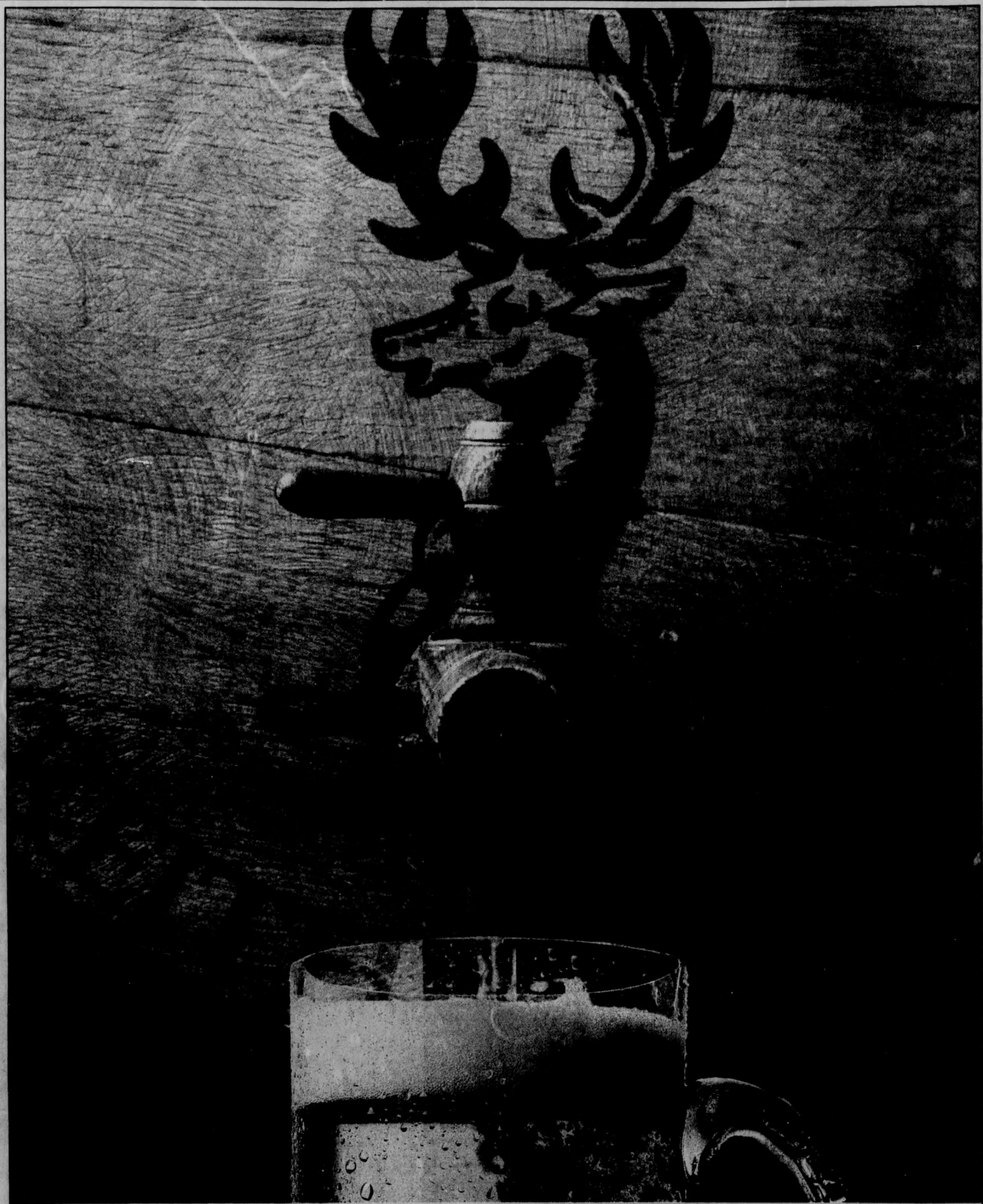


RIDE

terms that indicate prostitutes or wantons (Boswell, 1980). There is also the possibility that many of the Judaeo-Christianity doctrines and regulations refer to homosexual acts as performed by heterosexuals. In the section on biological issues, there is the statement that homosexuality needs to be differentiated from homosexual acts. This can be supported through Kinsey's Report which found a number of people who have had a homosexual experience (or engaged in a homosexual act) but did not consider themselves to be homosexual. In some cases it may have been due to a desire to not accept their homosexuality, but in other cases it could be more a sense of experimentation or curiosity. Sullivan (1995) examines the reasoning behind certain church doctrines which refer to transgressions of sex between men. The reference here appears to be, not toward homosexuals having homosexual sex but, heterosexual men engaging in homosexual sex. This idea is further compounded by the previous notion that actual homosexual persons did not exist; heterosexuals were instead performing the sin of homosexuality. However, in 1975, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, delivered a document with a remarkable statement. In it, the Vatican stated "A distinction is drawn, and it seems with some reason, between homosexuals whose tendency comes from a false education, from a lack of normal sexual development, from habit, from bad example, or from other similar causes, and is transitory or at least not incurable; and homosexuals who are definitively such because of some kind of innate instinct or a pathological constitution judged to be incurable." This was given additional support in a 1986 document entitled "The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons" in which homosexuals were recognized as deserving compassion, concern, dignity and the same human rights provided to heterosexuals. Both Judaeo-Christian documents recognized the existence of homosexual persons as valid human beings and possibly Christians, as well. What was frowned upon and discouraged were those homosexual activities which involved sexual behaviours; behaviours akin to premarital sex, adultery, use of contraceptives during sex and masturbation.

By the documentation in 1975 and 1986, homosexuals were perceived as valid human beings worthy of attention spiritually and socially. Yet some Judaeo-Christian denominations continue to discriminate against homosexuals despite the examination of religiosity and homosexuality. As a result, some Christian faiths have changed their doctrine to include homosexuals in their membership. One in particular, The United Metropolitan Community Church founded in 1968 by Reverend Troy D. Perry, is a Christian-based denomination. It claims the compassionate and open nature of the Judaeo-Christian faith, especially through Jesus' open acceptance and tolerance for those who society deemed as outcasts. Many homosexuals have therefore turned to lesbian/gay positive Christian faiths or other religious movements as an expression of their spirituality. In truth, there is the additional fact that not all people within Canada and the United States are Judaeo-Christians. Should it be assumed then that these people be forced to conform to all Judaeo-Christian doctrine and norms? Of course not. Society needs to take into account the various groups that make up the social network. Religious expression could then be performed by homosexuals across any faith or culture.

In conclusion, it can be seen that there are many social forces that influence, and are influenced by, homosexuality. In contrast to Mr. MacLean's supposition that we can now "see the deception laid down on society in order to accept homosexuality as a natural activity," it can be perceived that the progressive movement toward homosexual tolerance and acceptance is less a deception and more a reclamation of equal humanness that is part and parcel of being a human being. Many of the 'deceptive' issues mentioned by Mr. MacLean deal more or less with social interpretations and cultural norms which differ across space and time and from culture to culture. It is not the 'lie', as Mr. MacLean calls it, that will hurt all involved, but the continuation of social disapproval and intolerance of homosexuality that will hurt everyone. I agree that it must be through understanding the problems faced by people that change can be effected. However, it is the struggle to reclaim themselves despite intolerance and the lie of heterosexual normalcy and promotion by society that needs to be addressed.



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