

Wesleyan's Gay Alliance

Making A Tough Life Easier

By J.D. SOLOMON

Both George and Diane (which are not their real names) are Wesleyan students. They are both gay. They are in the process of trying to establish a gay organization on campus, with the aim of making life for homosexuals here a little less trying.

"Being gay can mean a very lonely existence," said George. He feels that some kind of group, whether it be called Gay Liberation or Gay Activist, would provide opportunities for gay people on campus to meet socially, talk, discuss mutual problems, and get to know each other.

The first publicity for the organization began the week before last. The last gay organization at Wesleyan died about five years ago, before either George, a senior, and Diane, a junior came here. However, George has found out that it was at one time a successful group with as many as 15 to 25 members. Although he's not sure, he believes that it was probably apathy which caused the eventual dissolution of the organization.

No Responses

As yet, there have been no responses to the posters which have been put up around campus. However, George explained, "It's not something people pound on the doors for. People would naturally be wary or afraid of being identified." He added, "Wesleyan is one of the

few schools around without an active gay organization, but I think that there is a need for one here."

Although neither George or Diane have any definite idea as to the number of homosexuals on campus, Diane said, "There must be other gay people here, or even just people who are unsure of themselves or who might have questions about where they're at. It's for these people that we're starting this organization."

Coffee Hours

Neither of the organizers would like to see their organization come to an early end. There will be more publicity for it and, if an interest is shown, the group's activities could consist of weekly coffee hours where members could get together and talk. "There is no communication or openness in the gay community here," explained George, "and I'm leaving in June, but I really would've appreciated an organization of some sort. That's why we're trying to start one."

George got in touch with Diane through a local group that is lobbying in the Connecticut State Legislature for a bill that would ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. For them and others, being gay at Wesleyan has not always been easy.

Social Life

George mentioned, "There is no gay social life at Wesleyan." Both admitted that their social lives

extend outside of Wesleyan, especially when they're interested in meeting other gay people. Diane stressed this as an important reason for an organization. George explained, "Since gay society is so repressed here on campus, some gay people, in their attempts to find others, have resorted to cruising in men's rooms. There are a few, though, who have found meaningful relationships and have private, isolated affairs." Diane said that woman rarely resort to cruising and that "relationships between women are usually also private and very hidden and secret." They agreed, however, that the vast majority of gay people on campus are, as George said, "isolated, alone, and without any type of relationship with other gay people."

Personal Adjustments

Besides social adjustments, George and Diane found that there were difficult personal adjustments to make before they could feel secure with a gay life. The biggest hurdle, according to both of them, was learning to accept and face the fact that they were homosexuals. "Being able to accept oneself as gay," said George, "is a positive note. Doubting it and denying it bring self hate. But you need a lot of self confidence in order to accept it." Diane added, "Coming out is a very slow process and it takes a lot of time to be able to come to terms with it." She mentioned that it

wasn't for two years after her first homosexual experience that she could fully accept the fact that she was gay.

Now, though, Diane considers being gay part of her identity, as does George. She stated, "Being gay isn't your whole life, your entire life isn't transformed by it. It's just one aspect of your personality."

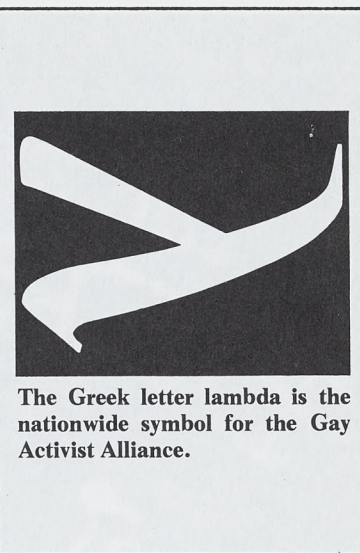
Neither of them thinks that their sexual preferences make them abnormal. George explained, "What it boils down to is how best one is happy. If you can accept it, it's normal for you. I have no desire to appear any way but as I am."

Straight Friends

Just about all of Diane and George's friends on campus are straight, but only their very close one's know their situation. They've both found that whenever they do admit to a straight friend that they're gay, their relationship with that friend doesn't change. "In fact," said George, "sometimes it enhances the relationship. It's only very rarely that a gay will feel threatened or a girl will feel put off by me when I tell them." Diane mentioned, "The people here that I've told can and have accepted it, first intellectually, then emotionally."

Intolerance

Diane feels that most people at Wesleyan would take a liberal line of thought about homosexuality, if they spend some thinking about it.



The Greek letter lambda is the nationwide symbol for the Gay Activist Alliance.

There have been incidences of intolerance, though. "For instance," Diane related, "there was the time someone, who didn't know I was gay, came in my room and joked about how she got rid of a room-mate she didn't like by telling housing that her room-mate was a lesbian—which wasn't even true. I can take some intolerance, but things like that get me angry." "Yeah," George said, "there's a lot of peer pressure here among students to be intolerant. Sometimes if you're not, people begin to question you."

When Diane first came here she had many questions about herself and her situation. She explained, "There was never any support for being gay, never anyone to talk to. I could've had a much easier time accepting it if the whole subject wasn't so taboo here."

"And that," added George, "is just why we really need a gay organization here."

ConnPIRG Checks Out Local Prices

During the week of March 9, the Wesleyan organizing committee for the Connecticut Public Interest Research Group conducted the following comparative drug price survey. The committee had difficulty in finding items of comparable size at all five stores but was able to establish general pricing trends. In most instances, store brands were cheaper. Prices at ShopRite and Top Notch proved the most reasonable, those at Spaulding's the least. In addition, the management at Spaulding's was found to be the least amenable to the concept of comparative pricing; the committee representative was not allowed to complete her survey.

Consumer protection activities such as this will be only one of the functions of the PIRG should it be established at Wesleyan. Ideally, ConnPIRG can become totally integrated into academic life, with credit being offered for research leading to expose, litigation and legislation in fields such as student rights, health care, ecology, government and corporate responsibility and racial, sexual, and age discrimination. Your support for the establishment of a PIRG in the petition drive which will take place after Spring Break may provide the means for allowing Wesleyan students, and all citizens, to benefit directly from the education process.



	Shop Rite	Top Notch	Coll. Sotre	Pel-ton's	Spal-ding's
Analgesics					
Bayer (50)	.79	.67	-	.83	-
Anacin (50)	.89	.89	-	.93	-
Tylenol (100)	2.39	2.39	-	2.49	-
Bufferin (60)	1.09	1.09	-	-	-
Baby Powder					
Johnson & Johnson (9oz)	.89	.89	1.15	.99	-
After Shave					
Skin Bracer (4 oz)	1.19	1.09	-	1.23	-
Old Spice Lime (4 oz)	-	1.49	-	-	-
Aqua Velva (4 oz)	1.09	.99	1.29	1.25	-
Band Aids					
Band-Aid (30 strips)	.89	.99	-	1.09	-
Cigarettes					
Package, reg.	.60	.60	-	.60	-

Carton, reg.	5.23	5.23	-	5.25	-
Carton, 100's	5.34	5.33	-	5.35	-
Cold Tablets					
Coricidin Reg. (25)	1.19	1.39	-	1.29	-
Co-Tylenol (30)	1.33	-	-	1.39	-
Dristan (24)	1.19	1.19	-	1.49	-
Creme Rinse					
Herbal Essence (8 oz)	1.19	1.19	1.59	1.29	-
Wella Balsam (8 oz)	1.49	1.49	-	1.79	-
Alberto Balsam (8 oz)	1.39	1.33	-	-	-
Tame (8 oz)	1.09	1.29	-	-	-
Brand Name (14 fl. oz)	.59	.89	-	-	-
Deodorant					
Right Guard Reg. (7 oz)	1.49	1.39	-	1.49	1.89
Right Guard AntiStain (8 oz)	1.49	1.39	-	1.59	1.99
Soft/Dry Unscented (8 oz)	1.59	1.54	-	1.59	-
Ban Roll On (1.5 oz)	1.19	1.04	-	1.09	1.36
Ultra Ban 5000 (8 oz)	1.59	1.59	-	-	2.09
Sure Super Dry Unscented (9 oz)	1.59	1.59	-	1.59	1.95
Eye Cleanser					
Murine (1/2 oz)	1.39	-	-	1.49	-
Visine (1/2 oz)	1.39	1.39	-	1.49	1.75
Facial Cleanser					
Clearasil	.89	.79	1.15	.89	-
Stridex (42 pds)	.89	.89	-	.99	-
MultiScrub (2 oz)	-	1.39	-	1.69	-
Phisoderm (5 oz)	-	1.29	-	1.39	-
Propa PH (6 oz)	1.45	1.45	-	1.69	-
Hand Lotion					
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Vaseline Reg. (10 oz)	1.05	1.19	1.59	1.19	1.59
Jergen's Ex.Dry skin (9 oz)	1.19	1.29	-	-	-
Laundry Dtrg't					
Tide (49 oz)	1.33	1.33	-	-	-
Bold (20 oz)	.57	.53	-	-	-
Clorox (1/2gal)	.55	.55	-	-	-
Wisk (1 qt)	1.09	1.09	-	-	-
Menstrual Aids					
Sanitary Napkins					
Kotex (12)	.79	.69	.97	.95	-
Modess (12)	.79	.59	-	.79	-
Stay Free (12)	.79	.79	-	-	-

Tampons					
Playtex (30)	1.89	1.99	-	1.79	-
Tampax (40)	1.29	1.39	2.09	1.79	-
Kotex (40)	1.69	1.69	1.98	-	-
Mouthwash					
Listerine (7 oz)	.69	.69	-	.83	.89
Scope (6 oz)	-	.83	.96	.89	.98
Lavoris (7 oz)	-	.73	.89	.79	.89
Shampoo					
Breck (7 oz)	1.09	1.09	1.59	1.19	1.59
Prell (7 oz)	1.19	1.19	-	1.19	1.39
Johnson's Baby (7 oz)	1.29	1.11	1.59	-	-
Hd./Shoulder's (4 oz)	1.59	1.59	-	-	1.98
Earthborn (8 Oz)	1.29	1.64	-	1.39	1.79
Herbal Essence (8 oz)	1.39	1.55	-	-	1.85
Shave Creme					
Old Spice (11 oz)	1.19	1.19	-	1.19	1.49
Edge (7 Oz)	.99	.99	-	.99	.99
Hot One (6 1/4 oz)	.99	.99	1.25	1.13	-
Palmolive Rapid Shave (11 oz)	.59	.99	-	1.13	-
Rise Regular (11 oz)	1.09	1.09	-	1.09	-
Soap					
Safeguard (3.5 oz)	-	.23	.32	-	-
Dial (3.5 oz)	-	.19	-	-	.39
Ivory (3.5 oz)	-	.14	.18	-	-
Toothpaste					
Crest Regular (3 oz)	.69	.62	.74	.63	-
Colgate (3 oz)	.69	.63	.74	.63	-
Close Up (2.7 oz)	.63	.57	-	.79	-
Gleem II (3 oz)	.63	.69	-	.63	-

GIVE A HOOT.
DON'T POLLUTE