## nglepink trianglepinktrianglepinktrianglepinktrianglepinktrianglepinktrianglepinktrianglepinktriang lepinktrianglepinktriangl

continued from pink triangle 1 house and shared my bed...' Well, just because I am a lesbian doesn't mean I am automatically attracted to every femble.

"We can't even look at our straight friends without being thought of as sexual objects. It's very frustrating and defeating. My choice of a lover is the only difference between me and the other heterosexual women on this campus. It's just one part of my life. People seem to deny the fact that we eat, sleep, and breathe just like everyone else. I enjoy going out to dinners, seeing movies, and other things as well," Lancaster said emotionally.

"People treat us so differently, so we have to fight for our civil rights. Many times, I have heard people say: 'She can't be a dyke, she's wearing a dress.' I didn't know skirts were forbidden for lesbians. We are supposed to be masculine and macho. I don't hate men," said langster.

"People said we are too promiscuous, but they don't want us to get married," said Matt. Matt went on to explain the nature of a homosexual relationship.

"What you get in a gay relationship is equality. For example, both my lover and I could not clean or cook, we split chores. In most gay and lesbian real relationships, both are equal partners."

Lancaster agrees and said: "There's

Lancaster agrees and said: "There's no defined roles, absolutely none. The butch-femme stereotypes don't exist. Lesbians have stopped being concerned with: 'I am a lesbian, I have to be like this and that'. My lover takes the garbage out because I hate doing it, and I do the ironing because she hates it. There's no such thing as she's the breadwinner and I am duly domestic."

"It's not true that when it comes to bed, one partner has to act as a woman and the other a man. The only problem in a gay relationship is that since both partners are raised as men, they can't communicate well because men are not taught to communicate or to express their feelings openly," said Matt.

"There are a lot of myths about homosexuals. In a relationship, there is no one acting as the masculine partner and/or the feminine partner. There are probably a few relationships like that, but it's very rare. There is also the myth about gay men being child molesters. Ninety-five per cent of children molested are approached by heterosexual men, even when you take into consideration that there are more heterosexual men than gay men.

"The other myth is that if homosexuality is allowed to happen, it'll cause the downfall of civilization. People blamed the fall of the Roman Empire on homosexuals. Greece was at its height when homosexuality was encouraged and flourished. Gay people aren't anti-family either. It depends on one's definition of a family, a couple in love could be defined as a family. And some gay couples decide not to have children, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are against families or children," said Matt.

So what are some hints for coming out?

"Be gentle with yourself. Give yourself time and patience... for yourself as well as other people," Lancaster advised. "The process of coming out can be very difficult, for the people around you and for you to tell them. You have to be strong, you do. I never thought that I would have the strength to face the process. But it's in there, you really have to believe in yourself. You never stop coming out, it's going to continue all your life. Defining yourself, growing and changing. Don't expect to have all the answers in one day, things about yourself, other gay people, and the world. Have a lot of faith in yourself and other people, for all the tough times, there is always one good time that balances it out," said Lancaster.

continued from pink triangle 2 protected from discrimination in areas under provincial jurisdiction.

For example, employment within provincial jurisdiction will not have to be protected. Secondary and post-secondary teachers fall in this category. But most collective agreements have clauses which protect against termination of employment without just cause. Even in Alberta it is very difficult to prove sexual

orientation is just cause for termination of employment. The United Nurses of Alberta agreement even includes a "wonderful" provision preventing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

But life can still be hard for gays and lesbians in Alberta. Homosexuals are not protected from discriminatory notices and signs for example. Homosexuals can also be denied access to restaurants, thea-

tres, or retail shops, denied an apartment, or commercial tenancy, and denied membership in trade unions, employment organizations, or occupational associations. All these areas come under provincial jurisdiction.

But Greckol believes that sooner or later even Alberta will change its legislation too. "(The federal government's) move is a starting point...In so many pieces of progressive legislation it's got to start somewhere. We do have a history of a kind of domino effect with respect to civil rights legislation. It starts to happen in the progressive jurisdictions, even eventually it's going to come to Alberta. Eventually we are going to be humiliated and shamed into doing it even here."

Meanwhile "homosexual groups in Alberta have another bullet in their gun basically, another good argument. They can say, 'look it's accepted by the federal Tories, what's the matter with you people."

"(This announcement) is really important. It's an extension of that recognition of the fundamental dignity and equality of everyone, and therefore a recognition of the importance of individual freedoms.

"The fact is that certain levels of our democratic structure have decided to enshrine this in legislation and therefore give it credibility and force. As a result it's going to gain more public acceptance.

"People will no longer be able to discriminate with impunity upon the basis of something that is not rational. You can no longer discriminate on the basis of something that is irrelevant to what you're discussing."

continued from pink triangle page 3 Lesbians of the University of British Columbia.

Fairclough says the predominant factor keeping young people in the closet is "fear. They're afraid of their friends, they're afraid of their family, they're afraid of how it'll affect their careers." Fairclough says counsellors tell the uneasy that time is on their side.

"There's no need to rush things. We tell them to take some time, to build a support group so they can have something to fall back on." He says counsellors speak from past experiences, and that "it was really much easier than we thought."

Fairclough says one irony common to many coming out experiences is the reaction of friends. "People are scared about the reaction of their friends. They want to believe they're fooling people, but they're not. Often their friends are just waiting for them to tell them."

The campus counselling group can handle most cases, but "if someone has real trauma, we refer them to a gay-positive professional," Fairclough says.

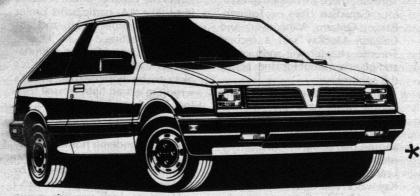
"There are still some psychiatrists around who claim they can cure homosexuality," he says, noting that aversion therapy can work with "anyone who has an aversion to sex at all."

Fairclough says the days of the anti-gay psychiatrist may be on the wane. A gay friend of his who wanted to be cured of his homosexuality had to travel to New York to find a doctor who claimed he could do it.

"It's a good sign that it's difficult to find a psychiatrist that wants to cure gays."

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