

Die Entstehung einer Fülle von scheinbar nicht auf Klassenunterschieden beruhenden Gesellschaftsbewegungen in jüngster Zeit wirft theoretische wie auch praktische Probleme bei einer politisch-wirtschaftlichen Betrachtung fortgeschrittener kapitalistischer Gesellschaften auf. Nicht-funktionalistische Verbindungen zwischen Klassenstruktur und nicht auf Klassenunterschieden beruhenden Initiativen werden erforderlich. Die gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen Geschlecht und Sexualität sind wichtige Elemente eines jeden Systems von Klassenbeziehungen. Die homosexuellen und lesbischen Bewegungen stellen eine Herausforderung der gegenwärtigen Beziehungen zwischen Geschlecht und Sexualität dar. Sie sollten deshalb sorgfältig (d.h. nicht-funktionalistisch) unter Berücksichtigung politisch-wirtschaftlicher Aspekte betrachtet werden. Diese Arbeit beschäftigt sich aus dieser Perspektive heraus mit den Errungenschaften homosexueller und lesbischer Bewegungen in Minneapolis. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wird einem Konflikt zwischen der homosexuellen Gemeinschaft und der Polizei geschenkt. Die betrachteten Personen und Ereignisse sind innerhalb eines breiten Systems von Klassenbeziehungen anzusiedeln, wie sie auf lokaler Ebene zu beobachten sind. Vertreter homosexuelle und lesbischer Gruppen gingen auf Konfrontationskurs, der die gesellschaftlich bedingte Natur von geschlechtlicher und sexueller Identität bloßlegte. Eine unbeabsichtigte Folge dieser Strategie bestand in der Schwächung eines wichtigen Bindegliedes innerhalb des breiteren Systems der kapitalistischen Gesellschaftsbeziehungen.

La reciente proliferación de movimientos sociales aparentemente no clasistas plantea problemas teóricos y prácticos para un análisis político-económico de una sociedad capitalista avanzada. Es necesario establecer lazos no funcionales entre las movilizaciones basadas sobre la estructura de clases y las movilizaciones sin base clasista. Las relaciones sociales de género y sexualidad son componentes importantes de cualquier sistema de relaciones de clases. Los movimientos de hombres y mujeres homosexuales han puesto en tela de juicio las relaciones actuales de género y sexualidad. Por consiguiente, merecen un análisis político-económico profundo (es decir no funcional). Este documento examina los logros de los movimientos de hombres y mujeres homosexuales en Minneapolis desde dicha perspectiva. Se ha prestado especial atención a un conflicto entre la comunidad "gay" y la Policía. Los actores y acontecimientos considerados, están situados dentro de un sistema amplio de relaciones de clases, según se experimenta a escala local. Los activistas homosexuales emplearon una estrategia de confrontaciones que expuso el carácter de género e identidad sexual elaborado por la sociedad. Una consecuencia no prevista de esta estrategia fue el debilitamiento de un eslabón importante en el sistema más amplio de las relaciones sociales en una sociedad capitalista.

# STUDENT HOMOPHILE LEAGUE: FOUNDER'S RETROSPECT

Robert A. Martin  
("Stephen Donaldson")

**T**he spring of 1982 saw the fifteenth anniversary of an historic moment in the history of the gay movement, an event which made the front page of *The New York Times* and reverberated around the world. In late April, 1967 (the 23rd or 27th, more likely the latter date, if memory serves me), Columbia University gave official recognition to the first known/public gay student group in North America, and quite possibly the world. This group, recognized then as the Student Homophile League, later changed its name to Gay People at Columbia-Barnard.

The historical memory of student groups, with their rapid turnover, is notoriously short, but there is a great deal of which to be proud. So that the history of that time, of the beginning of the gay student movement which now spans the globe, shall not be lost, I have undertaken to write this memoir. I must draw entirely on my own memory, for I have no access to the documents of the times. But I was there; I was the founder; and I am proud.

#### Background

Columbia has come a long, long way. I talked to Allen Ginsburg, the poet, one time in the late 'sixties. Allen told me that he was expelled from Columbia College in 1947 on suspicion of homosexuality, at a time when, according to him, he was still a virgin.

In the 1964-65 school year, the Board of Managers of Columbia's Ferris Booth Hall (FBH) created a furor by inviting a representative of the Mattachine Society of New York (MSNY) to speak as part of a series of FBH lectures. Prof. Gilbert Highet of the Classics Department cancelled his own lecture at FBH in protest against allowing a homosexual to speak on campus. In the same year, according to reports I heard two years later, one of the more athletic-oriented fraternities had a gay student playing piano at one of their parties. Getting drunk, they forced the pianist to perform sexually and then systematically broke his fingers. This was hushed up by the administration and the fraternity involved received a private slap on the wrist.

In the summer of 1965, prior to my registration as a freshman in the College, I had a social worker from Traveler's Aid (I had run away from home) call the dean's office, not using my name, to find out whether Columbia would allow a homosexual student known to them to register. It took two weeks for the administration to make up its mind; I have no idea how far up the decision went, but there was clearly no precedent. When the decision came down, it was this: the student would be allowed to register, on condition that he undergo psychotherapy and not attempt to seduce other students.

With this understanding, I began my studies in the fall of 1965, as far as I could determine the first *officially cognized* homosexual student to be tolerated. I was and am actually bisexual, but orientational dualism was even stronger then than it is now, and anyone who related to the same gender was considered homosexual.

During my entire freshman year I did not discover any other gay students (or faculty, for that matter) at Columbia, which tells you a lot about the atmosphere at that time. I began in a four-man suite in Carman Hall, but in December of 1965 my suite-mates went to the dean's office and told the dean that they felt uncomfortable having a homosexual living with them. I was taken out of Carman and assigned a single, 322 Livingston Hall, where I resided for the rest of my undergraduate days. This incident left a deep impression on me.

Meanwhile, I had "come out" in the spring and summer of 1965 and joined MSNY at that time. Having run away from home due to my mother's hysteria over homosexuality, I accepted an invitation from Julian Hodges, then president of MSNY (New York's major gay group at that time, founded in 1955), to stay at his apartment. So I began gay life with instruction from a movement activist. Spending August '65 with Hodges, I met Dr. Franklin E. Kameny at a meeting held in Hodges' Greenwich Village apartment.

Frank Kameny's significance to the gay movement is well recognized. He and I became friends; in the summer of 1966 I got a job as a House of Representatives intern (with Rep. Donald E. Lukens, R-Ohio) and lived with him in Washington. Frank, unemployed at the time, was an enormous influence on me, one of two people who most have shaped my thinking modes (the other being my

"girlfriend" of that time, who is still close 16 years later). Frank gave me a complete education both in homosexuality and in the homophile movement, instructing me also in how to respond to attacks from psychiatry, religion, the law, etc., etc. He largely shaped my "gay ideology" and continued to influence me even after I split with him ideologically in '68-69. I, and indeed every gay person in America, owe him an enormous debt.

In the summer of 1966 Frank took me to Cherry Grove, Fire Island, at that time one of the few places in the USA where gay people could feel a sense of freedom. It was there that I ran into James Millham, a psychology major in the College.

Jim was living (during the school year) with his lover, a NYU student, in Furnald Hall, and he knew of five other gay Columbia students. The eight of us formed a "family" in the fall of 1966, and we had some pretty wild parties in that ground-floor Furnald Hall room. Jim was a senior.

#### Underground

Not long after school started, Jim and I were having coffee in the Lion's Den (then in FBH), and I was telling him about the homophile movement, as it was then called. Thinking of my freshman year experiences (and lack of them) stimulated me to suggest to him the need for a movement presence at Columbia. He agreed. Since I already knew that Columbia was not going to expel me for being gay, it did not seem like an unacceptable risk for me to take the lead in this. I gave little thought to the long-term implications for my own life. The "family" supported the idea with varying degrees of enthusiasm and "keep me out of it" and was finally won over with a promise of complete anonymity. Only Jim and I would be known to the Columbia authorities.

Initially the idea was to form a chapter of MSNY, so that the group's first name was "Mattachine Society at Columbia." Dick Leitsch, however, had meanwhile become president of MSNY, and under the stimulus of his presidency it soon became clear to me that we would do better on our own, so the name "Student Homophile League" was chosen. I saw Columbia as the first chapter of a spreading confederation of student homophile groups.

In those days it was common for people in the homophile movement to use pseudonyms for protection. Thus, Jim Millham became Steele. Back in the summer I had used the name "Stephen Donaldson" in a piece I wrote for the Mattachine Society of Washington's publication, so Stephen Donaldson I was. (Sometime in 1968, I think, I ceased

using the name and reverted to Bob Martin. I took it up again in 1977 for very different reasons and continue to write under that name as well as use it socially.)

Our first task was to find an ally and protector. This turned out to be John Dyson Cannon, Chaplain of the University, an Episcopal priest of great courage, unshakable devotion to his ideals, wisdom and a gentle understanding of the needs of gay students. To me, the Rev. Cannon cannot be praised too highly. Without him, we never would have gotten started. He put his own neck on the chopping block for us, and in no little measure because of his action, he was forced to leave Columbia in 1970; our last chaplain. After the SHL became public, he was deluged with hate mail, and his wife was harassed with threatening phone calls, there was trouble from within the Episcopal Church. All of this he bore with cheerful grace. He was our formal sponsor, he brought us into Earl Hall, letting us use his own office as our mailing address, his phone as our phone, the rooms in Earl Hall for our meetings. He was our lighting rod.

In October I set up a meeting in Earl Hall to introduce the new organization—or more precisely, the idea of one—to the administration and the religious and psychological counselors. About fifty of the administrators dealing with student life and counselors were invited, and some twenty-five showed up in late October for a presentation which featured Frank Kameny, who came up from Washington for the occasion, as speaker. There was a fair amount of opposition expressed at that meeting, led by Associate Dean of the College, John Alexander and Unitarian-Universalist counselor, The Rev. Vilma Harrington (wife of the head of the New York Liberal Party). I consider this the birth day of the group.

Our next problem was getting university recognition. This proved to be very difficult. Proctor William Kahn, a jovial man, was head of the administration committee which passed on these things (for University-wide groups). I think he was personally on our side, but acting under orders from above. The University at that time required a membership list from each organization. We were only prepared to submit the names of officers: myself, Jim, and Barnard student Seana Alexander, a straight friend, who in those pre-feminist days was our secretary. Despite all our pleas, the University would not budge from its position, would make no concession to the needs of gay people for anonymity. One real concern of ours was government subpoena; the FBI and others were

known to consider the fledgling homophile movement to be subversive.

The struggle over this issue was protracted. I have little doubt that the issue served as a convenient cover for the University administration's real opposition to the group, which among other elements involved a fear of loss of alumni contributions, as I was later told.

So we functioned underground. In a way this period gave us valuable time to discuss issues, to formulate an ideology as it were, among ourselves, to educate ourselves and work on group cohesion.

Financial support came from Philadelphia's *Drum* magazine, which included a flyer asking for contributions with one of their soft-core porn issues, from the West Side Discussion Group, and from ONE's New York chapter. The MSNY and the lesbian Daughters of Bilitis (D.O.B.) were the only other gay groups in New York that time (indeed, the only ones on the East Coast north of Washington).

#### Breaking Out

In the spring of 1967, after most of an academic year underground, and with the Administration's Committee on Student Organizations (CSO) still refusing to budge, I had an inspiration. First I obtained an ironclad assurance from Kahn that if we submitted a membership list, there were no other barriers to recognition. Then I went around to the most prominent student leaders and asked them to become *pro forma* members. In this way, Dotson Rader, who went on to become a well-known writer, and John Ward, then chairman of the college's Citizenship Council, became charter members. The list was submitted, and the CSO capitulated; in late April we were recognized, and the Student Homophile League of Columbia University was history.

Obviously, this called for a press release. I wrote one up. A copy was given to the secretary to Dean of the College David B. Truman, then front-runner to succeed Grayson Kirk as President when Kirk stepped down. This release never reached Truman, and as a result he made some foolish remarks to the press after the story broke. I later learned that he was deliberately sabotaged to undercut his candidacy for the presidency.

The press release was sent out to all the city's media. Only WNEW, all-news radio, picked it up and used it, doing a phone interview with me. The student paper, *Spectator*, of course, did a big story. Being myself on the news staff of WKCR, I saw to it that the AM news also mentioned us. This was around April 27 or 28.

The world, however, ignored us for a week. Then somebody at the *New York*

*Times* saw the *Spectator* story, and decided it was news, never mind that they had ignored my press release. A front-page story began with the headline: COLUMBIA CHARTERS HOMOSEXUAL GROUP. The *Times* decides what is news. That afternoon (early May), the *World-Journal-Tribune* did a big, sensational story (the following issue was their last); all the papers, all the TV stations, radio stations suddenly were doing stories, the next couple days were frantic as media which had all ignored the press release suddenly wanted the information I had already given them. The story spread abroad: incoming mail told us of coverage in Paris' *Le Monde*, various London papers, and newspapers in Australia, Japan, and other distant points.

The University was deluged with outraged letters. Vice-President of the University Lawrence Chamberlain told me the University received more mail over the SHL than any issue he had seen in his 20-odd years at Columbia. (Chamberlain was an active ACLU member and one of our few sympathizers in the Administration.) A tide of letters also came pouring in to the Earl Hall office, and to the Chaplain as well. Some contained donations, which were most welcome.

The school year closed with an argument in the pages of *Spectator* with Dr. Phillips, head of the Columbia Counseling Service. Gay people were still sick in '67, not being cured by American Psychiatric Association fiat until years later. However, our subsequent relations with the Counseling Service were good ones, with some referrals in both directions.

#### Pioneering Days

The SHL was primarily interested in educating the campus, rights for gay people, and counseling. We were throughout the early years integrated with respect to orientations, gender and race. Membership ran around 15 to 30, from a wide variety of schools within the University, meetings were held about every two weeks. It was part of our understanding with the University that we would not embrace social functions—no dances. We did, however, have informal parties to which members were coincidentally invited. We were very active; I spent more time on the SHL than on my schoolwork (nevertheless finishing up with a B average in those pre-grade-inflation years; having a Mensa-measured IQ of 175+ helped).

We had regular office hours in Earl Hall, and did a lot of counseling, mostly with students who were just "coming out" (a process triggered by exposure to us in many cases). One of our first pro-

grams was the series of dorm discussions, which were never less than interesting, and done in cooperation with the dorm counselors.

We issued a long series of statements, written by me, on homosexuality and the law, psychiatry, armed forces, etc., and circulated them widely. In our insistence on the goodness of gayness and the thoroughness of our application of this principle, we worked out the basic principles and approaches of what came later to be known as "gay liberation," but a couple years before Stonewall. These ideas filtered out into the rather conservative homophile movement and did much to pave the way for Stonewall. Any historian of the ideas of the gay movement who neglects the pioneering intellectual work of SHL has missed a

**“In those days it was common for people in the homophile movement to use pseudonyms for protection”**

key element of gay history. Nor was our pioneering limited to thought, as you will see.

We had a number of "forums" at which we presented public speakers, heavily advertised, and usually heavily attended. Frank Kameny was the first such, a panel of prisoners from the Fortune Society, with David Rothenburg, was the second.

Only a few faculty members supported us in those days, Prof. of English Eric Bentley, one of Columbia's most famous scholars, being chief among them. We also had an alumni committee, which however never did a great deal; Foster Gunnison Jr. '49C, eventually headed it up (the late Lawrence May was the first alumni chair). Foster had been involved with the movement via his Hartford, CT Institute for Social Ethics and ONE, Inc. of New York. His archives contain virtually complete documentation on the SHL of this period.

In 1967, *Spectator* printed a two-page essay by me on the life of the gay student; I believe this is the first depiction of same in print, outside of fiction. It is worth looking up for a glimpse at what campus gay life was like 15 years ago.

#### Organizational

In the summer of 1967, I represented the SHL at the Washington meeting of what a year later was renamed the North American Conference of Homophile organizations (NACHO). Yes, in those years we actually had a national

organization to which almost all the gay groups belonged. I myself became very active in NACHO, being at various times Treasurer, chair of the Credentials Committee, chair of the Youth Committee, and head of the radical caucus. NACHO's regional organization, ERCHO, elected me Secretary. The SHL was always a radicalizing force within these umbrella groupings.

I think it was in the fall of '67 that the New York University chapter was chartered, followed by the Cornell chapter in the spring of '68. Rita Mae Brown (*Rubyfruit Jungle*) was head of the NYU chapter, Jearld Moldenhauer, and then Robert Roth (now an NYC attorney) head of the Cornell branch, which incidentally was sponsored by the Rev. Phil Berrigan.

This expansion necessitated reorganization, under which I took the title of National Chairman and Nino Romano, a GS student (now living in the Village), became chairman of the Columbia chapter. Nino and I worked very closely together, and I stayed very much involved with Columbia affairs even while devoting my time to SHL-national and the movement as a whole through NACHO/ERCHO. Nino was a good chairman. He was succeeded by Morty Manford, who joined us ("coming out" in the process) following the Fortune Society forum, but that changeover was after my time. Morty, of course, went on to become a major leader in the Gay Activists Alliance and movement.

In late 1968 John Baker established FREE at the University of Minnesota; this was the first non-SHL student gay group. John told me later that he was much influenced by the SHL literature I had sent him, and that he considered the SHL to be the true founder of "Gay Liberation."

It was in 1970, I think, that the SHL broke up as a national organization. Certainly the three chapters became autonomous in 1969, attaining separate representation (and votes) at ERCHO in that year. We still worked together in harmony, tho, whatever the formal arrangements, and the Columbia and NYU chapters or groups were often well-represented at each other's functions. Non-affiliated Student Homophile League groups were established for the Boston area schools and Rutgers; all, like Columbia, eventually changed their names.

One of our first public actions was going to the May 1967 March on Washington and distributing thousands of leaflets there calling the left to task on its anti-gay positions. In connection with this it should be noted that the SHL was never welcomed by the Columbia radical

political groups, and the Progressive Labor Party (Maoist) group was overtly hostile. This attitude did not change until 1970 or so.

We also initiated our own campaign to rid Columbia of NROTC as long as the armed forces continued to discriminate against gays. This issue was taken up by the Columbia University Student Council in 1967-68, and resulted in a resolution from CUSC supporting our position. NROTC was dismantled not long afterwards.

Another activity of this time was integrating dances. We would go to dances, especially those held in the dorms and Ferris Booth Hall, and dance together. This caused a sensation the first time it happened, in Livingston Hall, but was eventually accepted. It was part of our consciousness-raising efforts as well as fun. At this time there was no gay lounge.

I am not sure when exactly we changed our policy and added social activities to our concerns, beginning the series of Earl Hall dances in the auditorium upstairs. I think it was 1969. This decision had far-reaching consequences, altering the focus of the group, changing its nature, and making it relatively wealthy.

#### 1968

Nobody who was at Columbia in the spring of 1968 can ever forget that year.

In certain ways, the atmosphere in those days was a lot freer than it is now in respect to gay people. Experiments, including with sexual deviations, were encouraged by the psychedelic culture, love and a benevolent attitude towards people with different life-styles was part of the time. Pardon me if I wax nostalgic!

We liked to think that it was the SHL which started the Great Student Revolt, somewhat tongue-in-cheek. This came about in the following way:

Columbia's Medical School, P&S, scheduled a panel discussion on homosexuality, and advertised it at the Morningside Heights campus. Of the panelists, only the Kinsey Institute's Dr. Gebhard could be considered remotely favorable, all the others were psychiatrists known to be hostile. We decided to act by showing up and asking pointed questions. When P&S heard of this, they panicked and decided to limit admission to med students.

We then prepared a multi-page statement (with help from Kameny) on gays and psychiatry, and decided to undertake a picket and demonstration at the site, up at P&S. This we did. It was spectacularly successful. Medical students stopped to talk with us on the way in, read our statement, and handed us their

tickets. We thus got in. As every member of the audience (the hall was jammed with several hundred) had a copy of that statement, the questioning was overwhelmingly on our side, and Gebhard had a field day.

This event was, I believe, the first gay demonstration in New York City, one of the first in the nation. It was certainly the first to target the psychiatric establishment, and thus a step towards our cure-by-ballot in 1973. It predated Stonewall by over a year.

Flushed with our success, we returned that evening to find the Morningside campus in an uproar. It was April 23, and students had occupied Hamilton Hall and Low Library. The planned front-page story on our historic demonstration was lost in the epic events of that day.

We did seriously consider the SHL taking over a building, or part of one, to press our own demands; the major reason which stopped us, I think, was the fact that so many of our members were, by the 25th, already involved in the occupations by other groups. We did picket and issue a list of demands (very fashionable that spring).

And in May I ran for and was elected to the CUSC, one of six delegates from the College. Since everyone on campus knew who I was, I considered the election a triumph for non-discrimination.

In 1968-69, we were very heavily involved in the changes in Earl Hall, when the Student Governing Board was established and Chaplain Cannon handed over to it virtually all policy-making authority for the building.

#### Epilogue

I finished my studies in January 1970 (I had lost the fall '67 semester to illness) and left Columbia. Under Morty's leadership, the name was changed to Gay People at Columbia-Barnard and a new set of by-laws adopted, but the continuity of the group was maintained. Late in the spring of 1970 I dropped out of the gay movement, for a number of reasons, one of them the increased hostility from within the movement to my own bisexuality. I hope someday somebody does a study of why so many of the leaders of the movement have dropped or been forced out, but that is beyond the scope of this account.

I returned to Columbia as a graduate student in the fall of 1974, rejoined GPC, and was elected to represent it on the SGB. In December I became Chairperson of the SGB, a position I held until the spring of 1977, which was also my last semester at Columbia. During these three years I stayed with the

GPC, which met in the Gay Lounge. I enjoyed my somewhat legendary status, but the socially-oriented group did not offer any outlets for my energy, so I gave my main attention to the SGB. Dances, parties and the dorm raps were the main activities; of political activism there was virtually none.

In the words of the Buddha, all things put together are subject to change; and so is GPC. But besides change there is continuity. I do not know what the GPC is like today, a whole generation of students having passed since I left Columbia. Let our struggles, our achievements, our history be not be forgotten as have those of so many minorities. □

*Following his undergraduate studies, the author worked as a reporter for the Associated Press, served in the U.S. Navy for two years, then became a reporter covering the Pentagon, while founding the Committee of Friends on Bisexuality (1973--76). Arrested at a Quaker pray-in on the White House Lawn in 1973, he was gang-raped in a D.C. jail, and became the first victim of jail rape to speak out in public about it. He has been imprisoned since 1980 on a felony assault charge. The foregoing document was originally written in slightly different form as "An Open Letter to Gay People at Columbia."*

## A Punk's Song: View from the Inside

DONALD TUCKER

In jail; November, 1980

What you are about to read has been written specifically for this book in the conviction that the academics—researchers, armchair theorists, and others who have written on prison rape—have a good deal to learn from those who have lived in jails and prisons; that nice-sounding theories must yield to actual experiences; that our knowledge of prison rape and its context, prison sexuality, is pitifully small. I have attempted to criticize the academics—generally psychologists—wherever I feel they are vulnerable, for no one else is doing so, and their errors are many and in some cases fundamental. Some of my criticism will make more sense after reading the rest of this book, so I urge you to return to this article at that point.

Despite my criticisms, I do not wish to discourage the academics or cast doubt on the importance of their work, which I hope they continue, augmented by sociologists and sociobiologists. They are pioneers in a new field, most of which is yet unexplored, and I salute them for daring to break the ground. Mistakes are inevitable, for the culture of confinement is strange, forbidding, secretive, and resistant to standard research techniques. Take heart, and keep digging!

What I offer here is a hybrid account—my own experiences in the field, so to speak; the conclusions and theoretical observations derived from those experiences and from the accounts of scores of fellow prisoners, given to me with a candor seldom found when outlaws are questioned by “respectable” people; and—this has been the hardest—my own inner journey, the transformations in my own emotions, values, and perspectives which resulted from my experiences. It is this latter which separates me from the field anthropologist reporting on a strange and hitherto little-known culture, but I believe it is critical, for one must never lose sight of the fact that all those involved are human beings.

In this respect “A Punk's Song” is an authentic continuation of “The Account of the White House Seven.” Some may conclude that, for this man, the darkness has overcome. I will not dispute that conclusion, for it has certainly overcome much, including my Quakerism. And yet—despite all—I have never lost sight of the humanity of my fellow prisoners, and though I have become an