

The return of 'family values'?

Over the past decade, great strides have been made in favour of gay rights. LGBT couples can (sort of) marry; they can adopt children; Section 28 is no more, and they are less likely to be attacked on the street. However, homophobia is still a problem, and some groups are fanning the flames like they were two decades ago.

A few months ago, there was a row over whether gay couples could adopt children. A small demonstration was held near the Houses of Parliament against the eventual decision to allow same-sex adoption, but it gained a lot of coverage and support from the populist, authoritarian rightwing media.

The crowd was dominated by the usual mix of fascists (National Front); religious fundamentalists (mostly evangelicals) and all those in between (Ian Paisley), but their odious views were echoed by the Mail, Express and Telegraph. The Sun and Daily Star weren't too keen on the idea of gay adoption either.

The same thing happened when civil partnerships were introduced in 2005. The reactionary media were outraged, saying that we weren't capable of love and that homosexuality was 'un-natural'. The same lies that were spread when homosexuality was decriminalised were used nearly four decades later.

As a result of the bigotry of the Mail-Express-Telegraph triumvirate, many political parties have taken on an anti-gay stance in order to gain votes in the recent local and devolved elections.

Even though the Tories have, for the most part, apologised for Section 28, they look like returning to their old ways. At the beginning of this month, a think tank led by Iain Duncan Smith had announced that they planned to 'promote marriage'. By that, they mean 'family values', which is just code for saying that they don't like you if you're single or gay.

A handful of tendencies within the Conservatives are open about their homophobia. The most prominent of these is the Christian-right Cornerstone Group, which contains such bigots as Ann Widdecombe, Edward Leigh and Andrew Rosindell. Their motto of 'faith, flag and family' says it all.

Although they have a near-monopoly on

that particular prejudice, homophobia isn't just a preserve of the right. A handful of left groups have been into it for decades. The late Ted Grant, former general secretary of Socialist Appeal and the Militant Tendency, said that the gay rights movement was a 'bourgeois concern', even if it was the bourgeoisie that was behind discrimination. Rob Sewell, one of Grant's closest supporters said that homosexuality was a 'bourgeois deviancy'.

Another example of homophobia and the left coming together is the Socialist Workers' Party's (SWP) role in Respect. Aside from receiving donations from a million-



A vigilant member of the Gay community straightens out the facts.

aire Islamic fundamentalist, who once said that 'all homosexuals should be stoned to death', their leader, Lindsey German, tried to prevent a motion at Respect's 2005 National conference that promoted gay rights from going through. Sewell's line has been taken by the odd micro-left party, although the left as a whole has taken the issue of LGBT rights and, given the thinly-disguised hostility of the right, they seem to have made the issue their own. The overwhelming majority of people on the left are pro-gay rights, and realise that homophobia is a bourgeois concern.

Overall, many political parties, whether right or left, are to some degree homophobic. Despite what Labour claim to have done to improve the situation for LGBT people, they still are subject to discrimination, whether it comes from the government, the media, or if it happens on the street, and political parties are partly responsible, whether they represent the bosses or not. ★



The **Anarchist Federation** is an organisation of **class struggle** anarchists aiming to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the **ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world, its destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it, such as working through parliament and national liberation movements, as they fail to challenge capitalism itself.

Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

Organisation is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations. The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above.

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What's Wrong ★ with angry???

Resistance Special Free/Donation

Stonewall not Stonewall™

The Stonewall riots in New York in 1969 were the turning point of the gay rights movement. It was the point of radicalisation that saw gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people go onto the streets and demand a better life. When the police tried to break the Stonewall club up it was transgendered people, looking fabulous of course, who fought with the police and risked arrest and prosecution to defend such a basic right as to assemble. 40 years later and the gay rights movement has all but fizzled out and we are left with groups like Stonewall, the gay lobby organisation who took its name directly from the riots and who now allegedly "campaign" on our behalf. Hypocritically, Stonewall has sidetracked the issue of transgender discrimination and does not identify it as a specific area which it actively supports. It states that Stonewall's aim is to "develop ideas and policy that remove discrimination and improve the lives of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people" and even omits transgender people from its tagline: "Fighting for Equality and Justice for, gay, lesbian and bisexuals".

In their website literature they proudly explain that gay people perform better if they're "out" (exploitation is fine, as long as we're exploited as equals). This statement clearly doesn't match the experiences of those making a gender transition, 10% are verbally abused, 6% physically assaulted and as a consequence of this abuse around a quarter are forced to leave their jobs. Stonewall's focus is evidently only on gay people who identify with their current gender and they have no real or significant interest in lobbying for the rights of other vulnerable groups.



Transgender Stonewall rioters who would today be excluded from the modern corporate lobby group made in their name.

This is a massive betrayal to the name and events they use to identify themselves with. Stonewall simply wish to cosy up to governments and market themselves in order to appeal to the very people who institutionalise discrimination in the first place. It is for these reasons that we need to wrestle back our struggle and its true radical history from the mainstream elements of the gay rights movement. Instead of Stonewall being a trade mark it should be a battle cry for everyone fighting against homophobia, and that means transgender people too! ★

Manchester pride charity con

There's one article that didn't make it into *What's Wrong With Angry???* And that's the one detailing the fraud, lies and deception that have been the nature of Manchester Pride's existence since 1999. The 4,300-word article just would have not fit in this handout. However there are copies online, for example at our Northern website.

www.yorks-afed.org.uk/pride ★

When is freedom not freedom? When it is equality!

In the midst of Pride season, our 'leaders' and our 'lobbyists' expect us to celebrate the great liberal achievements of recent years, the fruits of our communal labours as citizens, consumers, voters, campaigners, militants and artists to eat from the same trough as everybody else and to be accorded the same rights and privileges.

If those were ever our goals, then we have achieved, but whether we should be proud of achieving the same quality of misery as everybody else is a different matter. Equality is not a social concept, it is a political one. That we could be treated as the same as every other downtrodden, oppressed and exploited victim of capitalism in an advanced post industrial society, is more a measure of our bosses success at managing society and dissent rather than ours at achieving 'sameness'.

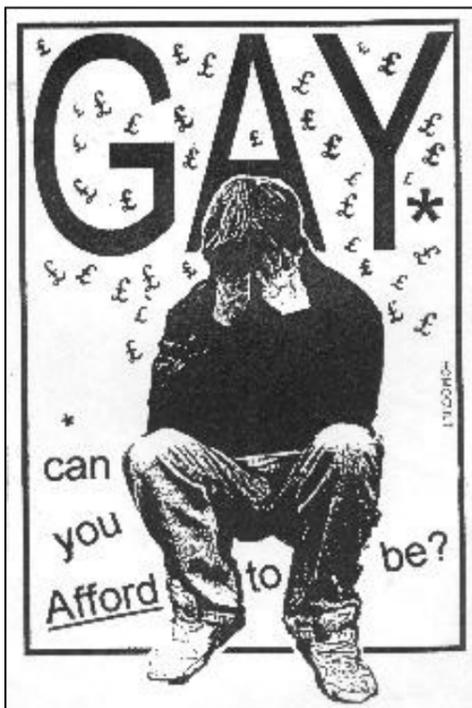
We are equally powerless as individuals to stop the chronic world war (we can write to an MP), the death of our planet (we can use less shopping bags), end global hunger (we can diet), or to eradicate disease (we can use a condom). But this concept of equality binds us to them however with the fiction that we have something to defend in 'common' with them, that is better than the 'inequality' that struggle and refusal implies.

What is it that we have actually achieved?? We can die proudly in foreign wars; we can adopt, so long as the church isn't objecting, we can be nearly institutionalised in the 'civil partnership'

My first proposal after joining the Anarchist Federation was for a handout highlighting how state and capitalism affects us as LGBT people. You are reading the finished result. I did this because of the despairing gap in the 'Gay scene' where once stood a strong sense of community and collective resistance against oppression and inequality.

Where is the community now?

Today's Gay scenes have been infiltrated by businesses, turning them into overpriced (Work harder!), shallow



compromise on marriage, we can bring in our foreign partners, as long as they can prove they're gay...a host of iconic measures. But the consequent costs of being sexual 'non-conformists' are still high. The self disclosed experience of queer folk is disturbing: Against a background of the last 2 years 168% increase in reported hate crimes, we find that 90% of us have been verbally abused, 80% have suffered from bullying, 60% have been assaulted. 10% are HIV positive, and 1,000,000 of us have died in that global epidemic. Small wonder that 25% of us are suffering problematic addiction as an alternative to

ghettos and like many political events the capitalist system has sucked out the politics out of Pride and sold it back to us. The result is that prides are no longer demonstrations, are no longer political and no longer demand Queer liberation.

Where is the resistance?

The authorities have done their hardest to neuter the struggles of oppressed groups by the same procedure; promoting representatives and spokespeople and setting up structures for consultation and representation such as Stone-

the 20% of us that attempt suicide. This is the price of alienation. A state of equality on a par closer to the misery inflicted on Baghdad than the idealised tranquillity of a liberal accepting democracy.

The detailed laws of hatred and prejudice against us haven't disappeared because someone took a 'be nice' pill. The fact is that homophobia supported the family when it was crucial to maintaining social control in industrial societies – keeping us as monsters, that helped keep the family backing the protection of 'normal' society. Now that buck can be squeezed elsewhere, social cohesion, and hence the power of the western 'developed' world, is better maintained by making us equal as consumers...participating in the democratic charade, and manifesting a consensus that 'our' (the bosses) way can be nicer than 'their' (those who's struggle against our bosses has not subsided) way.

Where Pride once mobilised, it now marshals that consensus, as our anger and frustration is channelled in to a range of diversionary shopping opportunities. As anarchists we continue to assert our primacy as human beings and advocates of community above state and profit. The battle is no longer about (if it ever has been) equality and acceptance, but liberation and simply survival as human beings against a system galloping towards the abyss. If Pride comes before a fall, lets make sure its theirs, and not ours, before its too late. ★

wall. These take the struggle off the streets and reduce the number of people actively involved (the strength of any movement) as people feel 'the leaders and representatives will struggle for us'. This is participating in our own exploitation.

For all the blood, sweat and tears of the last century of struggle, have our masters granted us liberation, or just a longer leash?

www.afed.org.uk ★

Gay Marriage- No Thanks!

Some people believe that a prerequisite to LGBTQ liberation is the ability to enter into wedded bliss, it is these people I wish to address, but more so I speak to those self-proscribed revolutionaries on the left who claim to understand capitalism, who claim to understand oppression and yet curiously see so called 'gay marriage' as compatible with queer liberation.

With the number of heterosexuals getting married the lowest for over 70 years UK and with frankly woeful divorce rates one must question why gays, straights and all in between have become so fascinate (distracted?) with the minefield politics of gay marriage.

To be queer if nothing else is to antagonise the very anti-sex and conservative society that represses queer consciousness. Marriage, in whatever guise can only ever offer assimilation with heterosexuals; denying distinctive queer values. Gay marriage, like marriage is therefore irrelevant.

Marriage was established as a symbol of heterosexual male power; a tool used by the state and the church to perpetuate gender myths, violence and female subordination.

British Peoples Party pathetic pride picket.

Someone in Brighton police force has a sense of humour. When arch Nazis the British Peoples Party and the National Front applied to hold a picket against the 2007 Gay Pride March the local coppers assigned them TWO OFFICERS. Needless to say the thousands of gay (and proud) marchers and their friends gave them hell. That's funny. What's funnier still is the statement put out by the BPP: their attackers were huge muscled monsters on cocaine! They attacked with children present! The numbers weren't fair!

A question? If you think that being gay is sign of weakness and disease - how come they thrashed you? If you are campaigning to reintroduce Clause 28 - cos you don't want your kids 'exposed to gays' - why take them to Gay Pride?! And the numbers will never be fair: you can victimise all you want, but Nazis are the minority. ★



Marriage then is not just anti-queer in it's own right, but defends the whole system of sexual inequality that we should be against. Queer Anarchists are explicitly clear on this question; we do not seek mere equality with heterosexuals, we want liberation, and yes that means abolishing capital and with it the state, but liberation goes much further; challenging not just the injustice of capitalism, but restrictive gender values that heteronormative society perpetuate.

Advocating stepping stone politics, in the form of fighting for the ability of queers to marry is to fight for equality within a framework controlled and dominated by an unfree and 'straight' society. Marriage therefore is the epitome of self-hate, why would we want to replicate heterosexual society that takes from us our distinctive identities and values?

Such short-sightedness is at best giving into pressure to simply conform to the straight jacket of a patriarchal society. This is made worse by those on the 'Marxist' left who have bought into this train-wreck position of heterosexualising queer identity. They wouldn't fight for our right to serve in the class-ridden, homophobic and macho armed forces, they wouldn't demonstrate over our inability to join parasitic organisations like the National Front and yet all too often the bankrupt left advocate this very same

precarious position when it comes to marriage. Go figure?

We call for true liberation rather than equality, this is the weapon with which to fight a society so embedded in conservatism. What we mustn't do is go down the road of copy-cat collusion with the straight-is-normality status-quo. We queers reject the use of tools of oppression to win short-term equality with straights, we will not invisibly blend into straight society. It's time some people got over their love affair with 'gay marriage' and come to realise that most aspects of heteronormative society are simply not worth emulation. ★

Systematic prejudice

In 76 countries people face jail for having gay sex. Homosexual acts officially carry the death penalty in several nations including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Mauritania, northern Nigeria, Sudan, and Yemen. In many Muslim countries, homosexuality is punished with jail time, fines, or corporal punishment.

And yet LGBT asylum seekers routinely face discrimination within the immigration services who systematically question the validity of their claims. For example, Pegah Emambakhsh, a 40-year old Iranian lesbian who fled to the UK in 2005 after her partner was arrested, tortured and sentenced to death by stoning. Pegah has and still faces a long struggle to stop her deportation from this country as the Home Office repeatedly denies her claims.

It is time to fight the inhumane system that would knowingly send people back into the hands of state's that would torture and kill them for nothing more than being in a relationship with a same sex partner.

noborders.org.uk ★