

The gay and so

a UNL homosexual talks about life and p

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by Joe Creason

I have a lot of problems with people who can't accept my gayness as positive, but at least I know who are my enemies. Persons have no qualms about letting their feelings toward "queers" being known.

For the most part, however, I've been fortunate. I've never been physically attacked, despite the fact I've held hands with my lover in public. I've never been arrested by the police. I've never been fired from a job, although I've had to keep many happy things to myself to keep other individuals from "finding out." I've never had to tell Uncle Sam I'm unfit for service because of a high draft number.

I consider myself lucky because I have been spared much of the oppression that confronts many gays. One good point about my gayness, however, is the opportunity to look objectively at straight people and how they treat one another. It's one of the greatest and saddest comedies I've had the good (or bad) fortune to watch.

Because I do not choose to take part, I'm offered a balcony seat to view the antics of a society beset with the highest divorce rate, but unwilling to examine its conceptions of marriage and families. The society also considers sex as a commodity to be acquired with the proper deodorant or cologne, but it believes sex is not worth serious examination. This society constantly complains about the suburban rat race, while at the same time it is afraid to deviate from prescribed norms. In short, society is so guilty about not living up to the Puritan forefathers' expectations that the thought of alternatives are undermined by the rapidly failing institutions of yesterday.

I pity straight men who are terror-struck when they are with men that they know are gay. While I realize such fears are taught by culture, I cannot ignore the problems that it causes. By commitment to such rigid roles a straight man hardly has the freedom to relax.

I consciously reacted against these roles in junior high school when "good" boys talked about sex and "making it" with girls. Most of it was talk but it still seemed disturb me; the bull sessions between guys who described how far each girl "went" and the double standard between the "stud" who made it with girls and the "easy law" who submitted to his requests. I could never quite make the connection between this sexual sterility and "love."

I did manage, however, to "adjust." I even dated and played the games of my friends, but not so seriously. I always have assumed that I was going to be a bachelor. Although I hadn't formulated the reasons for not marrying,

I look back on those feelings as the beginning of my total rejection of the "straight" lifestyle. Each time I tried to fit into that niche, I felt stifled. I doubt whether I would have rejected those roles as readily had my sexual orientation been more conventional.

The fact that a gay person can't fit into the traditional sex roles, such as families and children, makes it easier to look for alternatives. Many gay people are just as sexist as the rest of society, but the potential exists.

For example, instead of two ready-made roles in which to fit, two gay males must make their own arrangements concerning who cooks, who washes dishes or who makes an employment change when a move is contemplated. They even have the freedom to choose who will be in their family through communal living or adoption of children.

Although these decisions may be difficult, gay people at

"After writing this article," Creason said, "I was faced with the agonizing decision of whether or not to allow my name to be printed with it.

However, to print it without a name would decrease its impact and, in effect, endorse the status quo."

least can feel proud that they've chosen their own lifestyle freely, and not because of social pressure. They also know that they're together because they love one another.

Gayness gives freedom to enjoy life more completely. A person not bound by traditional sex roles, is more able to free himself. When these inhibitions are forgotten, it's easier to release a person's creativity. It also instills an appreciation of diversity in others and an increased consciousness of other minorities' problems.

While I appreciate the freedom gayness gives me, I resent the straight values that are forced down my throat. I'm not talking about the harassment that could be cured by legislation. Since I don't conform to the stereotype of a "faggot," I seldom receive direct harassment anyway. It does happen, however, to many persons and oppression remains constant shadow for gays.