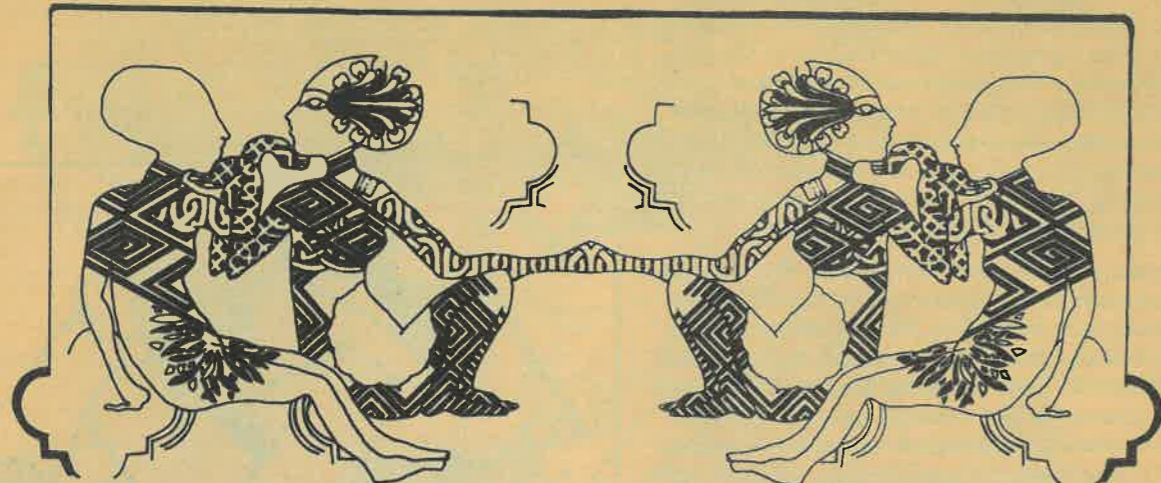


Couples



To fall in love usually means a total priority commitment of our emotions and our efforts at communicating and relating to one person. Couples become a tight emotional relationship, totally private between two people, attempting to encompass and answer all of their emotional needs.

It is warm and secure to be able to know someone will always be there to hold when things get really bad, to talk to when you really need it. In a world of work where relationships can be so shallow and superficial, where it is hard to find people who you really get on with, and any serious relationship seems to take a lot of pain and doubt and finally hard work to establish, it is much easier to know there is someone who will listen and understand, who is there now.

We accept the couple relationship with its priorities so much that it is very hard to "unburden" our troubles on a friend without feeling that we are indeed giving them a burden.

This total involvement must stunt our growth. It is impossible for one person to bear the weight of being all the other relationship, which someone needs to grow and develop. To preserve this relationship and to help it grow, we often adjust our own interests to fit better into the relationship. The couple relationship becomes a thing over and above the people in it. The couple rather than the person makes demands on us.

Couples tend to become very isolated. They go together and think together. They are treated as one entity and usually, in the case of heterosexual relationships, views of the male are simply projected onto his women. The couple comes in one packet, and to develop a deep friendship with one person usually involves either breaking up, or substantially changing the nature of the couple relationship.

When we fall in love, we almost always seem to mean a sexual relationship. To fuck becomes the ultimate in intimacy and friendship, and because a couple usually exercise a total sexual monopoly on each other this seems to be a crucial factor in their isolation.

We can rationalise and, suppressing the homosexuality

in ourselves, only relate to women or men of our own sex, refusing to acknowledge that there is anything sexual in our relationship. But we are forced to avoid getting to know anyone of the other sex, whose friendship could lead to adultery and the breakdown of the couple.

It seems impossible that we can spread our love around far enough to encompass more than one person. So to fall in love with someone else is a very real threat to the former friendship, and the intimacy and trust which was there. It is a matter of time; that the other person won't be there so often, they will have secrets and sorrows you don't know, they mightn't want to fuck with you so much, and that, if you want to survive, you might have to find someone else.

Fucking around with several different people usually makes things worse. It becomes difficult to develop the relationship beyond that of just fucking. It seems to be so crucial that the love and respect we may have for someone is ultimately expressed through fucking that we can spend all of our time with friends, just doing that. Unless we are living with someone, or seeing them a lot, to not fuck when it is possible is often felt as a rejection of them.

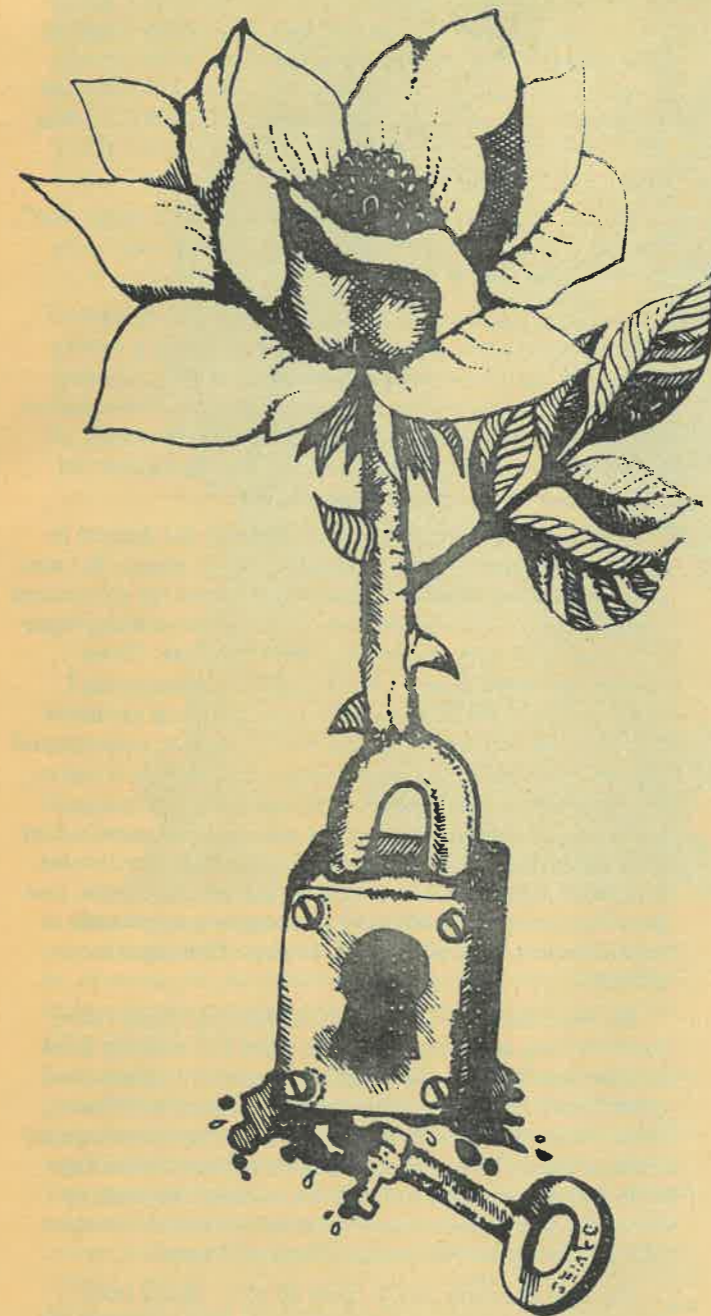
To become sexually involved with a lot of people becomes far too limiting and demanding. There are other things we need to do, with our mind and our body and with our friends and ourselves.

It could be good to allow a relationship to develop and when it stops growing and the other person starts to bore you, and overwhelm you with the restrictions of have to love them so much, then it is time to part. But you might want to leave when for them the relationship is becoming better and more important. You will have to go, knowing you are causing pain and hurt.

If we need a close warm friendship without being possessive, we can't depend on and demand everything from one person, but that also involves accepting that they have other loves and other friendships.

Whatever we choose, we have to learn to live with ourselves, our jealousy, our dependency, our sexuality. But we have to know that we have made a choice.

By myself



Celibacy is not regarded as a positive choice of lifestyle. It is a compromise which we may come to accept in coming to terms with a bad situation. Fucks don't seem to be coming in the right direction, and rather than go through the painful search for a dick or cunt it is often easier to abandon the whole thing.

But why is it so necessary to go through the hassles of a sexual relationship which is so often exploitative and hurtful. Maybe too much time is spent trying to handle situations which are not good and constructive for everyone. There is so much social pressure to consummate every friendship with some sexual involvement. In any intimate relationship, the first question asked is "Why aren't you fucking?" The implicit assumption being that sexual involvement can only enrich and enhance the relationship. Too often sexual involvement is very destructive. It can be totally inappropriate and bring out all the worst in sex role typing, which previously didn't interfere in the friendship. It can be a clammy grasping doubting silence where previously there was a warm deep conversation.

To refuse to enter in a sexual relationship is often interpreted as a monstrous denial. Women are accused of being 'cock teasers', of leading a man on to believe he could gain sexual satisfaction with her and then denying it. Men are treated as aberrations and misfits if they don't want to fuck every woman they ever get to know.

Not only is it assumed that sexual communication is the ultimate and only basis for a relationship, it is assumed that someone who doesn't want to fuck is a totally asexual being.

Celibacy can mean learning to come to terms with one's own sexuality and in touch with one's own body instead of being exploited and fucked over by someone else; it may be important to keep sexuality private, as something to explore and enjoy by oneself.

Instead of being bogged down wondering where the next fuck will come from and then feeling so bad and frigid and unresponsive because the fuck didn't work, it is better to work on other ways of communicating.

Celibacy is often associated with loneliness, isolation and no close relationship because people are just so hung up on fucking they can't see round it. How many people would prefer to relate by talking and being together, doing and sharing things which both partners feel they can participate in together and share, rather than going through a sexual feeling session which involves very little communication for those people.

Every individual has to control their own sexuality; it is a private feeling everyone should come to terms with in their own way. Why can't people enjoy their own sexuality without being roughly intruded on? To choose celibacy can give a far greater feeling of freedom and of control over one's life. If a relationship dies for lack of a fuck, it would seem that communication had ceased a long time before.

Prue, Marg, Laurie, Jean, Di, Helen, Jane