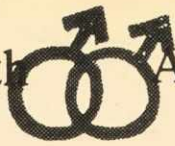


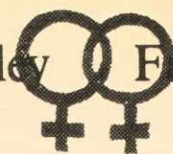
Bessie Smith



Andy Warhol

Virginia Woolf

Timothy Findley



Faith Nolan

THE ^{portable} GAY & LESBIAN READER

Some of you may be reading this in a classroom cafeteria library, university lounge or maybe on a bus. Or perhaps you're reading this at home behind a closed door, secure in the knowledge that family members won't barge in any second.

Hazarding a guess that relatively few copies of this supplement are being openly read in public, I'll admit that the first time I looked at material similar to this I was at home, my heart racing as I took in each word. That anxiety came not from fear of being caught, but from the wonderful realization that there were other people like me at Dalhousie, people who said "We're OK," by the very act of publishing that supplement.

I wasn't gay, and perhaps neither are you. But watching your university peers enjoying parties and dances and romantic involvements while you're alone is not fun; it's depressing. Nor is dating a member of the opposite sex and asking yourself why you're not having a good time.

While reading that particular newspaper insert was somewhat of a revelation, it didn't change my life immediately. I sought a way to break out of self-imposed seclusion and meet other people like myself, but the majority of the articles dealt with conferences and coalitions, and other things far removed from my needs.

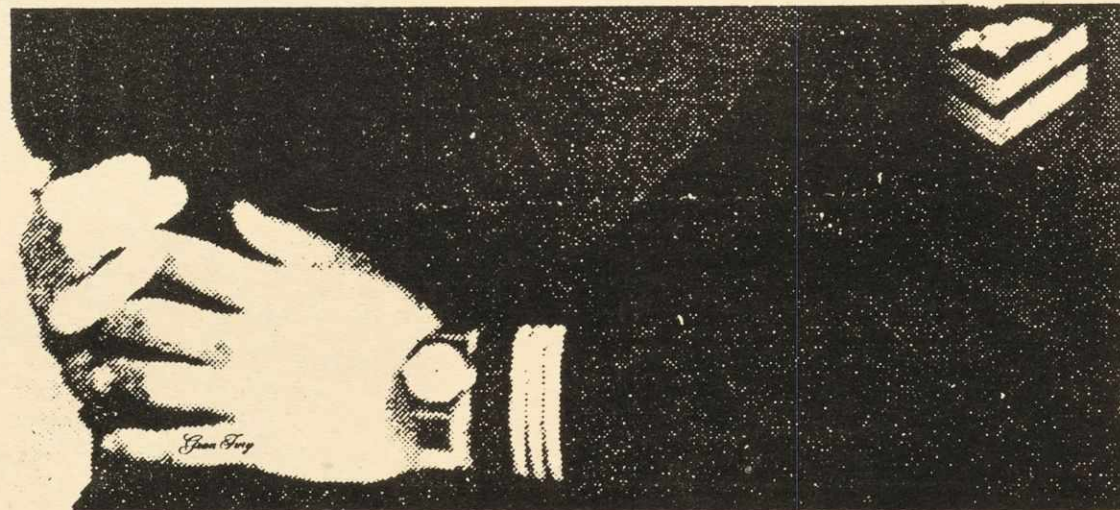
However, it did mention a phone line offering anonymous and confidential counselling, and also a gay group at the university. How I dreaded the thought of using either! Surely the person on the other phone would recognize my voice, or I'd be recognized at the meeting by other students from my faculty; either way, I suspected the whole city would soon know the truth.

It took me a long time to realize that there's really very little risk in making that phone call or attending a meeting. As conspicuous or self-conscious as you may feel doing either, to the people you contact, you're just another person. It's very likely these men and women will accept you simply because you've admitted to having something in common with them.

While there will always be some antagonism towards homosexuality, society is becoming more lenient and accepting of alternate lifestyles. It has been my experience that very few straight people are able to "detect" others with non-heterosexual inclinations, let alone be concerned. The majority of people don't give a damn about your sexual desires or preoccupations because they probably have better things to think about!



READ MY LIPS



Where are you reading this?

Unfortunately, there are people who self-righteously believe their own sexual observances are the only ones society should tolerate. Preventing confrontation from occurring with these people certainly requires discretion, and common sense; most of us become quite expert at "blending in" when required. As unlikely as it seems to me now, at one time I feared that coming out would automatically make me an easy target for ridicule or even violence. However, I eventually real-

ized the banner I wore around my neck that read "Attracted to Members of the Same Sex" was invisible to society, and still is, until I choose otherwise.

Perhaps you've considered the risks involved in coming out and now feel "Damned if I do, damned if I don't". But community support is available in various forms, in cities like Halifax. Using that support makes sense; my fear of discovery forced me to come out in another city, but

when I returned home I had to start all over again, with nobody to help me. Coming out in a strange city is certainly risky, but when I returned I realized that my hesitation to come out had cost me several years of unnecessary loneliness and anxiety.

While coming to terms with your sexual desires and acting upon them takes determination to change, as well as patience and courage, it helps to have the support of other people. Several gay

... GLAD we have this time together

Just coming out of the closet? New in the neighbourhood and want to make the acquaintance of members of the Gay and Lesbian Community at Dalhousie? Perhaps you should consider attending the next meeting of GLAD. It might be of interest to know that we are alive and well this year, with a fairly (spectacularly), active group.

Contrary to popular mythology, we are not a hedonistic den of sexual deviants; the budget's not big enough. Dalhousie lesbians and gays come together to relax, to talk, to discuss business, to make new friends, and to wind up the evening with either a movie, or a guest speaker.

New members are always welcomed. One need not be a university student to attend. If you feel ill at ease at the prospect of walking in on a bunch of people you don't know, relax. We are a friendly lot and everyone is made to feel welcome. If you have questions about coming out and are unsure of things, GLAD provides an atmosphere where you can learn to feel comfortable with your gayness.

GLAD meetings for the coming months are as follows: March 2, 16, 20 and April 6 in room 314 of the Dal SUB, at 6:30pm

Love is not a crime; if it were a crime to love,

God would not have bound even the divine with love.

Carmina Burana

GAYLINE 423-7129

Thurs - Sat
730 - 10pm

organizations (with varying objectives) exist in Halifax, among them Gays and Lesbians at Dalhousie (GLAD) and the telephone "Gayline".

Where you'll be when you read next year's Gay and Lesbian supplement depends on you. I probably won't be in public when I read it, but I certainly won't be tucked away behind a closed door, filled with fear and a racing heart.

Will you?