

# NEWS- LETTER



Association of  
Lesbian and Gay  
Psychologists (ALGP Europe)

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### **To B or not to B? Or too B? Or rather Therapy?**

Obviously, the inclusion/exclusion of bisexuals and non-psychologists is *the* central discussion for ALGP Europe at the moment. Two clashing positions can be found in this Newsletter: Jan Schippers (NL) vs. Dominic Davies (UK). Feel free to tell us your opinion about these issues.

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# Chair's Column

by Melanie Steffens

A few Newsletter issues back (Issue 2/1995), criticising the overall happy-go-lucky atmosphere in the Newsletter, we wrote in the *Editors' Column*: "Is there really no problem anywhere? ... Okay, it is understandable that every organisation tries to present itself in a positive way—but wouldn't it be very interesting and helpful for all of us to hear about things that did not work out well?" There is one thing that I think is not going well at all, and that is: Payment of fees to ALGP Europe. Since we reminded members in the last issue of the Newsletter to pay their membership fees, several people have done so: A handful or two. With this Newsletter, we are mailing extra reminders to single members and affiliated organisations, and we hope with more success. But the nagging question remains: Is there so little interest in a European ALGP that many people would not mind ending their membership like that? Also, new national organisations with similar interests as ours have been founded which have not established firm ties with ALGP Europe yet, for instance, as you can read in this issue, in Austria and Finland. I think it would be wonderful if we could win them as affiliated organisations, and we will increase our efforts regarding that aim in the near future.

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## World Wide Visibility

What is a very modern thing that ALGP Europe has, but its American counterpart doesn't have yet? It is: our own homepage on the WWW, to be found at: <http://www.psychologie.univ-trier.de:8000/projects/ALGP/algphome.html>. Birgit Eschmann and I installed it a few weeks

ago, and we are very proud of it. Next to basic information and addresses regarding ALGP Europe and affiliated national organisations, one can find interesting articles from back issues of the Newsletter there, as well as an announcement of our Dublin symposium. There are already links to several homepages of national organisations. From now on, we will publish important contact addresses in each issue of the Newsletter, too, those from the "real world" along with those from "virtual reality".

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## Dublin Conference

Our symposium on the European Congress of Psychology, Dublin, July, 6th to 11th, 1997, introduced in the last Newsletter, was accepted by the Organising Committee. Thus, there will be talks by Celia C. Kitzinger, Pavlo Kanellakis, Anna Maria Imbarrato, Luca Pietrantonio, and myself. Ulli Biechele will present an introduction into *Lesbian and Gay Affirmative Psychology in Contemporary Europe*. In addition to this "official" conference programme, we will also organise a Community event during the conference week for lesbian and gay psychologists from Dublin and elsewhere, as well as for other interested lesbians and gay men from Dublin. We were incredibly lucky in that two psychologists from Dublin who had heard about the Symposium contacted me and asked me whether they could be of any help. So I am positive that we will have lots of fun, stimulating discussions, and meetings with interesting people there: Have *you* made plans for your summer holidays already?

## Invitation: European Board Meeting

Along with our symposium on *Lesbian and Gay Affirmative Psychology in Contemporary Europe*, and with the community event, the European Board Meeting will, as always, take place during one evening in the conference week, probably towards the end of the week. We are hoping that contact persons from several countries will attend. If not, please send us written reports from your country. Additionally, interested members can attend the Board Meeting. Don't be afraid that it might turn out to be a boring meeting including nothing but boring treasurer's reports: As we still don't have a treasurer, no such thing threatens to happen! Instead, we are hoping to lead a heated discussion about membership inclusiveness and the B-word (see elsewhere in this issue).

Please contact us for further information if you are planning to attend: We will not mail extra invitations!

# Readers' Poll

by Birgit Eschmann

In the last edition of the Newsletter, we tried to set up a readers' poll with the questionnaire "Wanted: Your Opinion!". In the meantime, we got six answers from our dear readers. That is not much but still, it provided some interesting input. Thank you to the six contributors! And of course we would still be glad to receive more answers.

First of all, we asked how much of the Newsletter you read. Out of the six, two read all of the Newsletter, three most of it, one most or half of it. This result seems not that surprising since people who do not read the Newsletter at all could hardly find the questionnaire...

All different parts of the Newsletter are read by most or all of the answering readers. We also asked what you would like to read more about. To our surprise, only one person wants to read personal ads and about sex and crime, while four persons want to read more articles on lesbian and gay research and more national reports.

A great suggestion for a "Focus on..." topic was counselling with homosexuals from ethnic minorities. As far as we know, the ALGBP-UK is especially active in this field, so we will ask them for some input on this.

Two readers, one man from Germany and one woman from Italy, would volunteer to be portrayed in the Newsletter. We will try to write one portray for the next edition. Unfortunately, nobody mentioned anything else s/he would like to

contribute to the Newsletter.

The readability of the Newsletter got a lot of praise, and two readers made some minor lay-out suggestions. A reader's idea that we will try to establish from the next issue on is to give contact information about the authors.

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## Non-English Articles in the Newsletter

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Several persons suggested to print at least one article in an other language than English in each edition (suggested were French and German twice, Dutch, Italian and Spanish once). We discussed this on our last editors' meeting and agreed to actively support only the usage of German since a) it is the only language other than English we are fluent enough in to correct and edit articles, and b) there are more than 150 German speaking Newsletter recipients (all members of VLSP (ALGP) Germany, and quite a number of single members in Austria and Switzerland). Of course a contributor can have his/her article be printed in a different major European language, but s/he should keep in mind that for other languages than English and German, the potential number of readers will be pretty small. Still, if for example a South European psychologist wants to address other South Europeans especially, the usage of a Romanic language might be recommendable.



## **Lesbian and Gay Psychologists in Germany: Discrimination in Therapeutic Training and at Places of Work**

by Günter Reisbeck, Monika Bittner, Manfred Edinger, & Christopher Knoll

Between psychology and homosexuality an ambivalent relationship exists. On the one hand, the so called "psycho-sciences" (psychiatry, clinical psychology, psychoanalysis etc.) have belonged to these social institutions for decades which were responsible for the scientific superstructure of social isolation, discrimination and persecution of homosexuality and of homosexuals. On the other hand, the gay-lesbian emancipation movement in some respects always had a

"psychological division" as well, which is expressed among other things in numerous counselling—and therapeutic centres for lesbian women and gay men. At present they doubtless offer most of the institutions within the institutionalized emancipation movement. This trend goes so far that critical spectators of the scene warn of the psychologizing of the gay-lesbian emancipation movement (Perkins, 1995).

Psychological institutions in the field of train-

ing and research (above all the departments of psychology at universities) as well as organizations of applied psychology (e.g. advisory boards and clinics) substantially contribute to the discrimination or dediscrimination of homosexuality. This refers, as far as universities or scientific enterprises are concerned, primarily to the scientific and social discourse about homosexuality; as far as the applying organizations are concerned, it refers primarily to the actual way how these institutions deal with patients and clients. However, a psychology which is rooted in the heterosexistic bias first of all also discriminates the lesbian and gay members of the own system. An analysis of the situation of lesbian and gay psychologists (respectively the lesbian and gay students of psychology) throws a detailed light upon the attitude of psychology towards homosexuality and the homosexuals.

### The Investigation

For the purposes of a research project with the title "Lesbian women and gay men in the working world", which was carried out by the Munich gay-lesbian research group at the Department of Psychology, University of Munich, an extensive questionnaire was developed on that subject. To this questionnaire a supplement for gay and lesbian (former) students of psychology was added. The complete version of the questionnaire was sent to all members of the German Association of Lesbian Psychologists and Gay Psychologists (VLSP); at that time the VLSP had about 90 members. It was also distributed to all participants of the Association's congress in Munich in October 1994. 62 questionnaires could be evaluated by the examiners.

### The Composition of the Sample

58 % of the interviewees (36) were men, 42 % (26) were women. 26 % (16) were students of psychology and 74 % (46) were psychologists. 74 % (46) of the participants were members of the VLSP, 65 % (40) had completed additional therapeutic training or were just getting through one.

### Fields of Work of Lesbian and Gay Psychologists

25 % of the psychologists of this investigation work in free practice, 25 % work in advisory boards. Respectively 12 % work in general advi-

sory boards and in gay-lesbian advisory boards (e.g. AIDS-counselling). The rest comprises other places of work like general or psychiatric hospitals etc. Half of the interviewees work with an absolutely heterosexual circle of clients, about a third work with a mixed circle of hetero- and homosexual circle of clients. Five male and three female psychologists (10 resp. 6% of the sample) work exclusively with gay resp. lesbian clients.

### The Taboo of Homosexuality at the Departments of Psychology

The question whether there are/were "open" gay or lesbian teachers at the universities was answered by the vast majority (80%) with "no" (compare Table 1). To the question whether there are/were gay/lesbian subjects of study half of the sample (49%) answered that there are/were none (compare Table 2). Open gay or lesbian fellow students, indeed, were met more frequently (67% of the interviewees know/knew "several" of such "like-minded" persons, compare Table 3). A good third of the interviewees, however live/lived hidden at university as far as their sexual orientation is concerned (compare Table 4).

**Table 1:** Among my teaching staff at university were/are open living gay men/lesbian women

none	80%
one	16%
several	2%
many	2%

**Table 2:** During my academic studies lesbian-gay subjects could/can be found

frequently	0%
sometimes	7%
rarely	44%
never	49%

**Table 3:** Among my fellow-students at university were/are open living gays/lesbians

none	8%
one	17%
some	67%
many	8%

The open formulated question "Please describe your experiences as lesbian student/gay

student at university in your own words" was answered among others as follows:

- No isolation because of good experiences with heterosexual fellow-students; however, the subject homosexuality does not appear as a teaching subject.
- Being gay does not exist in the student's activities, because there are no gay subjects in the academic training, neither can aspects of it be presented by oneself, too.
- Lack of lesbian or gay subjects is annoying, but the environment is more tolerant than elsewhere!
- Isolation, no lesbian groups, no subject of study.
- Supporting my identity most was the fact that there was a section for gays and an explicitly gay teaching subject.
- From ignorance over rejection (when trying to work on gay subjects) to support.
- Being gay was no subject at university, a kind of taboo.
- Feelings of being alone.

**Table 4:** To my fellow-students and to the teaching-staff at university I was/am

open lesbian/gay	27%
to the most open lesbian/gay	36%
to a few open lesbian/gay	32%
not open lesbian/gay	5%

**Table 5:** In my additional therapeutic training lesbian/gay subjects occurred/occur

frequently	3%
often	15%
rarely	55%
never	27%

### Additional Therapeutic Training and Homosexuality

During the additional therapeutic training gay-lesbian teaching subjects occur almost as scarcely as in academic training (compare Table 5); however, gay-lesbian teaching-staff can be found in the same rare amount as in the case of the academic training (compare Table 6). Half of the interviewees had no open living lesbian or gay colleagues in the additional therapeutic training (compare Table 7); however, almost half of the

candidates being interviewed do not live entirely open as gay men or lesbian women in their additional therapeutic training (compare Table 8).

**Table 6:** There are/were open living gay men/lesbian women among my teaching-staff during the additional therapeutic training

none	90%
one	5%
several	5%

**Table 7:** Among my colleagues in the additional therapeutic training (candidates of the training) were/are open living gay men/lesbian women

none	50%
one	30%
several	20%

**Table 8:** In the time of my additional therapeutic training I was/am ... to colleagues or the teaching-staff

open lesbian/gay	58%
largely open lesbian/gay	18%
scarcely open lesbian/gay	20%
not open lesbian/gay	5%

### Sexual Orientation of the Clients and Openness at the Place of Work

Most of the interviewees reported that only few or none of their clients know about their homosexuality (compare Table 9). Almost 2/3 report that half or more of their colleagues know about their homosexuality. As a strategy of "coming-out" about 1/3 prefer to address it deliberately, whereas the majority "if I'm asked, I will tell it" (Table 10).

**Table 9:** The clients with whom I work know of my being gay/lesbian

none	46%
few	24%
many	16%
all	14%

To the open formulated question "Please describe in your own words which meaning the fact that you are lesbian/gay has in your work?" the following answers can be found among

others:

- Being lesbian gave me a more critical view upon so-called matters of course, normalities. A consequence of being lesbian is a greater potential for conflicts, however, also a greater creativity.
- Homosexuality is helpful in improving empathy for different groups of clients.
- Openness as an advantage, because colleagues have to cope with the subject. Acceptance by most of them. A colleague, however, has asked for the notice of employment of the homosexual to his superior.
- Not being able to talk with his colleagues about the leisure time.
- Possibility to bring in perspectives into the team and into the therapeutic team.
- In the clinic they attempt to keep the sexual orientation secret to patients and superiors. From this limitations result concerning behaviour in public.

**Table 10:** If your homosexuality is concerned, how do you regularly behave at your place of work?

Secrecy	2%
Keeping others in the belief that I'm heterosexual	10%
If I'm asked, I will tell it	56%
Address it deliberately	32%

### Differences between Psychologists and the Whole Sample of Gay Men and Lesbian Women

As was explained above, the interviewing of gay and lesbian psychologists was part of an inquiry of lesbian women and gay men on their working place situation that was carried out throughout Germany. Within this scope 2522 questionnaires were evaluated (1846 men and 676 women, including the 62 psychologists). In the following the whole sample will be compared with the psychologists concerning the answers to some relevant questions.

- Homosexuality plays a more important role for the choice of a profession for the psychologists than for the whole sample (35%; whole sample = 11%);
- In choosing the profession the motive of self-fulfillment was important to 78% of the psychologists, but only to 32% of the whole

sample.

- Psychologists are more discriminated at the places of work than the interviewees of the whole sample. 18% of the psychologists did not get a working place because of their homosexuality in comparison to 9% of the whole sample.
- Psychologists are more open concerning their own homosexuality than the average gay/lesbian employed. In the case of the psychologists (63%) half or more of the colleagues know about their being gay or lesbian. In the case of the whole sample only 33% reported this.
- Only 12% of the psychologists keep their homosexuality secret at their places of work, whereas 27% of the whole sample do this.
- Psychologists make more positive experiences, if they deal openly with their homosexuality at their places of work: 87% report good experiences with colleagues. In the whole sample it is 67%.
- Lesbian and gay psychologists did inform their mothers in 92% and their fathers in 84% about their own homosexuality. In the whole sample this is 81% and 66%.
- Being questioned "do you feel well being lesbian or gay?" 68% of the psychologists and 70% of the whole sample answered "this fully applies to me".

Almost all psychologists (97%) find it encouraging "if all lesbians and gays are out in public", in the whole sample 86% think that way.

### Interpretation

Many lesbian and gay students of psychology go through their academic training at departments of psychology and—if they want to become psychotherapists—through psychotherapeutic training institutions, as well, without being confronted with gay-lesbian subjects. This is, of course, true for the heterosexuals in these training institutions, too. German psychology and the diverse psychotherapeutic schools do ignore the subject of homosexuality largely. For lesbian and gay students of psychology this means an immense alienation from their own life experiences, above all, if they—as after all one third of the interviewees reported—can reveal their homosexual orientation to hardly anyone in their training surroundings. To gay men and lesbian women as (potential) clients of psychological and psy-

chotherapeutic professional groups this means that their life-styles and problems are largely being ignored in the training of these professional groups.

The results of the investigation show that German psychology is far from having left behind its fatal history as an essential institution of suppression of homosexual human beings. The most distinguishing mark of the prevailing heterosexism in German Psychology, thus, is an almost entire lack of gay and lesbian teaching subjects. The denial of this subject in the academic training is a very expressive record for the distortions and the one-sidedness of psychology and an additional example for the prevailing academic psychology's renunciation of practice relevance of its contents. The results also show that the numerous professional and semi-professional activities of lesbian women and gay men in the field of psychosocial care of their respective reference group (e.g. lesbian-, women- and gay counselling- and therapeutic centres; anti-violence-projects; self-help associations; established psychotherapists and their respective clients) almost never can count on assistance from their academic field of any kind. Thus, once more the current experience of the general gay and lesbian emancipation movement is substantiated according to which institutions for gay men and lesbian women (including, for example, the AIDS-institutions) have always been called forth only if lesbian women and gay men fought for them by themselves. Half of the interviewees work almost exclusively with heterosexual clients. This figure at first refers little to satisfaction with the job and discrimination at the working-place, because lesbian women and gay men as members of a minority cannot expect (and in some cases they also do not want to) to work exclusively for lesbian women and gay men.

However, the investigation also shows that the majority of the interviewees reported that only a few or some of their clients know about their homosexuality. Whether these figures can be referred to the special kind of contact which one part of the psychologists has to their clients (as diagnostician in psychiatric clinics, institutions for disabled, as counsellors for individual short-term counselling) remains open. The question whether the kind of relationship with the clients makes a greater openness possible and as well necessary

remains unanswered, too (cp. Authenticity-variable in Rogers' client-centered concept). However, it must be assumed that the prevailing heterosexism at universities and at therapeutic training institutions and the fact that, after all, one third of the interviewees do inform none or only a few of their colleagues at the working place about their being gay or lesbian cause many lesbian and gay psychologists involuntarily to keep their orientation secret from their clients. We maintain that this has negative influences on the therapeutic and counselling work in many cases.

To bring it to a point: The prevailing heterosexism in psychology and at the respective working-places also discriminates against gay and lesbian psychologists in a very specific way. It hampers the quality of their work by forcing them to an inauthenticity which does harm to the contacts with the clients—and this has to be seen from the background that many lesbian and gay psychologists absolutely view their being lesbian or gay as a positive factor for their work.

A comparison of the psychologists with the whole sample of lesbian women and gay men shows that for the psychologists their homosexuality was a more decisive factor for their choice of the profession, that the motive "possibility for self-realization" was more marked and that they are more open about their homosexuality than the "gay-lesbian average."

However, the psychologists also reported about more discrimination at work. This can be referred to their greater awareness of discrimination. It also is a consequence of the fact that many psychological jobs are offered by institutions which tend to be homophobic (e.g. ecclesiastical bearers; psychoanalytical/medical training institutions). This also seems to be the reason why psychologists more often report on not having applied for a certain job.

For many lesbian and gay psychologists the choice of the profession and the actual work downright refer to inconsistencies: on the one hand, they promise more self-realization, on the other hand, they mean being in a working-field which is characterized by a specific heterosexism. Probably this inconsistency is disentangled on the individual level by the fact that the job which on the one side brings about a high degree of discrimination against the own person, at the same time provides the necessary strategies for coping with this discrimination.

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Günter Reisbeck, Monika Bittner, Manfred Edinger, and Christopher Knoll work at the University of Munich, Germany. Within the Department of Social Psychology they have founded a gay-lesbian research group. The article was translated by Barbara Stahlheber.



## Do People Go for the Exotic? A Critical Review of a New Theory of Sexual Orientation

by Melanie C. Steffens

One of the first things that I learned about psychology journals when I was a first-year student was that the *Psychological Review* was the one and only journal for high-level theoretical advancement in psychology: If you succeed in publishing your research there, you have definitely made it to the top. Daryl Bem has made it, publishing his "exotic becomes erotic" theory of sexual orientation there. With his article, the developmental psychologists awake from their "sleeping beauty's sleep," as we say in German, and finally join the discussion on issues around sexual orientation that biologists and social constructionists have been dominating lately. Bem accommodates both of these viewpoints because he holds that (1) biological variables *indirectly* influence sexual orientation, and (2) that the theory is valid only in a gender-polarizing culture like ours in which gender conformity or non-conformity makes a difference and in which a construct such as "sexual orientation" exists.

Figure 1 shows the sequence of events that is, according to Bem, involved in the development of sexual orientation and that is followed by most men and women in our culture. Biological variables (genes and prenatal hormones) are correlated with sexual orientation not because sexual orientation is coded in the genes—"the belief that sexual orientation is coded in the genes embodies the unacknowledged assumption that knowledge of the distinction between male and female must also be hardwired into the human species, that sex is a natural category of human perception" (Bem, 1996, p. 329). Rather, childhood temperaments like *level of aggression* and *activity level* are coded in the genes. Those who have a high level of aggression and activity,

mostly boys, prefer boys' games, male playmates, "rough-and-tumble play" (p. 321), and competitive sports. If they are boys, they will be perceived as gender-conforming, if they are girls, as gender-nonconforming. In contrast, boys will appear gender-nonconforming and girls will appear gender-conforming if they prefer to "socialize quietly or play jacks or hopscotch" (p.321) with girls.

As a result of these preferences, gender-conforming children feel different from opposite-sex peers, whereas gender-nonconforming children feel different from same-sex peers. Some children feel different from all their peers. Peers whom one feels different from appear "dissimilar, unfamiliar, and exotic" (p. 321). The unfamiliarity of those peers, in turn, produces heightened nonspecific autonomic arousal in their presence, and in later years, this arousal is transformed into erotic and romantic attraction.

"Typical" boys will feel attracted to girls, because these are perceived as different, "typical" girls will be attracted to boys, and the gender-nonconforming children will experience homoerotic attraction. Children who felt different from male and female peers will turn out to be bisexual.—But what about children who have never perceived any of their peers as dissimilar or unfamiliar? It seems to me that they would, according to the theory, necessarily turn out to be asexual.

The "theory proposes that heterosexuality is the modal outcome across time and culture because virtually all human societies polarize the sexes to some extent, setting up a sex-based division of labor and power, emphasizing or exaggerating sex differences, and, in general, super-

imposing the male-female dichotomy on virtually every aspect of communal life. These gender-polarizing practices ensure that most boys and girls will grow up seeing the other sex as dissimilar, unfamiliar, and exotic—and, hence, erotic. Thus, the theory provides a culturally based alternative to the assumption that heterosexuality must necessarily be coded in the genes.” (p. 325)

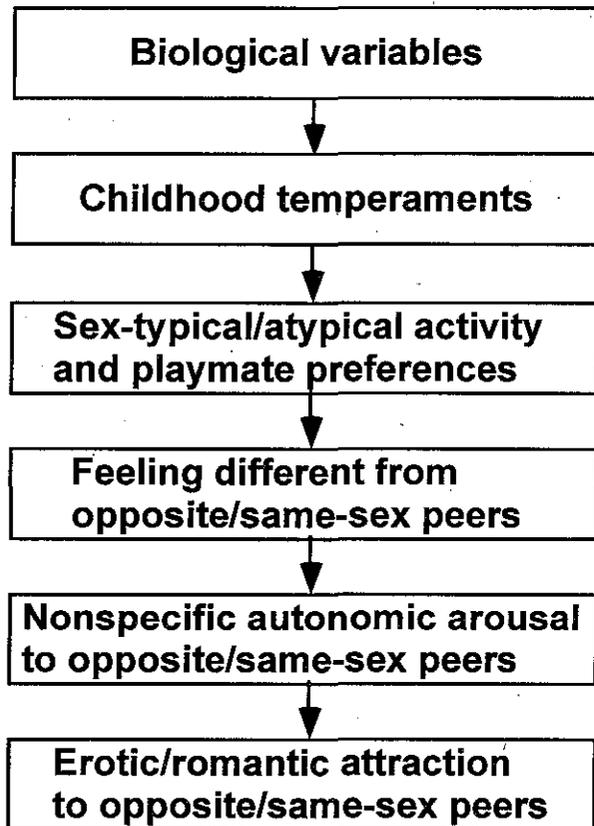


Figure 1. Path to sexual orientation in a gender-polarizing culture according to Bem (1996).

Bem specifies the mechanisms which allegedly lead from one event to the next in the “exotic becomes erotic” theory in detail, but I won’t elaborate on them here. Rather, I want to focus on some conceivable weaknesses of the theory. The “exotic becomes erotic” theory accounts for a lot of the evidence on the antecedents of sexual orientation that there is, for example for the fact that more gay men and lesbians indicate to have preferred gender-nonconforming behaviours in childhood than heterosexuals. As a memory psychologist, however, I am not particularly impressed with the results of these mostly retrospective studies which can easily be explained by participants’ reconstructing their distant past in accordance with their present beliefs; Believing that childhood nonconformity is an antecedent of homosexuality, they look for the respective evi-

dence, and of course, they find it. Bem cites a more convincing *prospective* study showing the same correlation between childhood activities and sexual orientation for men, but evidence for women still seems to be lacking. I even believe that one won’t find that evidence, at least not to the same degree as for men. For instance, there seem to be many lesbians who do not deny their former erotic and romantic attraction towards men, also in long-term relationships, whereas many gay men perceive themselves as “gay in essence” in retrospective (see also the Swiss conference report elsewhere in this issue). Bem himself also cites a study (Bell, Weinberg, & Hammersmith, 1981) in which I find my doubts confirmed. Gay men were much more likely than heterosexual men to report having enjoyed sex-atypical activities and having had mostly opposite-sex childhood friends. However, heterosexual women were as likely as gay men, or even more likely, to report having enjoyed sex-atypical activities and having had mostly opposite-sex childhood friends. (Still, lesbians reported so even more often than heterosexual women.) If 40% of heterosexual women report that they had mostly opposite-sex peers and over 60% indicate to have enjoyed sex-atypical activities, why haven’t they joined the club yet? Have they all felt similar to their also tomboyish girlfriends, and effeminate men were the only “exotic” peers for them and attract them now?

### Flaws of a “Unisex” Theory

More generally, I think it is a pity that Bem misses to point out the developmental differences between men and women growing up in a patriarchal society, the different connotations of gender-nonconformity in our society, and the differences between gay men and lesbians in the development of sexual orientation. And I am sure that such differences do exist, as one might infer from lots of differences in gay men’s and lesbians’ timing of coming out, in their beliefs about the origins of sexual orientation, etc. Like it is, Bem’s theory seems to me to be a theory of men’s development of sexual orientation, with a few extras added to account for diverging findings with regard to women. For example, so-called political lesbians might choose to “center their lives around other women. This could lead them to avoid seeking out men for sexual or romantic relationships, to develop affectional and erotic ties to other

women..." (Bem, 1996, p. 331): It is not made explicit in the theory, but left to the readers' imagination *how exactly* they come about to develop erotic ties to other women. Does that imply that sexual orientation is a question of our environment and that it is open to change during all of adulthood?

Note that Bem does not hold that in adulthood, it is still true that "opposites attract." By then, the former "sissy boy" might well have shaped his body to become similar to his early-eroticized Superman hero, and a gay couple may, in turn, look strikingly similar.—Which implies, I think, that they both have become in adulthood what they could, due to their temperaments, not be in childhood. At best, this scenario seems a bit unlikely.

However, I cannot understand how the theory accounts for gay men's being attracted to effeminate men and lesbians' being attracted to masculine women: If a lesbian used to be a gender-nonconforming child, "femininity" is what made female peers exotic to her. Consequently, very feminine women should attract her now. If the theory implies that, it seems flawed in a basic way to me. Who would be attracted to a masculine woman? A person to whom at the same time tomboyish games and girls were exotic, that is, a person who used to play girls' games with a group of male peers.—A very exotic group, isn't it?

Reading the article, it seems that Bem regards every child as free to choose childhood activities and peers, something that I doubt. However, in an unpublished postscript on the political implications of his theory (Bem, 1997), he explains that more clearly. He argues that one might falsely derive the conclusion from his theory that one could prevent homosexuality by discouraging children from taking part in gender nonconforming activities and encouraging gender conformity. I think Bem is correct in stating that this is already done in our society to a maximum possible degree "and that the gender nonconformity of children who continue to prefer sex-atypical activities despite these forces must be strongly rooted in their basic temperaments. Forcing such children to engage in sex-typical activities is unlikely to diminish their feelings of being different from same-sex peers and, hence, is unlikely to diminish their subsequent erotic attraction to those peers." That is,

non-heterosexuals are those that have resisted all of society's efforts—and maybe additionally those who were not subject to such strong efforts.

From a political point of view, however, one might still criticise the theory in that it provides a scientific basis for *keeping up* this gender-polarizing during childhood. If, as seems quite desirable to me, each and every child was free to play whatever they wanted with whomever they wanted and their sex was so unimportant that one wouldn't even be able to tell whether they are boys or girls (as long as they are dressed), somebody's sex would not be relevant anymore when it comes to erotic and romantic attraction, or would it? Thus, everybody who does not want our society to turn into a society of all bisexuals should see to it that boys will still be boys and girls will be girls.

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### Biological Explanations: US vs. European viewpoint

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Anyway, I don't want to criticize the "exotic becomes erotic" theory on the basis of its political implications, but only want to point out the implications I detect. I second Bem when he argues that any straightforward biological explanation is much more dangerous than a developmental one. I have rarely met a European gay or lesbian who understood the enthusiasm of large parts of the American gay and lesbian movement about biological explanations of sexual orientation. Additionally, the biologists' reasoning escapes me: If sexual orientation was coded in the genes, shouldn't 100% of gay men's monozygotic twin brothers be gay by sexual orientation, and not only 52%? What happened to the "gay gene" in the other 48% of monozygotic twin brothers?

While I don't believe in the "exotic becomes erotic" theory when it comes to explaining women's sexual orientation, there are some definitely affirmative sides to it that I want to mention. Bem tries to explain sexual orientation, not homosexuality, because trying the latter "is ... scientifically misconceived ... because it presumes that heterosexuality is so well understood, so obviously the 'natural' evolutionary consequence of reproductive advantage, that only deviations from it are theoretically problematic" (Bem, 1996, p. 320). Furthermore, he mocks social psychology research that has, as most of us will have learned

as students, maintained that similarity promotes interpersonal attraction: "But there is an obvious exception: sex. Most people choose members of the opposite sex to be their romantic and sexual partners. It is an indication of how unthinkingly heterosexuality is taken for granted that authors of articles and textbooks never seem to notice this quintessential complementarity and its challenge to the conclusion that similarity produces attraction. They certainly don't pause to ponder why we are not all gay or lesbian." (p. 323)

Whereas most people whom I have told about Bem's theory are sceptical about it, we have enjoyed many interesting and stimulating discussions about it so far. I hope that these discussions will go on and am looking forward to reading more about the theory.

Luckily, this Newsletter is not a too

"scientific" journal to give personal accounts here. Thus, there is room for my own distorted reconstruction of my childhood friends and activities: I mostly played girls' games with other girls—not because I considered the girls' games so attractive, but because the *girls* were so much more attractive than boys! And most attractive were the "tomboyish", exotic and nonconforming girls who seemed to be like me...

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# 100 Years Gay and Lesbian Movement

by Olli Ståhlström

The international gay and lesbian movement will celebrate its 100th anniversary on May 15, 1997. This marks the day when the first emancipation movement, the WHK, the predecessor of the modern gay liberation movement, was founded in Berlin by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld in 1897.

Possibly the first gay rights fighter in history was the German lawyer Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, who started to publish a series of booklets in 1864 claiming that homosexuals (*Urnings* was his term, referring to a proposed close relationship to the Uranus) are normal people, although they form a sort of *intermediate sex*. Ulrichs wrote that sexual relationships between members of the same sex are based on love and they have the right to marry each other. Ulrichs even demanded that the church creates marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples. He was a brave fighter and already in 1867 he spoke at the Congress of German Lawyers, demanding complete civil and legal rights for *Urnings*. Ulrichs was shouted down and not allowed to finish his speech. In his booklets and pamphlets Ulrich claimed a new "scientific" theory

asserting that homosexuality is an inborn and natural phenomenon and a form of love. Ulrichs fought to free his fellow homosexuals from legal and social oppression. The time was not yet ripe for his ideas and they were not pursued later on. On the contrary, because of the unification of Germany after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71, the harsh Prussian anti-homosexual law was extended to all German states. Ulrich was imprisoned twice for speaking out against the Prussian political invasion. In the spirit of his time, he only spoke for the equality of male-to-male relationships.

### Purposeful Misinterpretations

Ulrichs' biographer describes his booklets as a "pyrrhic victory" (Kennedy, 1988). The leading medical authorities of the time, who had just started to formulate their own ideas of homosexuality as an inborn degeneration and mental disorder, got their ideas from Ulrichs, but they reinterpreted them, turned them against the original intention and started to treat Ulrichs himself as a psychiatric case. Westphal (1870) claimed that homosexuality is an "inborn inversion of the sexual feeling (*conträre Sexualempfindung*) with

the consciousness of the pathological condition of this phenomenon". In the terminology of the next century, Westphal as well as Krafft-Ebing (1886) thus established the opinion of all homosexuality as an ego-dystonic psychiatric disturbance. Having tried in vain to change the minds of the leading physicians, Ulrichs died a disappointed man, although he retained his pride for having tried his best.

However, apparently without Ulrichs being aware of it, another German lawyer, Magnus Hirschfeld, was inspired by the arguments and by Ulrichs' cause. Hirschfeld became acquainted with Ulrichs' booklets and began a new effort to mobilize a movement for the legal and social equality of Urnings. Ulrichs died in 1895, two years before Magnus Hirschfeld had succeeded in creating enough support to publicly establish the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee (Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee or WHK) in Berlin on May 15, 1897. Hirschfeld adopted the

same idea of homosexuality as an inborn property and the view that gays and lesbians actually form a *third sex* (sexuelle Zwischenstufe) between the two sexes. Hirschfeld paid tribute to Ulrichs and even visited his grave in Italy. Hirschfeld wrote that Ulrichs was "one of the first and noblest" the first person to state publicly and unapologetically that he was an Urning.

Being the leading psychiatric authority of his time, Krafft-Ebing treated Hirschfeld in the same condescending manner as he had treated Ulrichs. It is interesting that Sigmund Freud (1905), who wrote his theories on sexuality contemporarily, actually cooperated with Magnus Hirschfeld. In clear contrast to the medical attitudes of his time, Freud treated Hirschfeld and his newly born emancipation movement kindly, although he made his theoretical disagreement very clear. According to Freud, homosexuals are no third sex but all human beings have a potential for bisexual feelings.

„Vindex.“

## Social-juristische Studien

über

mannmännliche Geschlechtsliebe.

Erste Schrift über mann-männliche Liebe.

Hirschfeld's biographer describes him as "politically more astute than Ulrichs" (Steakley, 1982). He was able to create a strong organization and emancipation movement. He collected a long list of important names supporting the decriminalization of homosexuality. The influence of Hirschfeld's WHK was strong and international. Branches of WHK were established in several European countries and it became a powerful and respected movement. The law reform received support in the German Reichstag. It had already been in the law committee when Hitler

came to power in 1933. He destroyed the German WHK, burned its libraries, drove Hirschfeld into exile like Freud some years later. This completely demolished the German attempt at emancipation and the Nazis started to ship gays to death camps.

The work and spirit of the German WHK were preserved and carried on mainly by the Dutch branch of Hirschfeld's movement, the NWHK. Being traditionally tolerant, the Dutch refused to cooperate with the Nazis. They protected stigmatized minorities like Jews and homosexuals. Their national emancipation movement, COC, was

founded on the basis of the NWHK as early as in 1940.

When the war ended, the gay emancipation spirit was quickly rekindled by the Dutch movement which started to spread ideas of a new emancipation movement already in the 1940s, giving inspiration to the Danish and Norwegian movements (F-48, DNF-48) and the Swedish RFSL (1950). These movements even led to an international organization, ICSE, which was not able to survive in the post-war atmosphere. An example of the WHK's international influence even in far-away places is that the third chairperson of the Dutch NWHK visited Finland in the early 1970s and radicalized the Finnish movement, SETA. In turn, the Finns started to spread and smuggle information about gay liberation over the border to Estonia and the (then) Soviet Union, where people had learned Finnish in order to watch Finnish news about the conditions in the West. In 1984 the Finnish television inadvertently mentioned the name of the (then) Leningrad gay liberation group. The KGB, who constantly monitored Finnish media from behind the borders, immediately crushed the budding Russian liberation movement ('Gay Language Laboratory'), which recovered only after decriminalization of homosexuality in Russia in 1993.

Although there was an almost complete break with the emancipation movement in Germany, many of Hirschfeld's ideas continued to live on, mainly in the Dutch movement and gradually spread again around Europe and the United States. One of the first post-World War II emancipation efforts on American soil was by Harry Hay, pioneer of the American homophile movement. In 1948 Harry Hay formed a group called "Bachelors for Wallace" whose slogan was "Androgynes of the world unite!". Presidential candidate Henry Agard Wallace of the American Progressive Party was able to collect one million votes. The American groups had to proceed extremely carefully in the cold-war atmosphere and the approaching McCarthy era. However, in the early 1950s various 'homophile' movements, the ONE Institute, the Mattachine Society and its sister organization the Daughters of Bilitis, were formed and cooperated with the famous pioneer of psychological studies, Evelyn Hooker.

Henry Abelove, a historian of American psychoanalysis, makes an interesting observation about Sigmund Freud's own role as one of the

pioneers of freer sexual morality in the American society. Freud visited America in 1909 and he constantly and publicly criticized the American society and American psychoanalysts of his time for their moralism. Freud's letter to an early American psychoanalyst (James Jackson Putnam), is quite well-known today: "Sexual morality as society—and at its most extreme, American society—defines it, seems very despicable to me. I stand for a much freer sexual life".

The rising criticism against the psychiatric sickness label of homosexuality was one factor in radicalizing the American movements. According to many historians, mass mobilization during World War II planted seeds of grass roots movements. Women, blacks and lesbians/gays got a taste of equal treatment during the war in the American armed forces. Then the Kinsey reports shocked the nation in 1948 (men) and 1953 (women), followed by the Hooker study in 1957. The overall social changes, protest and youth movements during the late 1960s finally led to a radicalization of the American homophile movement and to the Stonewall riots in 1969 giving birth to the gay and lesbian liberation movement.

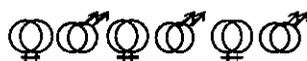
In 1994, when we marched past the United Nations Headquarters in New York to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Stonewall, there were more than half a million marchers, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgendered people.

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Olli Stålström is a Finnish gay rights activist and has written his PhD in the sociology of medicine on the pathologisation of homosexuality.



## Inside ALGP Europe

### Focus on... Membership Inclusion

The Steering Group discussed the topic of inclusion and exclusion of members once again on the Steering Group Meeting in February because first, we need to resolve our relationship to ALGBP-UK, and second, new associations that are about to be founded in Finland and Austria seem to be more inclusive than ALGP Europe, too. Thus, the "exclusive" psychologists' associations seem to become a minority within the range of European associations, and it does not make sense to affiliate many organisations that are much broader than ALGP Europe. The Steering Group position that emerged from the discussion and about which the next Board Meeting in Dublin will have to decide is as follows.

A) To make it clear that bisexuals are welcome in the association, a "B" should be added to its name. Topics of specific interest to bisexuals will be part of the Newsletter and of symposia insofar as they are brought forward by the members.

B) There is very much diversity among different European countries with regard to education and training of people working in a field broadly to be defined as "psychology", and the interests of groups of people working in that field will vary greatly. Therefore, national associations can be expected to differ in their membership criteria. To take that into account, a European association that intends to affiliate many national associations should be very inclusive. Then, it can still affiliate inclusive as well as exclusive national associations. Any member of an affiliated national association is eligible to become a member of the European organisation. Furthermore, all lesbian, gay, and bisexual psychologists and psychotherapists are eligible to become members.

On the following pages, you can read the two comments we got from contact persons regarding these issues and a reply. A truly delightful comment that reached me was: "I am also pleased that the dreaded B word will soon adorn the ALGP title! I hope the Association will also do more than just add the word to the name! I also await, with baited breath the time when I am allowed to join the European Association! Not having the requisite degrees, but clearly being well qualified, I look forward to sending you my membership fees—whenever you decide that I am worthy of membership!" (anonymized)

## Once Again: The B and the P

by Jan Schippers

While reading the latest Steering Group minutes it became clear that the discussion which played such an important rôle during the European Board Meeting in Athens two years ago, is back again. Should the Association of Lesbian and Gay Psychologists become the Association of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Psychologies?

Apparently the Steering Group has taken a position in favour of a change of name (and thus a change in the rules for membership inclusion).

As some of you may remember it was agreed upon in Athens that national groups would be free to add a B and use "psychologies", but that these national groups (ALGBP-UK in particular) would try and form a specific section for psychologists and develop new membership criteria, in order to avoid that the association would be flooded by all kinds of therapists without a reasonable "scientific" background and using dubious methodology (the so-called star-gazers and card dealers). And to make sure there are no misunderstandings: the former Steering Group was not against bisexuals joining the association, but feared that the whole debate on bisexuality might overshadow or take away attention from what we saw as the main issues: male and female homosexuality. The argument against "psychologies" were that in practice this would mean a completely therapy-oriented association, with little room for researchers, organisational psychologists, educational psychologists et cetera. Also we felt that as an association of psychologists it would be easier to influence mainstream psychology.

A little sooner than expected we find ourselves

in the middle of the discussion between "inclusionists" and "exclusionists" again. The board of ALGP-Netherlands has voted on the B-issue. A majority now was in favour of adding the B (3 to 2). Those who voted yes did feel the fear of loss of attention to homosexuality was unwarranted and two of them felt the label of bisexual could be applicable to themselves as well. The no-voters (and yes, I was one of them) repeated the arguments mentioned above.

As far as the "psychologies" are concerned, we decided to postpone a vote till after we have conducted an experiment. Feedback after our national conferences indicated members appreciated the fact that all participants were psychologists. Our next conference in September will be "mixed": other disciplines (like social workers and psychiatrists) will participate as well. During the general membership meeting two months later, we'll have a vote on the rules of membership-inclusion, based on the experiences with the mixed conference.

The Dutch board is well aware of the possibilities of expansion if we drop the psychologists-only rule. I feel we could easily triple the number of members by doing so. But we might lose some or many of the psychologists in the process. The extremely low number of psychologists who have joined ALGBP-UK may be a sign on the wall. For the moment, as you'll have understood, we'll let the issue rest until the general vote will be made at the end of this year. We're looking forward to read about other opinions on these issues in the Newsletter and will continue to contribute to the debate.

Jan Schippers is the chair of ALGP-Nederland and the founder of ALGP Europe.

## ALGBP-UK on Membership Debate

by Dominic Davies

The British group (ALGBP-UK) membership criteria is that full voting members will be lesbian, gay and bisexual with a professional interest in lesbian, gay and bisexual affirmative psychologies and share the Association's aims and actively be prepared to further its interests.

We also have associate members who are peo-

ple willing to support our aims but who wouldn't identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual.

From our inaugural meeting we have found this criteria to work well for us. At present we have around 150 members.

This criteria recognises that many people are interested in gay affirmative psychology but who

may not be qualified as psychologists i.e. they are counsellors, psychotherapists and students of counselling, psychology, social work etc.

Everyone is asked to sign a membership agreement to agree ethical practice and use of our name. Liz will send you a copy of this.

Clearly there have been strong views expressed amongst the European groups about membership. We are delighted to see ALGP considering supporting the view we have taken from our inception.

We are concerned however that to automatically bulk subscribe all our members would effectively be doubling their membership fees. We currently charge £30 per annum, and if we added the 50DM you require then people would be paying a fee similar to that charged by the British Association for Counselling, or our other large professional bodies. *[Editors' note: This statement is incorrect. The additional membership fee for bulk members is DM40 and for those with*

*a low income DM20.]* We are not convinced the market (our members) would bear this increase. We believe serious questions would be asked about what the benefits of European membership would be for this additional fee, and for us to automatically tithe the membership in the way might bring about the collapse of our own organisation.

We recognise that some of our members would want to be part of ALGP, and therefore, want to offer maximal choice. We have recently decided to ask ALGBP-UK members who meet the ALGP criteria and who wish to subscribe to ALGP to do this directly with Europe, as can those people who solely want the Journal. We believe this offers the best way forward for our members, many of whom are on limited incomes, still in training, or who do not earn a full living from their counselling or psychology work.

We hope this is helpful for you, and look forward to hearing the outcome of the decision.

Dominic Davies is one of the two chairs of ALGBP-UK.

## **European Comment on the ALGBP-UK Statement**

by Birgit Eschmann

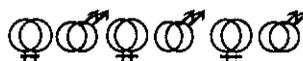
To be honest, as a member of the Steering Group I was rather disappointed by the lack of interest in ALGP Europe expressed by the UK statement above. Of course, one can question the relevance of a European association *as long as* one is member of a fully functioning national group. For instance, I am an active member of VLSP (=ALGP) Germany as well. And if ALGP Europe did not exist, I would have even more time and opportunity to work for the German association.

But what about the single members of ALGP Europe who cannot rely on a national association? Who receive information only by this Newsletter? Who live in countries even more homophobic than e.g. Germany or the UK? Who don't know any other gay or lesbian psychologist in their whole country? For example the desperate letters we got from our only lesbian member in Portugal touched us deeply. And to look back: ALGBP-UK as well as VLSP Germany were founded because a Dutch man (guess who) did not only establish ALGP The Netherlands but

a European association just as well. Only if others continue his work, and these others will of course come from countries with functioning national organisations, Europe might one day see the birth of a Portuguese or a Czech ALG(B)P.

On a more technical note, the Steering Group finds Dominic's suggestion regarding European membership of individual UK members the worst possible arrangement. a) Continuing the individual way to European membership (as it is in force now, in 1997) will keep the number of UK members extremely low. b) It means a lot more work for us in comparison to the bulk arrangement we have for example with ALGP The Netherlands or VLSP Germany which transfer their European membership fees completely and at once and send out the Newsletter with other publications to their members.

I hope indeed that Dublin will lead to some constructive exchange and to a solution that will make ALGP Europe live on instead of signalling the beginning of its early end.



## **Swiss Psychotherapy Conference: Gay and Lesbian Clients: Helpless Psychotherapists**

by Jan Schippers

On January 31st and February 1st a group of about 70 psychotherapists attended the conference with the above title, organised by the Forum schwuler und lesbischer Psychotherapeutinnen and the Paulus Akademie in Zurich. I noticed the organisers were a bit disappointed about the number of people who had turned up. An earlier conference had attracted more attention. As far as I was concerned the size of the group was just perfect, although it was a pity that only a few heterosexuals were present.

Both conference days were structured in the same way: plenary sessions in the morning, workshops (of which some ran both days) in the afternoon. On Saturday morning Ingrid Wandel from Konstanz in Germany spoke about the so-called *Wende-Lesben*, the coming out as lesbians by women aged between 40 and 50 years. The adoption of a lesbian or bisexual identity at a later age is much more common in women than it is in men. In her research Ingrid Wandel had noted that many of these women did experience an unexpected and complete change in sexual preference, without having the feeling that their former heterosexual identities had been false or based upon a repression of their 'true lesbian nature'. In my experience many men who come out at a later age, tend to reconstruct their past as characterised by a repression of their real sexual feelings and affections. In other words they usually feel that they had been homosexual from the beginning. This of course raises some interesting questions about differences in the subjective experiencing of sexual identities in women and in men.

Then it was my turn. I gave a lecture entitled *The development of individual gay identities*. I presented a stage-model (which always has its limitations if you work with individuals) and talked about some of the results of my research-project about gay identities. One way of looking at gay identities (and this was the perspective I had chosen) is to find out which qualities a person ascribes to himself as a gay man, which qualities he attributes to other gay men and which to heterosexual men. Using this method one can get a fairly concrete image of how an individual gay identity is structured and which antihomo-

sexual feelings and concerns play a role for the client concerned.

In the afternoon I attended the workshop on gay *Designs for life* and their consequences for therapy. This workshop by Bernhard Villiger focussed on personal experiences of the participants. We shared with each other which plans we had for our lives when we were young and how these plans changed or had to change once we discovered being gay or lesbian. Of course the old plans do not disappear and bits and pieces of these plans (usually linked closely to what your parents expected you to be) surface throughout the rest of your life (for example: I will only be happy if I find this one lover who will stay with me forever). I found that by looking at and talking about my own history from this perspective and by hearing the stories of others in the context of a workshop, it becomes so much easier to ask the same questions from my clients who are struggling to find a satisfying lifestyle as a gay man. Bernard presided the workshop in a calm and thoughtful way, which greatly facilitated the exchange of personal experiences.

The second workshop I attended was the one by Ruedi Tschopp about gay and bisexual fathers, "torn apart" between their family and the gay subculture. This workshop also became pretty personal, since a number of participants were courageous enough to share their own experience as a gay or bisexual father with the rest of the group. Besides Ruedi is really good in making people feel at ease, since his approach is warm, inviting and respectful, while at the same time he managed to point out therapeutical issues in the stories told. One of the things I remember most are the different dilemmas gay/bisexual fathers are (or have been) facing. These dilemmas are usually characterized by loyalty towards wife and children on the one hand and loyalty vis-a-vis one's own (sexual) wishes and/or male lovers. Important questions (like when, how or why to tell the children or how to react when one of the children seems to suspect something) were discussed at length. Of course, there is not one answer to these questions.

Sunday morning it was time for two plenary lectures, which in some way both dealt with issues

of transference and countertransference. Christa Schulte from Bremen (Germany) gave a fascinating talk (entitled 'I'm really not like you') about the approach of the many different lesbian identities by lesbian and non-lesbian therapists. Being a lesbian therapist certainly doesn't mean that you are like your lesbian clients, or that these clients will experience you as similar in some important ways. Clients may see their therapist as a (lesbian) role-model, but may also need to distance themselves from the kind of identity they think the therapist is representing. In working with the opposing wishes to be alike or to be different from the therapist, one must communicate space and permission for both identification and individuation.

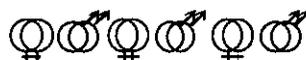
Ernst Frei (who replaced Martin Dannecker) presented a truly psychoanalytic case-history, for which he was chastized a bit during the discussion afterwards. He talked about a client who changed his insecure and somewhat 'effeminate' behavior into a more self-assured and 'masculine' behavior, following one crucial session. Countertransference (i.e., a dream about the client) made it clear to the therapist that this particular client wanted to be a desired person and thus identified with women's roles. A well-placed intervention then seemed the cause of the spectacular change mentioned above.

The workshop I presented on Sunday afternoon focussed on therapeutical interventions with clients who have trouble in developing a positive gay identity. Following the more theoretical issues I talked about in the lecture of the previous day, we discussed a model on how to work with these concepts in therapeutical practice.

Of course it has been impossible for me to attend all 11 (!) workshops. I'll give you the titles of these workshops, (that is, my own English translations of them) so you can get some idea of the topics that were covered:

- Coming out—and then? Lesbian and gay lives in a heterosexual world (Suzanne Dietler & Dorothea Burkhard).
- Homosexuality—heterosexuality, isn't that the same but with a different colour. Homophobia under the microscope (Bettina Steinbach & Ingrid Huelsmann).
- About the emotional reaction to the other sexual orientation. Psychoanalytic supervision for practicing psychotherapists (Ernst Frei).
- Parents of lesbian and gay children in the medical consultation hour (Ruedi Gloor).
- What we expect from you? Lesbians in psychotherapy (Jacqueline Frossard).
- Gay clients in therapy. Intervention for psychotherapists (Adrian Tuchschnid).
- Wende-Lesben—about the coming out of women aged 40 to 50 (Ingrid Wandel).
- Norms and values in the therapeutical relationship with lesbians. Supervision for therapists (Christa Schulte).

Looking back at these two days in Zurich I can only say that the cocktail of high quality, diversity in topics, efficient organisation (although the workshop-system was a bit complicated) and relaxed atmosphere made this conference a great experience. I want to thank my Swiss hosts for inviting me and I advice everyone to look out for the next conference the *Forum of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapists* will organise.



## **Austrian Forum for Lesbian and Gay Psychologists, Psychotherapists and those in Training**

by Sabine Waldhuber

The Formation of the Forum for *Lesbian and Gay Psychologists, Psychotherapists and those in Training* was based on the German Lesbian and Gay Psychologists' Convention in autumn 1995. Its purpose is to establish an open forum for discussion. In our first year of existence it was the main objective of the group to define its contents and its structure. One of our focuses apart from the topic "Violence in lesbian and gay relationships and inside the scene", is an extensive in-

quiry about the topic of homosexuality in psychotherapy and in places of psychotherapeutic training in Austria. In cases of discrimination of homosexuals in the psychosocial field of work reported to us we regard it as part of our responsibility to intervene at the relevant places (e.g., the commission of ethics, the employer, etc.) Besides all the examination of contents there is enough opportunity of interchanging privately.

# ALGP The Netherlands 1996-1997

by Evelyn Markus

After initiating and steering ALGP Europe in the years 1992-1996, the Dutch group was happy and proud to transfer its European responsibility to the German group. This meant we could finally put our efforts to setting up our national group properly. The Dutch steering group consists of five ex-European steering group members and two new members (six men and one woman).

Our primary goal for 1996-1997 was to end a period of neglect of our Dutch members and to revive their interest in ALGP. In this way we hoped to prevent a further downsize of our membership (25 still there at the beginning of 1996-1997) and to attract new people to the steering group. Our secondary goal was to improve our financial and membership administration and our facilities for European communication.

This year we are organizing two seminars on the relevance of Gay Affirmative Psychology in The Netherlands. The first one was held in January 1997. Two senior researchers of the University of Utrecht presented their studies on gay and lesbian identity and current omissions of

gay and lesbian topics in Dutch psychology were discussed. The second seminar will take place in September, where several psychotherapy training institutes will be invited to discuss omissions of gay and lesbian topics in their training program.

ALGP The Netherlands currently has 27 members. A few of them are starting to be actively involved and want to become steering group members in the next year. This is a promising development. We attended the European Board Meeting 1996 in Denmark and visited the Swiss initiative group for one of their activities. Our financial resources now are sufficient to send a representative to one or two ALGP Europe meetings abroad. And in a few weeks from now we will have our own E-mail address for communicating with other European groups.

In the coming year we want to concentrate on improving our membership quantity and active involvement of new people. Of special importance will be to pay attention to the underrepresentation of women and non-clinical psychologists.

Evelyn Markus is a psychologist from Amsterdam, the former vice chair of ALGP Europe and a member of the Steering Group of ALGP The Netherlands.



## New Books of Interest

### Book Review

Shernoff, Michael (Ed.), (1996). *Human Services for Gay People. Clinical and Community Practice*. Binghamton: Harrington Park Press.

Since 1985, when the first two books appeared in the US that provided instruction for social workers on how to work with lesbian women and gay men (Hidalgo, Peterson, & Woodman, 1985; Schoenberg & Goldberg, 1985), there have been plenty of publications on this subject. Shernoff's volume, on the one hand, is such a manual, too, summarizing up-to-date knowledge. On the other hand, this knowledge is presented from a clinical point of view, focusing on specific therapeutical settings, specific mental health problems, or on specific sub-populations of lesbian women and

gay men.

The book describes the needs of gay and bisexual college students, of HIV negative gay men, of gay and lesbian couples living with AIDS, of gay men choosing to be fathers, and of gay Latinos and their spirituality. The reader can become acquainted with the variety of lesbian and gay families as well as with anti-gay and anti-lesbian violence and the effects of chemical dependency and depression on lesbian women and gay men.

The chapters, most of which are written by practitioners, are pretty comprehensive and easy to understand, because they are explained by vignettes and experiences the authors have made in their own work. I read some of them with real enlightenment, like Benjamin Lipton's essay on college counselling, in which he expounds the

correlation between homophobia, transference and countertransference in quite simple words, but very much to the point.

The whole book is very instructive, particularly because every chapter is concluded by a set of practical advice. I agree with most of the contributors that it is not enough if there are specialized gay-lesbian mental health care and social services/agencies. Practitioners in the average service in the average city or town should know about the lifestyles and needs of gay men and lesbian women. This book provides good introductory knowledge for practical social service and students of social sciences. One drop of bitterness, however, has to be spilled: Not every

headline that promises male and female contents can be taken literally. Shernoff's volume is mainly based on gay male experiences, only three chapters focus on lesbian experiences as well.

### References

- Hidalgo H., Peterson, T., & Woodman, N.J. (Eds.). (1985). *Lesbian and gay issues: A resource manual for social workers*. Silver Spring: National Association of Social Workers.
- Schoenberg, R., & Goldberg, R. (Eds.). (1985). *Homosexuality and social work..* New York: Haworth Press

Ulli Biechele

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- I am a psychologist or a psychology student, and I want to join ALGP Europe and receive the ALGP Europe Newsletter.
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### Book Review

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Alexander, Christopher J. (Ed.). (1996). *Gay and Lesbian Mental Health: A sourcebook for Practitioners*. Binghamton: Harrington Park Press.

The second volume to be reviewed here is Alexander's compilation of more or less prominent authors (like Anthony D'Augelli, Miriam Ehrenberg, and Rik Isensee) writing on genuine psychological issues concerning mental health and psychotherapy. From the volume reviewed above (Shernoff, 1996) it differs not only in terms of appearance (hardcover vs. paper binding), but also in terms of a more scientific language; two US reviewers call it "intellectually rigorous". Facts are combined with profound theories, lesbian women and gay males are equally represented. Contrary to Shernoff, Alexander may be less appropriate for students, but rather for scientists and practitioners who want to be up-dated in terms of clinical issues concerning their lesbian, gay male and bisexual clients.

There are chapters that provide new theoretical access to phenomena like narcissism and egocentricity in gay men, lesbian grief and loss issues in the coming-out process, the global loss and trauma in the gay community caused by AIDS, or the process of aging in the gay and lesbian communities. Others deal with specific clinical issues like the disorders that may occur in the identity development in gay Latino men or the vulnerability to body dissatisfaction and eating disorder in gay men, or the categorizing of lesbian, gay and bisexual suicide attempters. A third group of articles is more practically oriented. Psychotherapists report on their work with lesbian partners of childhood sexual abuse survivors, with parents of gay and lesbian children. They describe possibilities how to balance autonomy and intimacy in lesbian and gay relationships, and how to integrate clients' spiritual needs into psychotherapy.

Each contribution is perfectly elaborate. The chapters that enlightened me most were the four ones I have quoted last.

Ulli Biechele

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### New Books and Articles

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Almaguer, T. (1993). Chicano men: A cartography of homosexual identity and behavior. In

H. Abelow, M.A. Barale, & Halperin (Eds.), *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (p. 255-273). New York, NY: Routledge.

Beardsell, S., Hickson, F.C.I., & Weatherburn (1995). *HIV testing services in North Thames (East)*. London: North Thames Regional Health Authority (SigmaResearch).

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Bogaert, A.F. & Blanchard, R. (1996). Handedness in homosexual and heterosexual men in the Kinsey interview data. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 25, 4, 373-378.

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- Prestage, G., et al. (1996). *Sydney gay community periodic survey February 1996: A demographic and behavioural profile of a cross-sectional sample of homosexually active men in Sydney, Australia*. Sydney: Macquarie University.
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- Psychology, John Dewey Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405, USA.
- In the first two issues of the *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, a range of interesting "classic" lesbian studies that were published elsewhere are reprinted. The publisher emphasizes the international character of the journal.
- Volume 1, No. 1:*
- Introduction: What Are "Classics" in Lesbian Studies? By Esther D. Rothblum
- Some Like Indians Endure—by Paula Gunn Allen
- Mati-ism and Black Lesbianism: Two Idealtypical Expressions of Female Homosexuality in Black Communities of the Diaspora—by Gloria Wekker
- "Coming Out" in the Age of Social Constructionism: Sexual Identity Formation Among Lesbian and Bisexual Women—by Paula C. Rust
- A Study of Lesbian Lifestyles in the Homosexual Micro-Culture and the Heterosexual Macro-Culture—by Joyce C. Albro and Carol Tully
- Sappho Was a Right—On Adolescent: Growing Up Lesbian—by Margaret Schneider
- Growing Older Female: Heterosexual and Homosexual—by Mary Riege Laner
- Lesbianism in Female and CoEd Correctional Institutions—by Alice M. Propper
- Lesbian Women of Color: Triple Jeopardy—by Beverly Greene
- Volume 1, No. 2:*
- Who Hid Lesbian History? By Lillian Faderman
- "Imagine My Surprise": Women's Relationships in Historical Perspective—by Leila J. Rupp
- Zero Degree Deviancy: The Lesbian Novel in English—by Catharine R. Stimpson
- Lesbian Ethics and Female Agency—by Sarah Lucia Hoagland
- Toward a Laboratory of One's Own: Lesbians in Science—by H. Patricia Hynes
- National Lesbian Health Care Survey: Implications for Mental Health Care—by Judith Bradford, Caitlin Ryan and Esther D. Rothblum
- Negative Sexual Experiences With Men Among Heterosexual Women and Lesbians—by JoAnn C. Brannock and Beata E. Chapman
- Therapy for Lesbians?: The Case Against—by Rachel Perkins
- Putting the Politics Back Into Lesbianism—by Janice G. Raymond

### Current Contents of the Journal of Lesbian Studies

The new *Journal of Lesbian Studies* published by the Haworth Press is edited by Esther D. Rothblum, PhD, who is a professor at the Department of Psychology, University of Vermont, Burlington, USA. Her research and writing have focused on lesbian mental health, and she is former Chair of the Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns of the American Psychological Association.

To obtain a free sample copy, send your request to Sample Copy Dept., The Haworth Press, 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904, USA. E-mail: getinfo@haworth.com. For information on how to prepare articles for submission and publication in *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, contact Editor Esther D. Rothblum, Department of

## Conferences & Papers & Requests

### European Congress on Lesbian and Gay Well-Being in Helsinki, Finland, on the 14th to 15th of August 1997

Inspired by last year's Nordic Congress in Stockholm we have organized this congress to keep the spirit alive. The Swedes gave us a real challenge and we have done our best to meet all expectations. We welcome psychologists, social psychologists, physicians, psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, and all other professionals and students who have scientific and/or professional interest in the mental and physical well-being of various sexual and transgendered minorities. Our priority has been to address as many facets of the vast array of sexual and gender minorities as possible without losing depth. Of utmost importance to us has also been to make sure that there is something for practitioners and researchers alike. The program includes three keynote lectures and several theme sessions in five different tracks running concurrently. Working titles for the track themes are 1) lesbian well-being, 2) HIV/AIDS, 3) non-heterosexual adolescents, 4) sex and gender, and 5) therapy and ethics. All sessions will include discussion and interaction.

If you are interested in giving a presentation (which would fit into one of the tracks) please send us an abstract before June 13th. At least twenty minutes will be allocated to each presentation and some time for discussion. Submitted individual contributions will be organized into thematic sessions by the Organizing Committee. Every presentation is also requested as a paper for the congress report. Naturally the program will also include social activities. We hope you will seize the opportunity to get to know people and share your thoughts and ideas with them. Often good ideas spread best in unofficial gatherings and the brilliant ones are discovered by accident. Hope to see you in Helsinki in August!

The registration fee is 550 FIM—250 FIM for

students—until the 13th of June and 700 FIM—300 FIM for students—after that. A 75% refund is available also until the 13th of June and a 50% refund until the end of July. There is no refund in August. For more information please contact Erika Heiskanen, e-mail: meheiska@cc.helsinki.fi, snail-mail: Helsinginkatu 15 B 46, 00500 Helsinki, Finland.

### The Netherlands: Summer Institute on Sexuality, Culture, and Society

The program will take place from July 21, till August 16, 1997 in Amsterdam. The Summer Institute is open to undergraduate and graduate students. The intensive international program is an opportunity for students to gain training in the social and cultural dimensions of human sexuality from scholars of various disciplines (e.g. Gilbert Herdt, John Gagnon, Han ten Brummelhuis, David Suggs, Linda Meyers). Students from Asia, Africa, Europe and the United States will meet. For further information contact: <http://www.pscw.uva.nl/projects/boundary/sumindex.html>, E-mail: SummerIns@pscw.uva.nl

### Wales: Non-Metropolitan Sexualities Conference

This multidisciplinary conference will be held by the Departments of Geography and English at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK, from 11 to 13 July 1997. Topics are likely to include: Rural identities, colonial and post-colonial identities, histories of sexuality, fictions of gender, mapping sexualities, queer theories, gay, lesbian and bisexual experiences on the margins, HIV/AIDS in rural areas. plenary speakers include the poets Alan Sinfield and Edwin Morgan.

For further information contact Sophie Lopez-Welsch, Conference Administrator, Dept. of English, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, SY23 3DY, UK. E-mail rip@aber.ac.uk. Fax UK 1970 622530.



# ALGP: Hot News

## Once Again: Come to Dublin

Don't miss the ALGP Europe symposium entitled *Lesbian and Gay Affirmative Psychology in Contemporary Europe* on the Vth European Congress of Psychology to be held in Dublin, July, 6th to 11th, 1997. There will also be a less formal evening session ("Community event") and the European Board Meeting during the conference week. We would be delighted to see many of you there—and the former ALGP Europe conferences have shown that these events are always both scientifically and personally rewarding. See also page 2 of this issue.

## Conference in the Netherlands

In September, ALGP The Netherlands will host a conference in Amsterdam. Several psychotherapy training institutes will be invited to discuss omissions of gay and lesbian topics in their training programme. For further information, please enquire at their address below, but no sooner than in July.

## Germany: Annual Conference of the VLSP on Identities: Formation, Diffusion, and Politics

The 5th annual VLSP conference will be held in Mannheim from October 31 to November 2, 1997. Besides three lectures a variety of workshops will be held. If you want to offer a workshop, you are still welcome. Please note that the deadline for offers is July 1, 1997. For further information, please contact Ulli Biechele, Tel. +49-621-8413401, Fax +49-621-8413402 or VLSP, Postfach 240 760, D-68177 Mannheim.

## ALGBP-UK Conference

ALGBP-UK has decided to not to have a residential conference this year over two days. Instead, there will probably be a one-day conference in London. The date is still being sorted out. The reason for making it one day and in London, is to try and increase the numbers attending. Also gay affirmative heterosexuals might be interested in coming to a non residential conference, but less sure about a residential one. For further information, please enquire at their address below.

## Addresses

If you want us to publish a contact address of your country on this page and/or in the internet, please tell us so! We are only publishing addresses after receiving explicit permission to do so, but we would like to have more!

Verband lesbischer Psychologinnen und schwuler Psychologen in Deutschland (VLSP), Postfach 221 330, 80 503 München, Germany, e-mail: 100653.3415@compuserve.com

Association of Lesbian and Gay Psychologists The Netherlands, Secretary: Rudolf Steinberger, P.C.Hoofstraat 5, 1071 BL Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Phone: +31.20.6624206, Fax.: +31.20.6646.069

Association for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Psychologies (ALGBP) U.K., PO Box 7534, London NW1 OZA, United Kingdom, e-mail: mother@innotts.co.uk (Dominic Davies)

## Addresses on the WWW

ALGP Europe: <http://www.psychologie.uni-trier.de:8000/projects/ALGP/algphome.html>  
 Finland: <http://www.dlc.fi/~jvan/steame.htm>  
 Germany: <http://www.psychologie.uni-trier.de:8000/projects/ALGP/VLSP/menu.htm>  
 The Netherlands: <http://www.psy.uva.nl/ResEdu/KP/Div/ALGP1.html>

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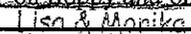
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