



Gay Liberation and the shrinks

Notes: From its outset, the Gay Liberation movement has identified establishment psychiatry as a basic institution involved in the oppression of homosexuals. On Aug. 24, the New York Times published a front page report entitled "Homosexuals in Revolt," in which it chose to give a considerable amount of space to the psychiatrists' view of the gay movement. One of the shrinks, Dr. Lionel Ovesey, a professor of clinic psychiatry at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, told the Times: "Homosexuality is a psychiatric or emotional illness. I think it's a good thing if someone can be cured of it because it's so difficult for a homosexual to find happiness in our society. It's possible that this movement could consolidate the illness in some people, especially among young people who are still teetering on the brink." The following analysis of the oppression of homosexuals by establishment psychiatry originally appeared on a leaflet distributed by Chicago Gay Liberation to doctors attending the convention of the American Medical Association.

The establishment school of psychiatry is based on the premise that people who are hurting should solve their problems by "adjusting" to the situation. For the homosexual, this means becoming adept at straight-fronting, learning how to survive in a hostile world, how to settle for housing in the gay ghetto, how to be satisfied with a profession in which homosexuals are tolerated, and how to live with low self-esteem.

The adjustment school places the burden on each individual homosexual to learn to bear his torment. But the "problem" of homosexuality is never solved under this scheme; the anti-homosexualist attitude of society, which is the cause of the homosexual's trouble, goes unchallenged. And there's always another paying patient

on the psychiatrist's couch.

Dr. Socarides (a well-known psychiatrist who "treats" homosexuals) claims, "a human being is sick when he fails to function in his appropriate gender identity, which is appropriate to his anatomy." Who determined "appropriateness?" The psychiatrist or moralist? Certainly there is no scientific basis for defining "appropriate" sexual behavior. In a study of homosexuality in other species and other cultures, Ford and Beach in "Patterns of Sexual Behavior" conclude "human homosexuality is not a product of hormonal imbalance or 'perverted heredity.'" It is the product of the fundamental mammalian heritage of general sexual responsiveness as modified under the impact of experience."

Other than invoking moral standards, Dr. Socarides claims that homosexuality is an emotional illness because of the guilt and anxieties in homosexual life. Would he also consider Judaism an emotional illness because of the paranoia which Jews experienced in Nazi Germany.

We homosexuals of Gay Liberation believe that the adjustment school of therapy is not a valid approach to society.

We refuse to adjust to our oppression, and believe that the key to our mental health, and to the mental health of all oppressed peoples in a racist, sexist, capitalist society, is a radical change in the structure and accompanying attitudes of the entire social system.

Mental health for women does not mean therapy for women - it means the elimination of male supremacy. Not therapy for blacks, but an end to racism. The poor don't need psychiatrists (what a joke at 25 bucks a throw) - they need democratic distribution of wealth. **OFF THE COUCHES, INTO THE STREETS!**

We see political organizing and collective action as the strategy for effecting this social change. We

declare that we are healthy homosexuals in a sexist society, and that homosexuality is at least on a par with heterosexuality as a way for people to relate to each other (know any men that don't dominate women?).

Since the prevalent notion in society is that homosexuality is wrong, all those who recognize that this attitude is damaging to people, and that it must be corrected, have to raise their voices in opposition to anti-homosexuality. Not to do so is to permit the myth of homosexual pathology to continue and to comply in the homosexual's continued suffering from senseless stigmatization.

A psychiatrist who allows a homosexual patient - who has been subject to a barrage of anti-homosexual sentiments his whole life - to continue in the belief that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality, is the greatest obstacle to his patient's health and well-being.

We furthermore urge psychiatrists to refer their homosexual patients to Gay Liberation (and other patients who are victims of oppression to relevant liberation movements). Once relieved of patients whose guilt is not deserved but imposed, psychiatrists will be able to devote all their efforts to the rich - who do earn their guilt but not their wealth, and can best afford to pay psychiatrist's fees.

We are convinced that a picket and a dance will do more for the vast majority of homosexuals than two years on the couch. We call on the medical profession to repudiate the adjustment approach as a solution to homosexual oppression and instead to further homosexual liberation by working in a variety of political ways (re-educating the public, supporting pickets, attending rallies, promoting social events, etc.) to change the situation of homosexuals in this society.

Join us in the struggle for a world in which all human beings are free to love without fear or shame.

to change themselves and the conditions in which they live and work and buy buy buy, to deal once and for all with the "ownership" class which controls and manipulates the music industry and the mass communications industry and the munitions and death industry and the educational industry and the whole industry of consumer society that is all tied inextricably together under corporate capitalism today.

There is the contradiction then between the freedom of the music and the anti-freedom of the conditions in which it is made, packaged, and sold. And there is the contradiction between music which is free on all levels and music whose real productive life ends in the recording studio, whose musicians separate themselves from the music they create.

The Rolling Stones is the best example I can think of. Now their music is so beautiful sometimes, and some of it (*Sympathy for the Devil, Street Fightin' Man, Jumpin' Jack Flash*) is so powerful, but they cannot rightly be called "free" musicians, because prior to and beyond the act of the music itself we are led back into their totally bourgeois lives.

I know people don't like to hear this too much, but it's a fact that the artist has a greater responsibility to his people than just making his art available to them at a price. He, and she, has the responsibility of using all the advantages which accrue to the artist in this weirdo economic system for the benefit of all the people - and especially in the new youth culture which exists and struggles for new life in the belly of the monster white beast of consumer capitalism where the musicians have the only access our people get to the mass information media and the capital which is needed in a capitalist society to fund self-determination programs for our people.

These musicians of our culture are going to have to start relating to the people's needs and they are going to have to start leading the people toward self-determination on all levels. Now I'm not putting them down, because I realize that most of them don't know yet that this is what they have to do, they have to start

putting themselves wholly in the service of their people, or else they are finally no more than what? Lawrence Welk, or Pat Boone, you dig, or Spiro Agnew finally. Bob Hope. Pigs.

Like I say, I know a lot of people will be pissed off when they read this, especially some of the musicians of our culture who don't like to be bothered with awful things like "politics" and prison sentences and the people's needs. They are meditating and counting their money and watching themselves on television in the back seats of their limousines and they don't want to hear about this mundane shit - it messes up the good vibes. Why, we have to play these tremendous rock operas and shit, we're playing at the *Philharmonic Hall* on interstellar television, this is the most important shit in the world man, we don't want to hear about Bobby Seale and the Vietnamese peasants and power to the people and all that stuff. Tim Leary is doing ten years for some weed? Shit, that's a drag, man, wish I could do something. But you get your ass off the stage now you scumbag radical, before we call the police - we've had enough politics, man, and all we are saying is give peace a chance.

But there's a lot more to it than that, the shit is coming down all over the world, and you are going to sound awfully fucking stupid trying to tell the heroic Vietnamese people that "the war is over if you want it" while they are being burned and bombed out of their huts and fields, you are going to sound awfully goddam dumb telling that to Huey Newton or Bobby Seale, or to Lee Otis Johnson who is doing 30 years for giving one joint to an undercover pig in Texas, you know what I mean? These people are not going to look on you as their friends when the people's inevitable response to the crushing repression of domestic imperialism starts, they are not going to be persuaded by a joint and a V sign, you know?

There is a war going on in this country right now, there is a war going on throughout the world, whether we like it or not, and there is no middle ground any more, for any of us. If you are not actively committed to the cause of freedom and self-determination for all peoples, which means

that if you are not actively engaged in the struggle for freedom and self-determination by your own people, if your life itself is not dedicated to the people's struggle, if you do not live and breathe and struggle for freedom not just for yourself, but for all people everywhere, then the people who are wholly involved in this struggle *are forced to deal with you as part of the problem*, no matter how distasteful this may seem to you. Because these people are not playing, we are not playing, this is as real as it gets, and if you can't relate to it you will have to do like those other millionaires the Beatles, and "get back," and pray that this "sad song" will "get better," and hope that the people themselves will "let it be." And you might as well know it right now - they won't.

It's just as Chairman Mao has said, "There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that is detached from or independent of politics." Art is either in the service of the people, or it is contributing to the people's oppression. Again, I know people don't wanna hear this, but I have to say it, and people are going to have to start relating to it.

All of us in the youth colony have to start relating to what's happening to our music and our culture as the rock/pop imperialists move to monopolize our energies and resources and use them against us. They drain us of our righteous strength, and they take our artists and performers and turn them against our struggle for freedom and self-determination, and they train them to tell our people that our lives have nothing to do with - ugh! - "politics." They do that and we have to stop it. That's why I write shit like this, I mean I would rather just talk about the music itself, you dig, but then I'd rather just be home with my people than in this penitentiary doing 9 1/2-10 years for getting high, and I would rather that they would just give peace a chance, too, but we have to deal with the shit the way it comes down on us, and we have to see that it's all connected, that separation is doom for us, that we are not going to be free *individually* until *all* the people are free *collectively*. Dig it.

GAYS
 Read Your Scene
 in the
NEWSLETTER
 Found at the Alternative and
 Washington Circle
 Community Center
 & Joint Possession
 in College Park Near U of M



Yippie!

BLACK SABBATH

[The group that's stood England on its ears. Number four first week out. Just out in America on the Warner Bros. label- and tapes, distributed by Ampex. Indulge yourself in the new English rage that's deservedly popular.]