

The fight for gay rights: overwhelming oppression

by Dave Andrews
Spectrum Staff Writer

"I am oppressed!" Standing in front of Squire Hall, Kevin Mallinson, president of the Gay Liberation Front and coordinator of the Gay Studies Program at Tolstoy College, expressed his discouragement concerning the persecution of homosexuals.

Anita Bryant, recently succeeding in reversing legislation in Dade County, Florida, prohibiting discrimination against anyone because of sexual preference, seems to have added to the already overwhelming oppression of homosexuals.

"She is a real fanatic; the epitomy of a homophobic (frightened of gays)," said Mallinson. "The banished law leaves gays unprotected from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. Two men cannot live together in Federal Housing, whether gay or not. Legally, I cannot practice homosexuality in most of the United States, specifically New York State," Mallinson stated.

"Gay Literature," "Creating A Gay Perspective," "How to be a Political Gay," and "Coming Out Workshops," (coming out is a term used by homosexuals referring to their outright admittance of their sexual preference) are among some of the courses that have been offered at Tolstoy (College F). They are designed to help the gay person feel more at ease and to inform them about issues relevant to their culture.

The vast majority of Tolstoy's courses are oriented toward non-gay issues. Some of these include "Desegregation," "American Jewish Experience," and "Mens' Studies" (a series of courses studying the historical role of men in our society. "College F's classes are very informal; based on anti-authoritarianism and collectivity," explained Mallinson. "Some people think the 'F' stands for faggot," he added

jokingly, "but they don't realize it's not specifically a college of gay men."

Informal coffeehouses

"The word faggot came from the English school. Freshmen were called this because they would obey seniors' demands, and were subsequently considered very menial," noted Mallinson.

The Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was once a very political organization at this University, staging demonstrations and lobbying senators for improved gay rights laws. Presently, it is more of a social organization. Mallinson said he is the only political activist in the group at this time. Up to five faculty members and twenty to twenty-five students attend GLF coffee houses Friday nights at Tolstoy College. "These coffee houses are informal gatherings of gay students, designed to promote friendship and support among homosexuals," said Mallinson. Based on the Kinsey report average of 15-18 percent gay population nationwide, Mallinson estimates that 2500 gays attend this University. This figure includes exclusive homosexuals and bisexuals, also those occasionally indulging in homosexual activities. "Most gays won't come out," he said.

"Where did I go wrong" is a common parental inquiry when a son or daughter admits homosexuality.

George Weinburg, who coined the term "Homophobia," believes that most parents of homosexuals are worried their children will not carry on the family name. Many gays *do* want children. "I think I could raise a child well and be a loving father," said Morgan deTarr, GLF member. "Homosexuals aren't sick. Society won't give us much opportunity to prove we're good people."

No procreation

One of the National Gay Task Force's main goals is to reverse the law which prohibits gays from adopting children. There have also



—Jenson
Kevin Mallinson

been many court cases where a child becomes a ward of the court, because of a divorce between the parents caused by the homosexuality of one of the "spouses."

"There is only one legal homosexual marriage in the United States," says Mallinson. He claims that one of the spouses is Australian and many years ago was required to leave the U.S., unless he married. Laws then did not bar homosexual marriages. He married his gay lover and is still in wedlock to this day.

Harvey Rosenberg, vice president of GLF commented, "Look at it environmentally. The earth is crowded, and in the next twenty years it will be drastically overpopulated. I and people like me don't contribute to procreation."

"I spent five years in psychotherapy trying to get cured of homosexuality," said deTarr. "I didn't change, but found that I was quite content being gay. The therapist did discover that I was punishing myself because of guilt feelings about homosexuals, so that was cured." Fifteen to twenty years ago, shock therapy was used to attempt to cure homosexuals. The patients would repeatedly get shocked if they enjoyed viewing nudes of the same sex on film. If they pressed a

button to reveal pictures of opposite sex nudes, there was no shock. Patients were then strapped to a chair and made to watch the latter films. "There were no cures from this experiment," stated Mallinson.

'Not to be ashamed of'

"Presently, psychiatrists proclaim that homosexuality is in no way an illness. Their basic opinion is that a homosexual can be a very stable member of this society," claimed deTarr. Freud said in his famous "Letter to an American Mother," in consolation of the distraught mother of a gay, "Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by a certain arrest of sexual development."

Out of hatred for homosexuals, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) have implanted a recording in many bookstore telephones, calling for the execution of all gay people. "They rationalize this edict, by claiming the Bible states that homosexuals are degrading," said deTarr. "The National Gay Task Force (NGTF), an organization which attempts to protect gay people, and coordinates calls to the President of the U.S. and senators, has discovered that this type of "murder" is illegal," Mallinson added. "They are taking immediate action to ban this action, besides publicizing the fact widely."

"California senator John Briggs

is struggling to get 312,000 signatures by November 15 to repeal a law which protects sexual activities between two consenting adults in private. Senator Jerry Brown, also of California, originally passed this legislation," reported Alex Van Oss, faculty member at Tolstoy College and member of GLF.

'You homo'

If Briggs passes his legislation, it would require dismissal from work of any person "advocating, soliciting, promoting, imposing, or encouraging gay activities." In the State of Washington, a homosexual ironically named Gaylord, got fired for his sexual preference. He fought it until the case reached the Supreme Court, and they refused to hear it.

There is no clause protecting gays at this University. The New York State Coalition of Gay Organizations (NYSCGO) recently held a conference in Albany at which deTarr represented GLF. NYSCGO is planning to hire a full-time lobbyist for gay rights. They want to repeal sodomy laws, get gay rights legislation and an anti-discrimination clause written in New York State law.

Besides collective persecution of homosexuals, there is much individual oppression. "A man once yelled across the cafeteria, 'You homo,' so I yelled back, 'The word is homosexual,'" quipped Mallinson.

"I have no idea why I'm gay. I don't think you can find any gay who knows," imparted Mallinson.

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Latin dance

PODER is holding its annual Latin Dance this Saturday, October 29, at 8 p.m. in Goodyear Cafeteria. Come and join them in a festive night of Salsa and Disco with Ismael Quintana and Orq. Thillet.

Considering a Career in the Legal Profession?

If you are seeking a career opportunity — WSU offers several ways in which you can enter the legal profession. **Full-Time Students:** Can earn a J.D. Degree and be eligible to take the California State Bar Examination in 2½ or 3 years. **Part-Time Students:** Can graduate in 3½ or 4 years of study with the same degree as a full-time student by attending class an average of 3 times per week, 3 hours per class. There are schedules to fit many needs — classes are offered days, evenings and weekends. **Western State University College of Law has a Whole Person Admissions Policy** - applicants are screened for academic

"mechanisms I have to deal with at Amherst will meet the federal don't mesh with the federal requirements.

Gay rights . . .

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"I dated a girl for a year and a half, but it wasn't sexual. I never felt comfortable playing a heterosexual role."

"I don't know if I was born this way, if it's God's will or what," said Rosenberg.

DeTarr stated, "I was living with a girl for five years when I went gay. I talked to my sister about it and found out she was officially bisexual which is rare in the same family."

Even a painter?

There are definitely occupational disadvantages in being a confirmed homosexual. Nearly 70 professions are closed to gays because of no anti-discrimination clause, including those of policeman, fireman, nurse, doctor, truck driver and even sign painter. A gay person cannot get a certificate for these jobs as they stipulate that the applicant be in "good moral

standing and have acceptable social standards," a class in which homosexuals are apparently not included. Government and civil service jobs are also closed to gays because they cannot get a security clearance.

"Gay Churches" have formed primarily because homosexual persons have felt rejected by established churches. These churches are usually run by gay clergy. Proponents feel the "Gay Church" must exist until the homosexual feels comfortable in the midst of established churches.

The Metropolitan Community Church in Los Angeles; Integrity, an Episcopalian church in Niagara Falls; Dignity, a Catholic church in Niagara Falls; and the Gay Community Synagogue are among the many gay churches.

Rosenberg holds a counseling center at Tolstoy Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10