations which merely wanted equal rights for Gays under capitalism such as the 'Campaign for Homosexual Equality'. They had a critique of sex roles, the family and (to a greater or lesser extent) of capitalism. Women have played an active part in revolutions...from the Paris Commune to the Spanish Civil war and beyond. The February '17 revolution in Russia was triggered off by women striking and marching on International Womens Day! In the Miners strike recently the more militant women involved rejected their role as food providers and organised pickets... often the most violent and effective! A regular Lesbian and Gay picket was organised near Manchester which gained a lot of respect from many of the miners because of its determination and effectiveness.

In all these examples and, more, aspects of sex roles are challenged but there is an underlying core which not only remains unchallenged but which it seems inconcievable to challenge.

"Far from being particularly odd the transvestite exposes how tragically ridiculous the great majority of people are in their monstrous uniforms of 'man' and 'women'." "From our vantage point... it is 'normal' people who are the true transvestites. Just as the absolute hetosexuality that is so proudly flaunted masks the polymorphous but sadly inhibited disposition of their desire, so their standard outfits hide and debase the marvellous human being that lies suppressed within." MARIO MIELI

Transvestites and transexuals usually merely reverse sex roles rather than destroying them which implies accepting the validity of gender role even if they are not firmly attached to biological sex. It seems quite probable that as a by-product they will undermine sex roles for the rest of society. However it is also true that transvestism can reinforce them either through 'drag acts' which tend to be reactionary in the extreme or through such things as Boy George where it is used as a 'gimmick' to increase marketing, playing on peoples boredom by letting them watch, talk about and PAY FOR something 'different'.

This problem can also be seen in the large amount of coverage given to transsexuals by the media. The thing which rammed home each time is that these people are 'women' trapped in 'mens' bodies (or vice versa). This totally accepts the existence of gender roles as though they were somehow natural rather than social. In order to match the mental role they have they change their bodies... although the right to change sex is a matter for the individual and shouldn't be interfered with in the interest of ideology, we should bare in mind the implications of accepting 'natural' gender roles.

Meili's concept of trans-sexuality(see page 3) escapes some of these problems and I think provides us with a tool for successfully undermining the foundations of sex role oppression. Obviously we cannot become sexually free... losing all our hang-ups, inhibitions and the dead weight of sexual conditioning just by deciding we want to.

The only way to attack them in the short term is to become conscious of the existence of the reactionary roles we are forced into and to playfully use them for our own ends (as far as we can) exposing them for the prisons that they are. Only by breaking the boundaries of what is permitted, by confronting our false desires (i.e. those implanted by the family, media, school etc.) and by exploring and discovering new regions of desire generated in the positive community of the movement towards revolution - only in this way can we seriously challenge the structures which deform and oppress us... only in this way can we begin to relate to each other as sensual human being rather than as the objects to which we have all been reduced. The movement towards Social revolution must also be an EXPLICIT movement towards sexual liberation since neither can succeed without the other.

"...the end goal of feminist revolution must be, unlike that of the first feminist movement, not just the elimination of male privilege but of the sex distinction itself: genital differences between human beings would no longer matter culturally. (A reversion to an unobstructed pansexuality - Freud's "polymorphous perversity" would probably supercede hetro/homo/bi-sexuality.)....the dependence of the child on the mother (and vice versa) would give way to a greatly shortened dependence on a small group of others in general, and any remaining inferiority to adults in physical strength would be ended by the elimination of labour altogether (through cybernetics). The tyranny of the biological family would be broken." SHULAMITH FIRESTONE
(e) (Dialectics of Sexuality)

Does anyone disagree with this as the Ultimate goal of the social/sexual revolution? If so you know what to do...~~fuck~~ sorry, write off immediately. If this bulletin seems at all one sided or inadequate that is because it is. I'm sure you know how to rectify matters.

"ANARCHIST ALTERNATIVE TO LAYING THE TABLE"

REPRINTED FROM ANARCHY 31

What I would really like to have is several good friends with whom I can fuck when I, and they, feel like it; but with no shit like 'Where will you be tomorrow?', 'You have beautiful eyes', 'Stay with me forever', 'I love you', 'Do you love me?', etc. None of the rubbish, no promises and no demands. Now I, and this is true of several women and men that I know, think this is the only way that sex can be free from all the constraints that bind us, tie us, make us guilt ridden and generally keep us down. What's more it ought to be so easy to attain; what are we asking after all but that people don't get caught up in treadmills of oppressive relationships?

I know the traps of jealousy, I have at times believed that someone couldn't

possibly love me and screw someone else: even as I write this now I smile at the absurdity of that statement, but have too good a memory to discount the grinding agony that jealousy puts people through. Then there's the 'How will it be in the morning blues'. It's the movies, romance and general conditioning that makes people yearn for promises of 'never-ending love' or demonstrations of 'eternal passion'. A bit of rational thought makes a monkey out of anyone who pines for someone all the time, who can't make it with anyone else because 'you/they're the one' and 'my/your own true love'. I mean c'mon, there's thousands of people out there, who are we trying to kid? No one is the same, that's what makes it such fun right? And one person is just that, to put them on some idyllic pedestal

is not just making more of them than they can be; but if you are on the top of a pedestal there's no place to go but down!

What do people mean by love anyway?

Is it love coming home every night? Or is that just having no place else to go?

Is it love thinking only one person could ever turn you on this way? Or is that lack of imagination?

Having dismissed love, (and it wasn't hard!) what about the other problems, because just starting to work it out in your own head isn't enough! Fear eats the soul, and doesn't do a lot for sexuality either: I still find it hard to suggest screwing, to men, especially those I haven't screwed before. There's various reasons; like no one relishes being rejected, it can sometimes louse up a friendship if one of you wants to screw and the other one doesn't; and some men seem to find it intimidating having women suggest screwing rather than the woman merely waiting around for and then accepting the offer; and of course there's general lack of bottle.

I've had some rejections and I've also kicked myself for lack of bottle - I've known people who have outraged at the idea of me thinking fucking would be a good thing to do - and some amazing insults as to what kind of woman/mother/wife I am for making such rude suggestions. At the time, all these things have hurt, saddened, and enraged me and also make me take a few steps backwards and wonder why I ever started the journey in the first place. But just like when I was a kid and thought the world ended when he said goodbye - only to find that life did pick up again once I had stopped crying (!); when I pull my shattered pride, bottle and ideology together I can make through the night either on my own or with someone else.

This isn't to say that once the hurdles of getting near someone are crossed, all is hunkey-dorey - I have a long way to go to being the sexually assured person I will be. But that's something to look forward to, and work towards rather than accepting a freaked-out, inadequate standstill. I look forward to the years ahead with a joy that I didn't think was possible: getting older being something that women are taught to fear. So that the barriers I have to cross, the bottle it takes to cross them and even the bad times when I don't get myself together, or when I feel I am not doing what I want because of my own inadequacy and lack of self-confidence: even all that is managable, because it will get better! Good huh? What else does me in then? Well there's the awful past! I got screwed when I was sixteen and as innocent as they come, (or rather don't come and don't even know that women get to

to have orgasms). This is very common in young women (or certainly was), though hopefully a situation that is improving as people maybe talk more, and honesty creeps in with a flash of lightening and a drum roo! Along with being screwed, I was forced to suck a guy off. Such things leave scars in my head and make progress along the path to a free sexuality hard: bad memories sometimes stop me doing what I want to do; make a man's body look like a weapon; or just slow me down some - but I'm working on it! (And that's important even if I did laugh when I wrote it!).

I should make it clear that it was the force and not the act of sucking that was wrong. I make no distinction in terms of fun and acceptable behaviour between fucking & sucking. The reason this incident had such a long-standing bad influence on me is because it was my first experience of sucking and therefore I did not have the strength of knowing it could be good to help me distinguish between the terror of force and the joy of sucking.

As to women, I have known - as they say in the bible - some women, and would like to know more. Women's bodies don't frighten me in the same way that men's can; partly because of their nature and knowledge of my own. I find getting to know women sexually now, very difficult, as opposed to some years ago, because sexuality seems to have polarised into gays and straights and never the twain shall meet - let alone touch each other. I don't want to go in search of the 'gay scene', or any other scene for that matter but I miss the freeness I used to have with women friends a while ago.

I would not define myself as heterosexual or bisexual but sexual, and who ever turns me on is down to me and them. Getting to know myself sexually is good too, without feeling guilty about it, and the very pleasant oneness of self-sufficiency and private experiment. For me this is just another part of a whole sexuality and not a substitute. We need to be freer, more honest and a lot friendlier to each other! It ought to be a lot easier to suggest fucking and to say yes or no without either answer being bad vibes man! It ought to be easier to get what you want and give what you want when fucking. Who you screw should not be something people can use against you - the 'what him/her bit.

I don't hold with the 'celibacy is where it's at' school of thought at all. That is one line I call a cop out and will criticise. I understand people

rejecting sex with one gender or another for historical reasons etc. but I think that getting into celibacy is like 'getting into' a starvation diet - we should not deny our sexuality.

I think fucking has to be taken out of its special wrappings where it's both hailed as the be all and end all of living and also hidden away as either frivolous or too dangerous, and put back where it belongs along with talking, eating, drinking, dancing and other every day occurrences.

I'll end with a famous and slightly changed quote, wandering why it was so hard to begin this, and wishing I hadn't left out so many things I wanted to say!

'People who talk about revolution and class struggle without referring explicitly to every day life, without understanding what is subversive about sex and what is positive in the refusal of constraints, such people have corpses in their mouths.'

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This article was by Charlotte B. there are other articles of interest in the same issue of Anarchy on the subjects of romantic love and masturbation. If you can't get a copy of the magazine, photocopies of the relevant articles are available from us for 20p plus an S.A.E.

There is also quite a lot of debate and discussion of sexual politics in old issues of 'Social Revolution' and in 'Solidarity for Social Revolution'. More information on which issues contain what etc is available from us along with photocopies if necessary.

We hope this bulletin will generate enough response for a decent 'Sexual Struggles Conference' to go ahead in Summer or Autumn '85. Since this bulletin contains what is mainly a Careless Talk perspective, we are quite prepared to do a second bulletin if you send us the stuff.

NOW ITS YOUR
TURN.....

RESPOND!
... PLEASE