SAN FRANCISCO AREA COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

6 - Public Discussion Meeting, Friend's Center, 1890 Sutter St., 8 p.m., Speakers: William E. Baker, M.S.W., and Julia E. Coleman, M.S.W., in a discussion of new methods of group therapy.

14 - Koffee Kettle, Moderated Discussion Group, Area Council Meeting Room, 693 Mission St., 7:30 p.m.

15 - Strawberry Festival, H. Rieger, host, Box 192-A, Route 1, Mill Valley via Panoramic Highway $1.75, Food served from 2:00 to 5:00. Those attending are requested to call EXbrook 7-8773 for information and/or transportation. Reservations must be made in advance, either at our office, or the S.P. Area Chairman's home, so that we know how many people to provide for.

23 - SPECIAL NOTICE - Combined business meeting for May and June will be held on June 20, at the Area Council Office, 693 Mission, Room 309. Meeting will start promptly at 8:00 p.m., so please be on time. Important decisions will be made which concern you in the San Francisco Area.

25 - Daughters of Bilitis public lecture, "Is A Homophile Marriage Possible?" Basil Vaeilen, 465 Geary, 8:15

JULY

11 - Public Discussion Meeting (as above), a roundtable discussion between the Daughters of Bilitis and the Mattachine Society. There will be no meeting on the first Thursday of July because of the 4th.
Speaking on the sexual impulse at the May public discussion meeting, Dr. Carlo Lestrucci, social psychologist and instructor at San Francisco State College, started out by explaining that his orientation toward such matters was biological. He viewed them from this angle rather than a religious or philosophical one.

Years earlier, in his student days, he had been deeply impressed by the remark, "Actually, you know, sexual behavior is purely voluntary," by one of his teachers. To confirm or disprove this view he had consulted famous endocrinologists, and other authorities.

Among other things, he had collaborated in a study made of prisoners who had been castrated. It had been found that suggestion played a very strong part in the frequency of orgasms; those men who had expected their sexual behavior to diminish having it do so, and those who had expected it to increase having it do so.

The research of such pioneers as Margaret Mead, and of more recent workers, have seemed to show that masculine and feminine roles are essentially patterns of social behavior, the degree of "masculinity" and "femininity" depending upon the specific definition of its nature in the respective culture. Thus in the famous Margaret Mead study three different New Guinea tribes were described. In one of them there was little quite difference between the men and the women; they were almost what might be termed "sexless," in another, they were sharply differentiated, and existed on somewhat the same qualitative competitive level on which they exist in our society, and in the third the women assumed what we regard as the protective "masculine" role, supporting and looking after the men and children, while the men concerned themselves solely with artistic matters.

In response to a query as to the origins of homosexuality, he suggested that it resulted from "linkages," and described how a linkage had occurred in his own life in regard to lilacs. Three times in his life he has come into contact with the bodies of persons close to him, and at the same time lilacs blossom. Now he cannot stand their odor in a way impossible for the average person to understand.

In the same way individuals, he suggested, make linkages between various types of sexual behavior and the amount of gratification they associate with it, purely by chance, and it becomes a basic part of their personality structure. About the only way one type of pattern of sexual behavior could be changed would be to substitute one's motive for practicing it for a stronger one. How this can be accomplished, however, he did not know; it lay outside of his field.

He also commented in response to a query as to what "sex" homophiles should regard themselves as belong to, since they, technically speaking, are neither men nor women that the abrupt demarcation between "masculine" and "feminine" behavior is more typical of rural societies than our modern urban one. Nowadays one finds that most women have masculine characteristics to some degree and men feminine ones to a certain extent. As an example, he pointed out his mother-in-law, who is a sweet, kindly, white-haired old lady, but
who likes her prizefights on TV to be as gory as possible.

A DESCRIPTION OF OUR JUNE SPEAKERS

Mr. William A. Baker, M.S.W., is a Graduate of Social Welfare from the University of California, in Berkeley. He has been previously employed by several psychiatric in-patient and out-patient settings and is at present a staff member of a social agency.

Mrs. Julia A. Coleman, M.S.W., is a Graduate of the New York School of Social Work, at Columbia University. She has worked in a variety of treatment centers, including family agencies, juvenile court and psychiatric settings and is at present a supervisor in a social agency. They are both stimulating and interesting talkers, so keep June the 6th free, it'll be well worth attending!

THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

The Strawberry Festival, which we hope to inaugurate as a yearly social event during the spring or early summer will be held this year June 16th at R. Krieger's mountain home, overlooking Mill Valley. Let all fanciers of good old-fashioned strawberry delight prime themselves for an afternoon of fun, good eating and good friendly get-together ambiance. We'll serve from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Please call in reservations at the Society office in order that we may have some idea of how many to prepare for. Why not get a big group of family and friends together and pack a picnic lunch (with strawberry shortcake for dessert) and enjoy with us an afternoon of fun and sun?

LIBRARY NOTES

A new addition to the library is Homosexuals Today, a handbook of homophile organizations and publications put out by ONE, Inc.
The compilers have attempted to fill the long-felt need for an over-all survey of the entire homophile world. The book is essentially a pioneering work, and as such lacks a certain smoothness. On the other hand, no one has ever before made an attempt to do such a thing, and it contains much valuable data.

Among other things, the editors comment that with many European groups, "the emphasis seems to be on a degree of withdrawal into delightful and charming by-ways, rather than a determination to vigorously urge upon both society and the homophile their mutual interdependence and the necessity for mutual acceptance of each other as self-respecting elements of a healthy social structure." Especially interesting is their description of the National League for Sex Education, a Swedish organization which has done much to promote sex education in Sweden, and was strongly influential in bringing about the alteration of laws against homophilia in that country in 1944.

Also received was Primitive Heritage, an anthology of selections from important anthropological works edited by Margaret Mead and Nicholas Calas. As a whole the book is a highly fascinating one. The selections dealing with homosexuality among shamans in Siberia and certain customs followed among the Mohaves by all young boys who had a strong homophile bent make one wish that there was more anthropological material dealing specifically with the subject. At the present date, there is such material, but most of it exists in the form of footnotes and side comments made in reports of other matters. Also interesting, and curiously poetical is the description of Ezulile, the Haitian goddess of love, who when she has appeared before her worshippers by possessing one of them, starts to weep after a short while, since love can never understand why anything should ever go wrong in its attempts to give itself.

The Verdict of Iaull by Rupert Croft-Cooke, the British novelist, is an oddly disturbing book. His account of how he was unjustly tried and condemned for nine months by the English courts for a supposed homosexual offense on purely hearsay evidence is told with great honesty and clarity. His comments upon the inadequacy of the present prison system and penal code are accurate. By the end of the book you have the feeling that his experience gave him a greater sympathy and understanding of his fellow prisoners, and that he had grown as a person.

The only thing that is troublesome is that you are left with the feeling that if he had never been jalled he would never have become aware of the existence of such problems. He gives the impression of having lived in comfortable complacency in his own private little world beforehand, and that he will attempt to do his best to do so now.

It leaves one wondering just how true this is of most of us? How many of us are inclined to trouble ourselves about people or causes with whom we have never come in person contact? Worse still, how many homosexuals concern themselves with the problems of the entire homophile world, in-
From the Washington Newsletter we learn that the 34th annual meeting of the American Law Institute was due to take place in Washington, D.C., May 23-25. Among other things it was expected that drastic revisions of our somewhat outmoded sex laws would be submitted at the meeting for consideration. During the 20th century only three states - Louisiana, West Virginia and Wisconsin - have revised their criminal codes, a fact that is supposed to have been influential in causing many legislators to consider seriously the American Law Institute's Tentative Draft No. 6, which deals with the subject. We will let our readers know further about the matter as soon as we obtain more information. The performance of "The Reluctant Dragon" was greatly enjoyed by all present. Considering the limited means available of selling tickets, there was a surprisingly large attendance. To the Matte-chini Players, Mr. Donal Norton and Mr. Mel Betti, we would like to express our gratitude for putting on the show free of charge, and for their generosity. Thanks to their generosity, the Area treasury funds, which were depleted in paying for painting and reconditioning the new rooms, are now back to normal. As most San Franciscans know, The Immortalist is now playing at the Encore Theater. The few reviews have been good, though one critic, when saying that it dealt with homosexuality, made the side-comment: "Oh, that subject again!" The lead is Jocelyn Brando, who labor under the disadvantage of being known as "Marlon Brando's sister." It was planned for one weekend, and has run for three...