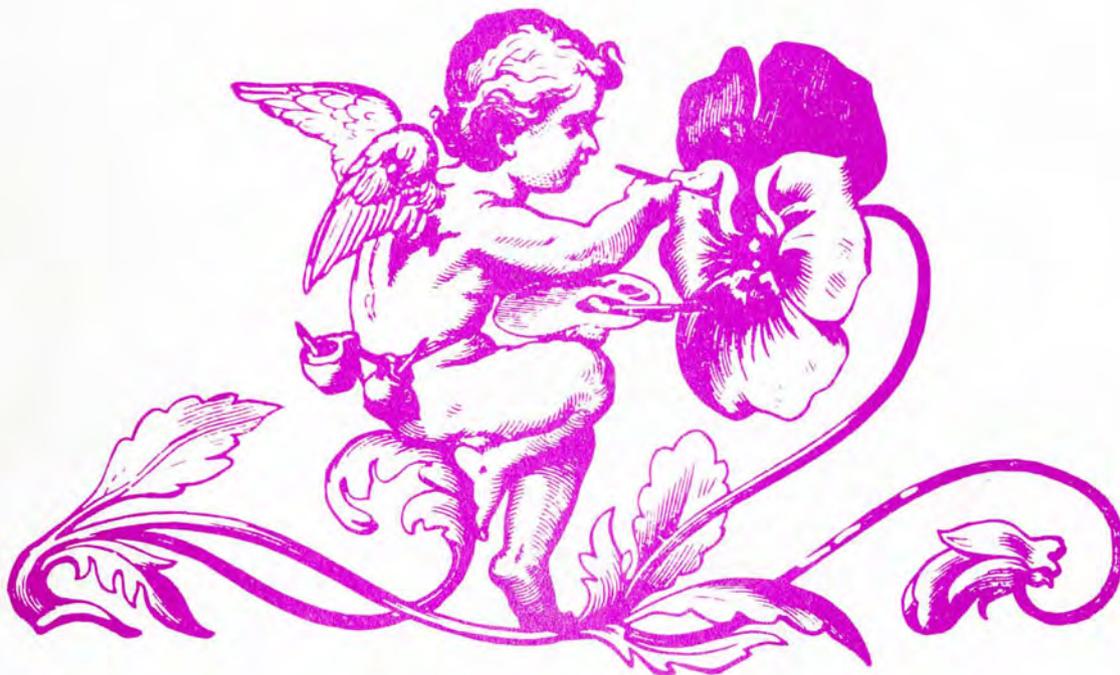


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GAY

FLAMES



A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES BY MALE HOMOSEXUALS

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# gay is good



By Martha Shelley

Look out, straights! Here comes the Gay Liberation Front, springing up like warts all over the bland face of Amerika, causing shudders of indigestion in the delicately-balanced bowels of the Movement. Here come the Gays, marching with six-foot banners in Moratoriums and embarrassing the liberals, taking over Mayor Alioto's office, staining the good names of War Resister's League and Women's Liberation by refusing to pass for straight any more.

We've got chapters in New York / San Francisco / San Jose / Los Angeles / Wisconsin / New England and I hear maybe even in Dallas. We're gonna make our own revolution because we're sick of revolutionary posters which depict straight he-man types and earth mothers, with guns and babies. We're sick of so-called revolutionaries lumping us together with the capitalists in their term of universal contempt -- "faggot!"

And I am personally sick of liberals who say they don't care who sleeps with whom, it's what you do outside of bed that counts. This is what homosexuals have been trying to get straights to understand for years. Well, it's too late for liberalism. Because what I do outside of bed may have nothing to do with what I do inside -- but my consciousness is branded, is permeated with homosexuality. For years I have been branded with your label for me. The result is that when I am among Gays or in bed with another woman, I am Martha Shelley, a person, not a homosexual. When I am observable to the straight world, I become homosexual. Like litmus paper. Dig it?

We want something more now, something more than the tolerance you never gave us. But to understand that you must understand who we are.

We are the extrusions of your unconscious mind -- your worst fears made flesh. From the beautiful boys at Cherry Grove to the aging queens in the uptown bars, the taxi-driving dykes to the lesbian fashion models, the hookers (male and female) on 42nd Street, the leather lovers...and the very ordinary very un-lurid gays....We are the sort of people everyone was taught to despise -- and now we are shaking off the chains of self-hatred and marching on your citadels of repression.

Liberalism isn't good enough for us. And we are only just beginning to discover it. Your friendly smile of acceptance -- from the safe position of heterosexuality -- isn't enough. As long as you cherish that secret belief that you are a little bit better, because you sleep with the opposite sex, you are still asleep in your cradle and we will be the nightmare that awakens you.

We are men and women who, from the time of our earliest memories, have been in revolt against the sex-role structure and the nuclear family structure. The roles that we have played amongst ourselves, the self-deceit, the compromises and subterfuges -- these have never totally obscured the fact that we exist outside the traditional structure -- and our existence threatens it.

Understand this -- that the worst part of being a homosexual is having to keep it secret. Not the occasional murders by police or teen-age queer-beaters, not the loss of jobs or expulsion from schools or dishonorable discharges -- but the daily knowledge that what you are is something so awful that it cannot be revealed. The violence against us is sporadic. Most of us are not affected. But the internal violence of being made to carry -- or choosing to carry -- the load of your straight society's unconscious guilt -- this is what tears us apart, what makes us want to stand up in the offices, in the factories and schools and shout out our true identities.

(Do you think some of my school teachers will remember me, the quiet bespectacled painfully shy kid now metamorphosed into Super-dyke?)

We were rebels from our earliest days -- somewhere, maybe just about the time we started to go to school, we rejected straight society. Unconsciously. Then, later, society rejected us, as we came into full bloom. The homosexuals who hide, who play it straight or pretend that the issue of homosexuality is unimportant are only hiding the truth from themselves. They are trying to become part of a society that they rejected instinctively when they were five years old, trying to deny that rejection, to pretend that it is the result of heredity, or a bad mother, or anything but a gut reaction of nausea against the roles forced on us.

(My mother was no prize -- nor was she worse than most people's mothers of my acquaintance.)

If you are homosexual, and you get tired of waiting around for the liberals to repeal the sodomy laws, and begin to dig yourself -- and get angry -- you are on your way to being radical. Get in touch with the reasons that made you reject straight society when

you were a kid (remembering now my own revulsion against the vacant women drifting in and out of supermarkets, vowing never to be like them, trivial endless gossip mah johngng sicklysweet lipstick), and realize that you were right. Straight roles stink.

And you straights -- look down the street, at the person whose sex is not readily apparent. Are you uneasy? Or are you made more uneasy by the stereotype homosexual, the flaming faggot or diesel dyke? We want you to be uneasy, to be a little less comfortable in your straight roles. And to make you uneasy, we behave outrageously -- even though we pay a heavy price for it sometimes -- and our outrageous behavior comes out of our rage.

But what is strange to you is natural to us. Let me illustrate. Gay Liberation Front "liberates" a gay bar for the evening. We come in. The people already there are seated quietly at the bar. Two or three couples are dancing. It's a down place. And then GLF takes over. Men dance with men, women with women, men with women, everyone in circles! No roles. You ever see that at a Movement party? Not men with men -- this is particularly verboten. No, and you're not likely to, while the Gays in the Movement are still passing for straight in order to keep up the good names of their organizations or to keep up the pretense that they are acceptable -- and not have to get out of the organization they worked so hard for because they are queer.

True, some Gays play the same role-games among themselves that straights do. Isn't every minority group fucked over by the values of the majority culture? But the really important thing about being gay is that you are forced to notice how much sex-role differentiation is pure artifice, is nothing but a game.

Once I dressed up for an ACLU theatre benefit. I wore a black lace dress, heels, elaborate hairdo and makeup. And felt like a drag queen. Not like a woman -- I am a woman every day of my life -- but like the ultimate in artifice, a woman posing as a drag queen.

The roles are beginning to wear thin. The make-up is cracking. The roles -- breadwinner, little wife, screaming fag, bulldyke, Hemingway hero -- are the cardboard characters we are always trying to fit into, as if being human and spontaneous were so horrible that we each have to pick on a character out of a third-rate novel and try to cut ourselves down to its size. And you cut off your homosexuality -- and we cut off our heterosexuality.

But back to the main difference between us. We Gays are separate from you -- we are alien. You have managed to drive your own homosexuality down under the conscious skin of your mind -- and to drive us down and out into the gutter of self-contempt. We, ever since we became aware of being gay, have each day been forced to internalize the labels: "I am a pervert, a dyke, a fag, etc." And the days pass, until we look at you out of our homosexual bodies  
homosexual bodies, bodies that have become synonymous and consubstantial with homosexuality, bodies that are no longer bodies but labels; and sometimes we wish we were like you, sometimes we wonder how you can stand yourselves.

It's difficult for me to understand how you can dig each other as human beings -- in a man-woman relationship -- how you can relate to each other in spite of your sex-roles. It must be awfully difficult to talk to each other, when the woman is trained to repress what the man is trained to express and vice-versa. Do straight men and women talk to each other? Or does the man talk and the woman nod approvingly? Is love possible between heterosexuals; or is it all a case of women posing as nymphs, earth-mothers, sex-objects, what-have-you; and men writing the poetry of romantic illusions to these walking stereotypes?

I tell you, the function of a homosexual is to make you uneasy.

And now I will tell you what we want, we radical homosexuals: not for you to tolerate us, or to accept us, but to understand us. And this you can only do by becoming one of us. We want to reach the homosexual entombed in you, to liberate our brothers and sisters, locked in the prisons of your skulls.

We want you to understand what it is to be our kind of out-cast -- but also to understand our kind of love, to hunger for your own sex. Because unless you understand this, you will continue to look at us with uncomprehending eyes, fake liberal smiles; you will be incapable of loving us.

We will never go straight until you go gay. As long as you divide yourselves, we will be divided from you -- separated by a mirror trick of your mind. We will no longer allow you to drop us -- or the homosexuals in yourselves -- in the reject bin; labelled sick, childish, or perverted. And because we will not wait, your awakening may be a rude and bloody one. It's your choice. You will never be rid of us, because we reproduce ourselves out of your bodies -- and out of your minds. We are one with you.



By Step May

# Which May Fix His Bad Mouth

## What's Wrong With Sucking?

Dear Jerry,

Your book DO IT! is one of the most anti-gay pieces of literature I've seen in current writing -- movement or otherwise. Throughout the book, you denigrate the villains of Amerika by suggesting that they are homosexuals. One of the most disheartening things about this is that DO IT! came out in early 1970, a full half-year after the Christopher Street riots and the birth of the Gay Liberation movement. A sensitive and conscious straight revolutionary should quickly become aware of her/his heterosexual chauvinism, should see that this chauvinism unjustly oppresses gay people, and should shortly be able to screen out at least blatant expressions of anti-homosexuality. We get very upset when **he** tells us that women in a revolution can prepare a good meal for the male guerrillas when they come home from a hard day's fighting, but perhaps **he** didn't have the benefit of a Women's Liberation movement to confront him with his male supremacy and get the wheels turning right. If you could put out a book chock full of anti-homosexuality after six months of gay riots, rapid Gay Liberation growth, and good underground press coverage, you're not as hip and close to the action as DO IT! is supposed to lead us to believe. We're making the new society, Jerry, and our vision is that everyone is going to be liberated. With your heavy hetero-chauvinism you're ushering in a revolutionary culture that's going to mean continued gay repression, and maybe even more severe state repression (1959 was a bad year for Cuban gays, you know). Let's free everyone, Jerry. Us homosexuals, too.

### Pigs, not gays

A few examples from DO IT! will illustrate just what it is you do. "Dick Daley fell asleep every night scratching his crabs (which he got from his closed-door advisory meetings with J. Edgar Hoover)." (p.163) Hoover and Daley are both contemptible men, and you want to express what's wrong about them. But instead you infer that they fuck together.

You intend two men fucking together to be taken as a disgusting thing or at best a joke. But that's all screwed up. Daley and Hoover are pigs, they're lackeys, they're fascists. THAT'S what makes them disgusting. If they DID fuck together, that would be the same as any two people fucking together, certainly better than rapes, and certainly no worse than a whole lot of fuck-exploitation of women.

### Reagan doesn't

"The entire university administration was drunk, sucking each other off in the back rooms of the university." (p.227) Ain't nothing wrong with sucking! In fact, one of the things wrong with Ronald Reagan is that he probably DOESN'T suck. Talk about what's REALLY objectionable about university administrators, not some intended slur that is in effect an attack on all homosexuals. How are my overweight brothers and sisters supposed to feel if I call some paunchy pig "Fatsó?"

Or my small breasted sisters if I call Pat Nixon "Tiny Tits?" Or my black sisters and brothers if I call Duvalier a "Nigger?" It's an attack on all of them for the wrong reasons. We're about fighting sexism, capitalism, racism, totalitarianism, hetero-chauvinism, imperialism. To put a person down for being fat, flat, black, gay or for resembling a cartoon character (guilty: the Conspiracy, for calling Hoffman "Magoo") is oppressive and inhumane. And you've got gay friends too, Jerry -- sure you do. You may not know it, because they may be keeping it a secret. Who could blame them, with a fag-baiter friend like you to contend with? Consider how they feel when you put them in the same category as Daley, Hoover & Reagan under the derogatory heading "cock-sucker." You force us into a position where we have to defend these bastards from your opportunistic attacks. Keep pushing me, Jerry, and you'll find me allied with some ruling class pig who is also homosexual -- allied against a common oppressor -- that great freedom fighter Jerry Rubin. I couldn't be liberated in Yippie society as long as something so central to my life as my sexuality is an object of ridicule. Let's get our vision into shape so that all the oppressed peoples will fight to win its realization. Next time you gay-bait a pig, remember that you're attacking my homosexuality. Don't use it as a weapon -- not against anybody. The Pig Class uses people's oppressions as tools...our arms are revolutionary.

### Mythical

"Fuck bureaucrats, especially the "nice" Deans of Men who put one hand around our shoulders while the other hand gropes for our pants." (p. 215) You should

be able to raise specific and actual objections to bureaucrats, not mythical ones. After Tom Foran spoke of the Conspiracy as the "freaking fag revolution," Stew Albert wrote that somewhere buried deep in Foran's balls is a homosexual. It's ironic that DO IT! places you, the object of Foran's vicious gay-baiting, well at the top on my scale of heterosexual supremacists (I once mistakenly told Foran that I thought HE was the leader). So what's in YOUR balls, Jerry? What if we met and liked each other? I might put one hand around your shoulders while the other hand gropes for your pants, just like a nice Dean of Men. I'd be expressing something I felt for you, honestly. Once we overcome the fear we've been taught, lift the barriers, and start to open up where before was suppression, then we can begin to eliminate considerations of gender in human relationships and perhaps we could love one another, brother.

As I write this you're in prison. Nothing but men. It's an opportunity for broader experiences, a new evaluation. In your loneliness, do you welcome a person's touch? A man can be tender, affectionate, human. A man might arouse you. Would you let it happen? What if it somehow got out that you were having sex with fellow inmates? I guess it would shatter your reputation as a rooster. Is the old image worth saving?

What do you think, Jerry, about the Gay Liberation movement? We're bigger now -- the wildfire's spread from New York all across the country, to Billings, Montana; Normal, Illinois; Tallahassee, Florida. We're even taking it to Cuba. I'm leaving in a few

days going down with Nancy. People tell me to keep my damn gay mouth shut...I'll be expelled or end up in jail or in a rehabilitation camp for a 'cure.' But you know I'm gonna fight like hell. We're stronger now--marches, rallies, media broadcasts, dances, forums, 'integrating' bars, concerts, carnivals (seven of us got attacked by some angry heterosexuals -- wonder if they were incited by your DO IT! anti-gay propaganda -- maybe they associated us in their minds with "cocksuckers" Hoover, Reagan, and Daley), and following from that, self-defense classes. We even took a building at the University of Chicago and held a big Gay Guerrilla Dance in defiance of an official university ban on Gay Liberation Dances. YIPPIE!!! So what do you think of that last masterpiece of yours? What do you think about yourself? Have we reached you, Jerry?

OUT OF THE CLOSETS INTO THE STREETS!!  
 BETTER BLATANT THAN LATENT!!!  
 FREAKING FAG REVOLUTION!!!  
 FIGHT STRAIGHT SUPREMACY!!!  
 GAY POWER TO GAY PEOPLE!!!  
 ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!!!

With comradely feeling,  
 Step May  
 Chicago Gay Liberation  
 Venceremos Brigade No. 3

This article is reprinted from the  
 Madison Kaleidoscope.



(FAG FAG)

# BORN TO LOVE:

# A FREAKING FAG REVOLUTIONARY SPEAKS OUT

By Stevens McClave



The revealing autobiography of The Green Hairnet, champion of liberation, arch-enemy of oppression, screaming Gay militant, and freakin' fag revolutionary, as told to Art Linkletter and Martha Mitchell, wherein the MAN is warning the fathers and mothers of the silent majority of the moral degradation threatening their children, insinuating - dirty old men on park benches? Don't take candy from strangers? Your son propositioned in the movie theatre balcony, the Youth of America blown in the john? But, FREAKIN' fags?

Freaks, like hippies, like 1967 Newsweek magazine Haight - Ashbury flower child, free love and you can't tell the boys from the girls, but WAIT, not that they're QUEER (oh, Mick Jagger maybe but what about Marianne Faithfull? My SON wears beads). No, not that all those supergroups like the Beatles and the Conspiracy are really - HOMOSEXUAL - you understand, not that they ACTUALLY suck cock, they're just so, well, not exactly effeminate, just - UNMANLY - it's unnatural, I mean even Ronald Reagan I wasn't sure about at first because you know what they say about ACTORS.

Spiro Agnew, Hugh Hefner, Bob Hope, Marlboro Country, and so, in this society, what more potent derision, what greater demoralization and deflation of masculine ego than intimations of being a - fairy? as Norman Mailer used to say. And probably still does. Not being one, really, no conception of what Walter Jenkins really felt or needed or DID even. LOOKING like one - wars of aggression, imperialism, fascism - Jackie and Lady Bird and what's her name - sexual insecurity is powerful stuff.

Freakin' fags, the movement squirms, the media can't even co-opt it. Yet. No splashy psychedelic - SYMPATHETIC, UNDERSTANDING - Life magazine coverage about alienated youth searching for meaning in technological civilization. GUERRILLAS GANG BANG DAVID EISENHOWER IN GRAND CANYON - FBI SEEKS MOTIVE. Revolution sells detergent (new CUM! with fast-acting GAY POWER actually SUCKS OUT STAINS. Now you can cruise through washday) and Women's Liberation sells cunt-spray. BUY!! NEED!!! GET LAID BETTER!!! The power structure depends on the total polarization and alienation of the sexes and the perpetuation of leg-shaven hairstyled femininity and bread-winning crewcut masculinity. And

the sideburned sportscar macho radicals swim in the white heterosexual male supremacist mainstream — GET FUCKED, STRAIGHT BOY. They still own you.

Saying they're all fags, with the exception of one nigger — the accusation is an accusation precisely because they're NOT Gay. And Abbie and Jerry (starring in *CHICAGO!* with Judy Collins, Arlo Guthrie, Country Joe McDonald, Allan Ginsberg, Timothy Leary, and a cast of thousands), Abbie and Jerry exchanging rings in court and saying they're married — they're heavy, but they ain't my brothers.

SUCK COCK AND SMASH THE STATE: "The societal organization of the sex instinct taboos as *perversions* practically all its manifestations which do not serve or prepare for the procreative function. Without the most severe restrictions, they would counteract the sublimation on which the growth of culture depends . . . The perversions thus express rebellion against the subjugation of sexuality under the order of procreation, and against the institutions which guarantee this order . . . The perversions seem to reject the entire enslavement of the pleasure ego by the reality ego. Claiming instinctual freedom in a world of repression, they are often characterized by a strong rejection of that feeling of guilt which accompanies sexual repression." —Marcuse. "Eros and Civilization."

Maybe they ARE dangerous, says middle America, something akin to the garterbelt spikeheel featherboa decadence of Nazi Germany, the decline and fall of various empires, the last days of Pompeii. This is no joking matter, says the postwar fingerfucking at the drive-in morality. We must and we WILL suppress any subversive manifestation of locker room towel snapping and the frightening consequences thereof by whatever means necessary. (Prolonged applause.)

Fascist domination depends on the suppression of the sexual instincts. The Russian Revolution eliminated the statute against homosexuality as well as abolishing the regulation of marriages. In 1934, the law reappeared in the Soviet Union and mass arrests were made. "It is catastrophic when leaders of a revolutionary movement try to defend reactionary concepts by calling sexually progressive people 'bourgeois'." —Reich, "The Sexual Revolution" — UP THE ASS OF THE RULING CLASS.

WE'VE  
LOST  
ALL  
OUR  
KIDS  
TO  
A  
FREAKING  
FAG  
REVOLUTION

-- U. S. Attorney Tom Foran

Liberated homosexuals? Like Union Street and Upper Grant? Velour bell-bottoms and see-through skirts do not a revolution make, beware of freaks wearing gifts and pigs in queen's clothing. UP AGAINST THE WALL, BROTHERFUCKERS. You too can look like a beautiful rock star and be — U\*N\*O\*P\*P\*R\*E\*S\*S\*S\*E\*D!!! Unoppressed homosexuals in seventy five dollar fringe jackets, free, FREE to go to a ghetto bar and dance to ROCK AND ROLL, jesus christ, rock and roll. tomorrow the world — equality of exploitation already, we've come a long way baby. Just a little while ago we were like STYLING HAIR and DECORATING INTERIORS and seeing Bette Davis movies and listening to SHOW TUNES and lusting after Paul, the Beatles were so DARLING in '64, and paul singing "Till There Was You" on Ed Sullivan right before the Judy Garland Special, and THEN, we got long hair and smoked grass, that lowest common denominator of current social change, and even began to DROP ACID to find that we were not only Dietrich but Brando too and got into — too much — ASTROLOGY, far out, what's your sign; I mean, groovy, it's OUR culture too now, not like still needing a chick to dance with at the old Fillmore and going to other people's demonstrations, OUR movement and OUR music and OUR movies, liberate! Liberate! I am he as you are me and all that we are all one person bullshit. Woodstock!! Mainstream white male-chauvinist heterosexuality — WE balled there too, and swam naked. Life = Rolling Stone = harper's Bazaar, it's all

the same ripoff, easy riders and Antonioni and Columbia records and ALTAMONT, the ultimate mindfuck ripoff because it was FREE. Why just the Bank of America? The mad little boutiques on Telegraph, trippy headshops, record stores, radio stations — but shit, people gotta eat, and the Consumer Society at least feeds its own. Which is more than the revolution is doing.

Gay Liberation, bitter politics bound by the inability to relate in this society and sexual frustration; Gay politicians still lousy in beds as our rhetoric and our responses fail to concur, but LIBERATED, from — guilt? conditioning? And liberated TO — oh yeah, LIFESTYLE, SUBCULTURE, RELEVANCE. Far out. As the desperate cruising and tricking syndrome perpetuates the alienation, orgy!! Orgy!! and more lib. rated than thou as an ethic and still buying the old short-hair cute-assed sailorboy pornographic establishment line. Don't worry, middle America, we can't suck all your children into the freakin' fag revolution yet. Is "Let It Be" post-political? Were the police stations bombed in vain? Destiny is an inevitability and all is meaningless rhetoric; my body is rejected and my gifts refused, but there are no alternatives. Maybe not in our lifetime, but perhaps in our children's, or in our children's children's. May I have the envelope please? And the winner... John Wayne!! For every action there is an equal and opposite etc. Things are gonna get worse before they get worse.

This article is reprinted

from the Berkeley Tribe.



# my Gay soul

A few weeks ago a Gay brother and I interviewed B.J. Beckwith, a lawyer who is sort of the Terrence Hallinan for the Gay community in San Francisco—when homosexuals are busted a lot of people hire him to defend them.

I asked Beckwith if he is Gay (he obviously is, but that's just my slanderous opinion—I can't prove it). He said, "If you're trying to get me to say I'm queer, I won't do it. What I do in bed is nobody's business."

I wanted to scream, "Honey, I don't care what you do in bed, I just asked if you are Gay."

A few days later I was in a rap with some women who are heavy into Women's Liberation. "You zero in on sex, you always zero in on sex," they said.

I've been told the same thing by liberal homosexuals and straights alike, "what you do in bed is your business, do your thing." They are saying that Gay means SEX, nothing but sex.

Well, I am tired to the bone of being told what I am. I am Gay. Yes, yes my cock, my mouth and my asshole is Gay. So is my fingernail, my big toe, my nose and my brain. I am not Gay because of where I put my cock or who I sleep with. I am Gay because everything about me is Gay, because I am part of a Gay community.

I was Gay long before I admitted my homosexuality to myself, long before I ever had sex, long before I knew what sex was.

When I was 10, I played paper dolls with the girls and dug it; when I had to, I played baseball with the guys and didn't dig it.

When I was 13 a gang of four or five guys tormented me—all through junior high school. They called me a cocksucker. I didn't know what it meant, but I knew it was the worst thing a guy could call another guy. They called me MRS. Alinder. They probably had homosexual fantasies and wanted to relate to me physically and the only way they could sense to do it was to provoke me to fight them. But I didn't. I was scared shitless.

There were five of them and I was alone.

I grew up on a farm in southern Minnesota and there you proved your masculinity in competitive athletics. I had too much self doubt to be any good in that. In high school I earned a bit of respect through journalism, theatre and art. But I was never the man I was supposed to be.

Don't get me wrong. I was not

exactly a flaming faggot. I drove a tractor, plowed the fields, tossed bales of hay into the hay loft and joined the Future Farmers of America.

I went to a small liberal arts college near my home for two years. It was a parochial, superstraight middle class place, everything based on a social pecking order of fraternities and sororities. Even the lowest fraternity—a bunch of creeps—didn't want me. Did I have B.O.? Bad breath? No. I was hipper and in some ways more together than they were. But I couldn't censor myself enough. My Gay self was showing through. And my Gay self was me. And every response I got from the world told me my Gay self was despicable. So I censored myself more, built higher and thicker walls around my soul and retreated deeper into my closet.

I had friends, other guys at the bottom. I was afraid to be seen on campus with them. I thought I would slip even lower. We were all Gay, but that could never be talked about, never be acted out. We were the outcasts but we were not together.

Two years later a good friend came out. At first I played straight; finally I admitted that I was Gay too. We had been friends since we were seven years old. But it was not until we were 22 or 23 that we could deal with what brought us together. Since then—although we live far apart—I've felt very close to that friend. We've been through a lot.

What separates me from the straight boy is not just the things we do in bed, but what our lives have been. When I meet an upfront Gay brother, I make a connection. I already know a lot about him.

I need to be together with other Gay men. We have not been together—we've not had enough self respect for that. Isolated sex and then look for another partner. Enough of that, that's where we've been. Let's go somewhere else. Let's go somewhere where we value each other as more than just a hunk of meat. We need to recognize one another wherever we are, start talking to each other. We need to say "Hi, Brother" when we see each other on the street. We need consciousness raising groups and communes.

Our Gay souls have nearly been stomped to death in that desert called America. If we are to bloom, we can only do it together.

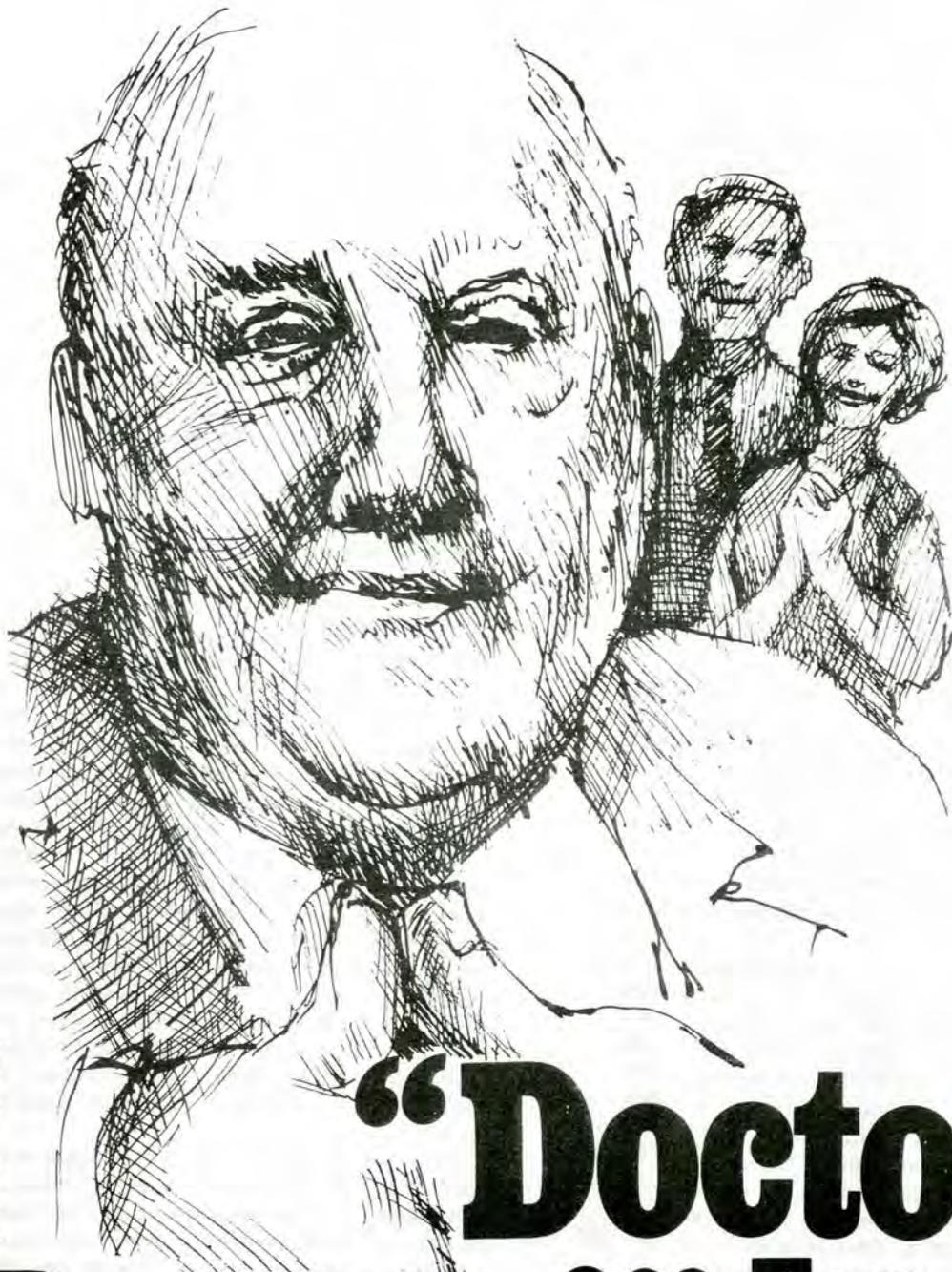
I need you brother, because brother you are all I have.

Gary Alinder

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This article is reprinted from Gay Sunshine, a publication of Berkeley GLF, Box 4089, Berkeley CA 94704.

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(FAG RAG)

# “Doctor, Doctor!” Fags vs. Shrinks

CONFRONTATION I: SAN FRANCISCO.....By Gary Alinder  
CONFRONTATION II: CHICAGO.....By Step May  
A LEAFLET FOR THE A.M.A. ....By Chicago Gay Liberation  
"YOUNG DEVIATES CAN BE CURED" -- A BOOK REVIEW.....By John LeRoy

# CONFRONTATION I: SAN FRANCISCO

by Gary Alinder

SAN FRANCISCO (LNS) — Walking into the enemy's inner sanctum is an enlightening experience. Last month, Gay Liberation invaded the National Convention of the American Psychiatric Association in San Francisco. We found out how tuned out the shrinks are.

The main convention meeting looked like a refugee camp for Nixon's silent majority. It was 99 and 44/100 per cent white, straight, male middle-aged, upper middle class. They are the insulated ones — separated in their immaculate garb, cars, country clubs, planes, expensive hotels — protected from emotional involvement by a gibberish vocabulary which translates humanity into "scientifically" quantifiable and "objective" terms.

Oh yes, psychiatrists come in different stripes; some are right-wingers, many are liberals, a few radicals. But they seem with few exceptions to be caught up in a sense of their unusual importance. They expect to be listened to. They have no qualms about male chauvinism, they've never even thought about it.

And so they couldn't imagine what the woman was getting at when she took the microphone to say: "I want to know what room the women can have to meet together in, and I want to know now." The chairman went on to the next speaker. Another woman got on the microphone: "I don't believe you heard, we want to know what room we can have and we want to know now."

A week after Kent and Cambodia, the psychiatrists had come to discuss business as usual. A caucus of radical psychiatrists described what business as usual would be: "...a panel about American Indians which concentrates on suicide by them rather than genocide by us...learning about aversion treatment for homosexuals — but not considering whether homosexuality is really a psychiatric "disease" ... hearing about drugs, new drugs and old drugs — but not the way drugs are used to tranquilize people who are legitimately upset... hearing about psychiatry and law enforcement but not about how our society uses police to oppress people and prevent change... discussing sexuality and abortion — but not the way sex roles are used to oppress women."

I've read psychoanalytic writing on homosexuality. They have a million theories about its "causes" and "cure." As a homosexual, it occurs to me that the shrinks don't know their elbows from their assholes.

I don't so much mind people playing intellectual games. (How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?) But psychiatrists hold power to inflict their games on people.

As a young homosexual you feel alone, you need answers but there's no one to talk to. So you read books or end up under the "care" of a psychiatrist. You find out how sick you are. The reactionaries

want to cure you through brainwashing, shock treatments or castration. The liberals just want you to be "happy." Of course they know homosexuality is an inferior way of life, but they have little faith in cure; and encourage their patients to adapt to the "deviation." A minority of shrinks say that homosexuality falls within the "range of normality". Those with the latter view kept coming up to Gay Liberation people after the sessions: "We agree with you, so what's your complaint?"

One of our replies was: "You do, why don't you tell the world? Silence is also a crime."

One of the worst mind pigs is Dr. Irving Bieber, Professor of Psychiatry at New York Medical College. Listen to Dr. Bieber: "A (male) homosexual adaptation is a result of hidden and incapacitating fears of the opposite sex...frequent fear of disease or injury to the genitals...frequently includes attempts to solve problems involving the father... The combination of sexual over-stimulation and intense guilt and anxiety about heterosexual behavior promote precocious and compulsive activity...By the time the son has reached the preadolescent period, he has suffered a diffuse personality disorder...pathologically dependent upon his mother and beset by feelings of inadequacy, impotence and self-contempt...Mothers of homosexuals are usually inadequate wives. They tend to dominate and minimize their husbands and frequently hold them more or less openly in contempt...Often there is a sense of identification with a minority group which has been discriminated against. Homosexual society, however, is neither "healthy" nor "happy." Life within this society tends to reinforce, fixate and add new disturbing elements to the entrenched psychopathology of its members." (Irving Bieber, "Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study of Male Homosexuals.")

When we heard that Bieber and company were coming to the American Psychiatric Association convention, we knew that we had to be there. And we were — on the convention floor microphone:

"We've listened to you long enough; you listen to us. We're fed up with being told we're sick. You're the ones who are sick. We're gay and we're proud" — bearded Konstantin running around in a bright red dress.

Andy laying it on the twenty shrinks who show up for a Gay Liberation workshop. Gay guerrillas in the balcony sailing a paper airplane down to the convention floor when the delegates voted for a two-year study of violence. The airplane's message:

Bieber is almost too good a target. His views are grotesquely reactionary; personally he is old, with a pinched face and nasal voice. A few days later we dealt with Nathaniel McConaghy of Australia. Young, charming, sympathetic, ("I've gone on television urging an end to discrimination against homo-

sexuals.") He reported his "research" as part of the program entitled "Issues on Sexuality."

From a summary of his paper: "With apomorphine therapy, the patient was given injections of apomorphine after which he viewed slides of males while experiencing the resultant nausea. With aversion-relief, the patient received painful electric shocks after reading aloud phrases describing aspects of homosexual behavior. Following a series of shocks, he read aloud a phrase describing an aspect of heterosexual behavior, and this was not followed by a shock...."

The Veterans Memorial Auditorium is nearly full — about 20 women's liberation people, 15 gay liberation people scattered through the 300 psychiatrists as McConaghy begins his paper. Shouts of "vicious," "torture," "get your rocks off that way?" McConaghy stops, apparently he'd expected trouble.

"If you'll just listen, I'm sure you'll find I'm on your side." Intermittant heckling continues, but he completes his paper. Five minutes of discussion and the chairman announces it's time to go on to the next paper. "We've listened to you, now you listen to us," we shout. "We've waited 5,000 years." The chairman responds, "Can't you just wait a half hour longer?" "We've waited long enough, we've waited long enough," comes our chant. With two papers still unread, the chairman announces, "This meeting is adjourned."

We are in a room of enraged psychiatrists. "They should be killed," shouts one. "Give back our air fare," shouts another.

Maria DeSantos reads from a Women's Liberation statement: "Women come to you suffering from depression. Women ought to feel depressed with the roles society puts on them....Those roles aren't biological, those roles are learned....It started when my mother threw me a doll and my brother a ball...."

Michael Itkin reads the Gay Liberation demands. Anarchy. Knots of people talking loudly all over the room. Shrinks coming up asking us what we want. Finally, some discussion.

Dozens of gay brothers and sisters have told me what awful experiences they've had with shrinks. "I

was in and out of mental hospitals for three years. I know how to talk their language, and they're motherfuckers." a brother told me. Another said, "When I was about 19, I read Bieber's book; that set me back two or three years. Then I went to a psychiatrist who took Bieber as gospel; finally after a year I stopped."

Rather than dealing with a sick society, the shrinks deal with the individual members of that society. Conform, fit in, straighten up, the shrink tells us. "Something's wrong? It's in your head." And for the privilege of getting such advice, we pay them \$30 an hour, and more.

One of Gay Liberation's demands to the convention was the abolition of psychiatry as an oppressive tool. The more I think about it, the more I favor the abolition of psychiatry, period.

"We've known 4,000 years of violence, don't fight us, fuck us; don't shoot us, suck us."

Bruce heckling the man in a booth selling shock treatment machines. He demonstrates a machine which shows slides of nude males during which the male patient is painfully shocked; the next slide is of a female, the patient receives no shock.

Finally we found Dr. Bieber on a panel (Transsexualism vs. Homosexuality: Distinct Entities?) By this time I'm really angry: "You are the pigs who make it possible for the cops to beat homosexuals: they call us queer, you--so politely--call us sick. But it's the same thing. You make possible the beatings and rapes in prisons, you are implicated in the torturous cures perpetrated on desperate homosexuals. I've read your book, Dr. Bieber, and if that book talked about Black people the way it talks about homosexuals, you'd be drawn and quartered and you'd deserve it."

Bieber answers; "I never said homosexuals were sick, what I said was that they have displaced sexual adjustment." Much laughter from us: "That's the same thing motherfucker." He tries again, "I don't want to oppress homosexuals; I want to liberate them, to liberate them from that which is painning them—their homosexuality." That used to be called genocide.



## CONFRONTATION II: CHICAGO

On Tuesday, June 23, eighteen women and men of Chicago Gay Liberation invaded the American Medical Association National Convention here in Chicago. The occasion was a workshop on Family Medicine at which Dr. Charles Socarides was to speak. A psychiatrist practicing in New York City, Socarides is an "authority" on homosexuals and is foremost spokesman for the school of psychiatry that proclaims that homosexuality is a disease, and must therefore be treated as a medical problem which requires a cure. The members of Gay Liberation decided that we could not allow our arch-

-enemy to go unchallenged. We scattered ourselves throughout the hall and waited for him to begin his address. As soon as he said the word "homosexual" one invader shouted "homosexuals are beautiful" and ten others jumped up to distribute the prepared leaflet. We then settled back with our arms around each other to hear all about ourselves. At appropriate points throughout his speech, invaders would shout such challenges as "that's a moral judgment" and "you're making things up" and "do you cure your straight patients of heterosexuality?" When Socarides repeated

his point about the male and female being physiologically adapted to each other, one audience participant yelled, "a woman's breasts don't fit into a man's chest." After Socarides finished, one furious doctor demanded to know by what authority we were attending the session. Another doctor suggested that the issue that the Gay Liberation people were raising should be given legitimacy, and that one homosexual should join Socarides and the other authorities on the panel. A gay guerrilla raised the objection that there were women homosexuals and men homosexuals and that both groups would have to be represented. A gay woman and a gay man then took their places on the panel and

plained that homosexuals are not inherently sick, but that society and psychiatrists force them to think of themselves as sick. Socarides reiterated his position about gender identity being confused by childhood trauma, which by now must have sounded pretty lame to just about everyone present. That evening a man called the number on the leaflet and said that he approved of the action we'd done. "I'm a doctor," he explained. "I'm gay."

Step May  
Chicago Gay Liberation  
1212 E. 59th St.  
Chicago, 60637

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## A LEAFLET FOR THE AMA

(Editor's note -- by Liberation News Service: From its outset, the Gay Liberation movement has identified establishment psychiatry as a basic institution involved in the oppression of homosexuals. On Aug. 24, The New York Times published a front page report entitled "Homosexuals In Revolt," in which it chose to give a considerable amount of space to the psychiatrists' view of the gay movement. One of the shrinks, Dr. Lionel Ovesey, a professor of clinical psychiatry at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, told The Times: "Homosexuality is a psychiatric or emotional illness. I think it's a good thing if someone can be cured of it because it's so difficult for a homosexual to find happiness in our society. It's possible that this movement could consolidate the illness in some people, especially among young people who are still teetering on the brink." The following analysis of the oppression of homosexuals by establishment psychiatry originally appeared on a leaflet distributed by Chicago Gay Liberation to doctors attending the convention of the American Medical Association in 1970.)

\* \* \*

The establishment school of psychiatry is based on the premise that people who are hurting should solve their problems by "adjusting" to the situation. For the homosexual, this means becoming adept at straight-fronting, learning how to survive in a hostile world, how to settle for housing in the gay ghetto, how to be satisfied with a profession in which homosexuals are tolerated, and how to live with low self-esteem.

The adjustment school places the burden on each individual homosexual to learn to bear his torment. But the "problem" of homosexuality is never solved under this scheme; the anti-homosexualist attitude of society, which is the cause of the homosexual's trouble, goes unchallenged. And there's always another paying patient on the psychiatrist's couch.

Dr. Socarides claims, "a human being is sick when he fails to function in his appropriate gender identity, which is appropriate to his anatomy." Who determined "appropriateness?" The psychiatrist as moralist? Certainly there is no scientific basis for defining "appropriate" sexual behavior. In a study of homosexuality in other species and other cultures, Ford and Beach in Patterns of Sexual Behavior conclude "human homosexuality is not a product of hormonal imbalance or 'perverted heredity.' It is the product of the fundamental mammalian heritage of general sexual responsiveness as modified under the impact of experience."

Other than invoking moral standards, Dr. Socarides claims that homosexuality is an emotional illness because of the guilt and anxieties in homosexual life. Would he also consider Judaism an emotional illness because of the paranoia which Jews experienced in Nazi Germany?

We homosexuals of Gay Liberation believe that the adjustment school of therapy is not a valid approach to society.

We refuse to adjust to our oppression, and believe that the key to our mental health, and to the mental health of all oppressed peoples in a racist, sexist, capitalist society, is a radical change in the structure and accompanying attitudes of the entire social system.

Mental health for women does not mean therapy for women -- it means the elimination of male supremacy. Not therapy for blacks, but an end to racism. The poor don't need psychiatrists (what a joke at 25 bucks a throw!) -- they need democratic distribution of wealth. OFF THE COUCHES, INTO THE STREETS!

We see political organizing and collective action as the strategy for effecting this social change. We declare that we are healthy homosexuals in a sexist society, and that homosexuality is at least on a par with heterosexuality as a way for people to relate to each other (know any men that don't dominate women?).

Since the prevalent notion in society is that homosexuality is wrong, all those who recognize that this attitude is damaging to people, and that it must be corrected, have to raise their voices in opposition to anti-homosexuality. Not to do so is to permit the myth of homosexual pathology to continue and to comply in the homosexual's continued suffering from senseless stigmatization.

A psychiatrist who allows a homosexual patient -- who has been subject to a barrage of anti-homosexual sentiments his whole life -- to continue in the belief that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality, is the greatest obstacle to his patient's health and well-being.

We furthermore urge psychiatrists to refer their homosexual patients to Gay Liberation (and other patients who are victims of oppression to relevant liberation movements). Once relieved of patients whose guilt is not deserved but imposed, psychiatrists will be able to devote all their effort to the rich -- who do earn their guilt but not their wealth, and can best afford to pay psychiatrists' fees).

We are convinced that a picket and a dance will do more for the vast majority of homosexuals than two years on the couch. We call on the medical profession to repudiate the adjustment approach as a solution to homosexual oppression and instead to further homosexual liberation by working in a variety of political ways (re-educating the public, supporting pickets, attending rallies, promoting social events, etc.) to change the situation of homosexuals in this society.

Join us in the struggle for a world in which all human beings are free to love without fear or shame.



The following book review

is reprinted from Gay.

BY JOHN P. LeROY

*Changing Homosexuality in the Male* by Lawrence J. Hatterer, M.D., McGraw-Hill, New York, 486 pages plus index, \$15.00

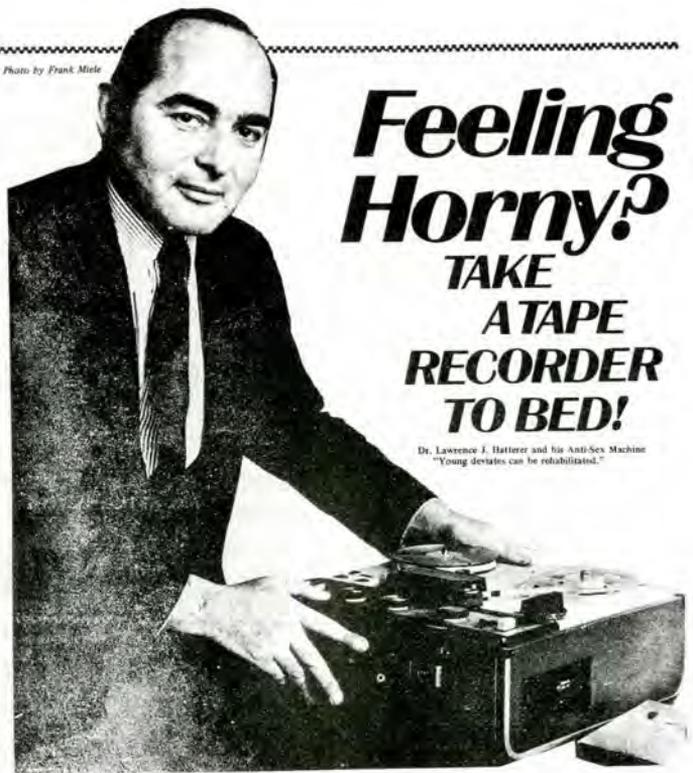


It seems that every time a psychiatrist writes a book on how to cure homosexuals, the gay population either increases or becomes more militant. There was scarcely a known homosexual around when Edmund Bergler's *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life* first appeared in 1957. A year later, the first prohomosexual organizations made a feeble start.

On the publication of Bieber's tedious and dreary study, *Homosexuality* (1962), the Mattachine Society was firmly established in a few major cities. And by the time Albert Ellis (*Homosexuality, Its Causes and Cure*, 1964), Charles Socarides (*The Overt Homosexual*, 1968) and Lionel Ovesy (*Pseudohomosexuality*, 1969) finished their books, gay liberation groups spread all over the country, including several college campuses and small towns. Now, Lawrence J. Hatterer has joined this rogues gallery of witchdoctors, and the cause of homosexual liberation will gather momentum. More gays will hop on the bandwagon, once they become aware of the stupidity and futility of such books, and more straights will realize that curing homosexuals doesn't work, and that the "homosexual problem" is in reality a problem for the heterosexual.

Hatterer's underlying assumption is that change is possible and desirable. But he cannot successfully treat more than thirty per cent of his patients, most of whom are young, impressionable, and hate their homosexuality. Yet, he is very suave, very hip, uses tape-recorded replays, and covertly admits that he really doesn't know much of anything. To demonstrate his ignorance he uses the buckshot approach, which says nothing.

Photo by Frank Miele



# Feeling Horny? TAKE A TAPE RECORDER TO BED!

Dr. Lawrence J. Hatterer and his Anti-Sex Machine  
"Young deviates can be rehabilitated."

"Is homosexuality a single disease? Is it a symptom of a neurosis? Is it an inevitable manifestation of a disturbed or undisturbed society? Can it be a social ritual? Is it a crime? From historical, biological, anthropological, and sociological points of view, investigators report that homosexual behavior and role have been designated both adaptive or maladaptive . . ."

Well, doctor, which is it? Since a lot of his patients are "troubled," and since they said they would like to change, if possible, and since most psychiatrists define homosexuality as a mental illness, and since he is a psychiatrist, he is being paid quite a bit to "help." So, why not? There's money in it!

In discussing the causes, he lists virtually every conceivable family situation that could occur, every conceivable erotic cultural and environmental influence, and every conceivable attitude one can have about *maleness*. Homosexuality is multicausal, you see. Since his parameters are so wide, so generalized, the possible and probable causes so diverse, and the situations so varied, not only can interpersonal, family, and societal factors produce homosexuality, but they might also bring about a preference for potato chips on Friday night or for doing the cha-cha in Central Park.

Rather than admit that nobody really knows what causes homosexuality, Hatterer is trying to tell us that just about anything can cause it. But because Hatterer has an M.D. from the Columbia Medical School, is Associate Attending Psychiatrist at the Payne Whitney Psychiatric Clinic, Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Cornell Medical School, and is also a Fellow in the Academy of Psychoanalysis, it simply isn't very professional to merely come out and say so. How could he justify all those honorific titles if he did? Better to bury such simple truths under piles of excess verbiage and call it a day. People might even think he knows something if he can obfuscate his ignorance.

But, in a good deal of the psychiatric profession, this is expected and practiced as standard procedure. It will make one look competent, but it will not justify the publication of a \$15.00 book. For that we need a gimmick. Hatterer's gimmick is the tape recorder. By taping his sessions with his patients, editing them for "therapeutic value," and giving the patient a tape capsule to play back before he comes to the next session, therapy is supposed to be reinforced, and faster progress should result. Thus, whenever a gay patient gets an urge to go out and cruise, he is advised to play back the tape, be reminded of the sin he is about to commit, and presumably whack off or get a girl, even if he can't stand her. Does it work? Hatterer won't even bother to find out.

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"Throughout the past ten years, weekly tape recordings have been used to document the diagnostic evaluations and full treatments of every man reporting any significant history of homosexuality in his past or present life whom I have seen, both in clinic and in office practice. During this time four pilot projects were designed, the last of which is still in progress . . . None of these projects was approached statistically or with the intent to validate and prove scientifically my own hypothesis as to the psychodynamics and subsequent effectiveness of psychotherapeutic techniques used in the treatment of the homosexual symptom. However, I do believe that after listening to thousands of treatment hours on tape and from naturalistic observations along with years of macro- and microscopic analysis of consecutive minutes, hours, days, and years of taped sessions, that specific empirical findings have emerged which disclosed some common denominators of psychodynamics and correlations between specific therapeutic action and change." (Page 151.) (Hatterer's emphasis.)

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But his findings are never specific, let alone empirical, and his correlations are nonexistent. Instead, we get a lot of taped dialogue in which the therapist is always right and the patient is always wrong. The insights brought out are that his therapy fails for the following reasons: (1) The therapist presumes that

he communicated one thing, but the patient remembers something else, indicating that true communication rarely takes place in psychoanalysis; (2) that the patient forgets all about what the therapist was trying to tell him, or had a completely different interpretation of it; (3) while the therapist thought the sessions were bringing about one form of change, the patient was either not responding, or changing in a different way.

In the end, Hatterer claims to have cured about thirty per cent of his patients, but these were the least homosexual of all, the most impressionable of all, and the ones who hated their homosexuality the most. Not a very impressive record when one takes into account the fact that people can make deep homosexual and heterosexual commitments without having to sit in a psychiatrist's office. To seriously propose psychoanalytic treatment as a means of reducing the amount of homosexuality is like trying to melt the Polar Ice Cap with a box of matches.

Some of my gay friends have expressed concern and worry over Hatterer and his ilk. But there is really nothing much to fear. Hatterer has had the stupidity to publicize his work, which means that a lot of people will eventually discover that he doesn't know what causes homosexuality and can't do much to change it. Gay liberation is the only alternative.



## A LETTER FROM HUEY TO THE REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERS AND SISTERS ABOUT THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND GAY LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

During the past few years, strong movements have developed among women and homosexuals seeking their liberation. There has been some uncertainty about how to relate to these movements.

Whatever your personal opinion and your insecurities about homosexuality and the various liberation movements among homosexuals and women (and I speak of the homosexuals and women as oppressed groups) we should try to unite with them in a revolutionary fashion.

I say, "whatever your insecurities are" because, as we very well know, sometimes our first instinct is to want to hit a homosexual in the mouth and to want a woman to be quiet. We want to hit the homosexual in the mouth as soon as we see him because we're afraid we might be homosexual and want to hit the woman or shut her up because she might castrate us or take the nuts that we may not have to start with.

We must gain security in ourselves and therefore have respect and feelings for all oppressed people. We must not use the racist-type attitudes like the white racists use against people because they are black and poor. Many times the poorest white person is the most racist because he's afraid that he might lose something or discover something that he doesn't have. You're some kind of threat to him. This kind of psychology is in operation when we view oppressed people and we're angry with them because of their particular kind of behavior or their particular kind of deviation from the established norm.

Remember we haven't established a revolutionary value system; we're only in the process of establishing it. I don't remember us ever constituting any value that said that a revolutionary must say offensive things toward homosexuals or that a revolutionary would make sure that women do not speak out about their own particular kind of oppression.

Matter of fact, it's just the opposite, we say that we recognize the woman's right to be free. We haven't said much about the homosexual at all and we must relate to the homosexual movement because it is a real movement. And I know through reading and through my life experience, my observation, that homosexuals are not given freedom and liberty by anyone in this society. Maybe they might be the most oppressed people in the society.

What made them homosexuals? Perhaps it's a whole phenomena that I don't understand entirely. Some people say that it's the decadence of capitalism--I don't know whether this is the case, I rather doubt it. But whatever the case is, we know that homosexuality is a fact that exists and we must understand it in its purest form; that is, a person should have the freedom to use his body whatever way he wants to.

That's not endorsing things in homosexuality that we wouldn't view as revolutionary. But there is nothing to say that

a homosexual can not also be a revolutionary. And maybe I'm now injecting some of my prejudice by saying "even a homosexual can be a revolutionary." Quite the contrary, maybe a homosexual could be the **most** revolutionary.

When we have revolutionary conferences, rallies and demonstrations, there should be full participation of the Gay Liberation Movement and the Women's Liberation Movement. We understand there are factions within the Women's Liberation Movement. Some groups might be more revolutionary than others. We shouldn't use the actions of a few to say that they're all reactionary or counterrevolutionary because they're not.

We should deal with factions just as we deal with any other group or party that claims to be revolutionary. We should try to judge somehow whether they're operating sincerely in a revolutionary fashion from a really oppressed situation (and we'll grant that if they're women they're probably oppressed.) If they do things that are unrevolutionary or counterrevolutionary, then criticize that action. If we feel that the group in spirit means to be revolutionary in practice but they make mistakes in interpretation of the revolutionary philosophy or they don't understand the dialectics of the social forces in operation, we should criticize **that** and not criticize them because they are women trying to be free. And the same is true for homosexuals.

We should never say a whole movement is dishonest when in fact they are trying to be honest; they're just making honest mistakes. Friends are allowed to make mistakes. The enemy is not allowed to make mistakes because his whole existence is a mistake and we suffer from it. But the Women's Liberation Front and Gay Liberation Front are our friends, they are our potential allies and we need as many allies as possible.

We should be willing to discuss the insecurities that many people have about homosexuality. When I say, "insecurities" I mean the fear that there is some kind of threat to our manhood. I can understand this fear. Because of the long conditioning process that builds insecurity in the American male, homosexuality might produce certain hangups in us. I have hangups myself about male homosexuality where on the other hand I have no hangups about female homosexuality and that's a phenomena in itself. I think it's probably because that's a threat to me maybe, and the females are no threat. It's just another erotic sexual thing.

We should be careful about using terms which might turn our friends off. The terms "faggot" and "punk" should be deleted from our vocabulary and especially we should not attach names normally designed for homosexuals to men who are enemies of the people such as Nixon or Mitchell. Homosexuals are not enemies of the people.

We should try to form a working coalition with the Gay Liberation and Women's Liberation groups. We must always handle social forces in an appropriate manner and this is really a significant part of the population--both women and the growing number of homosexuals that we have to deal with.



***ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!***

*Huey P. Newton,  
SUPREME COMMANDER,  
Black Panther Party*

The following statement was issued by the Third World Gay Revolution, a group of New York Black and Latin homosexuals.

#### THE OPPRESSED SHALL NOT BECOME THE OPPRESSOR

Sisters and Brothers of the Third World, you who call yourselves "revolutionaries" have failed to deal with your sexist attitudes. Instead you cling to male supremacy and therefore to the conditioned role of oppressors. Brothers still fight for the privileged position of man-on-the-top. Sisters quickly fall in line behind their men. By your counterrevolutionary struggle to maintain and to force heterosexuality and the nuclear family, you perpetuate outmoded remnants of Capitalism. By your anti-homosexual stance you have used the weapons of the oppressor thereby becoming the agent of the oppressor.

It is up to Third World males to realistically define masculinity because it is you, who, throughout your lives have struggled to gain the unrealistic roles of "men". Third World men have always tried to reach this precarious position by climbing on the backs of women and homosexuals. "Masculinity" has been defined by white society as the amount of possessions (including women) a man collects, and the amount of physical power gained over other men. Third World men have been denied even these false standards of "masculinity". Therefore stop perpetuating in yourselves and your community the white-supremacist notions which are basic to your own oppression.

We, as Third World gay people suffer a triple oppression:

1) We are oppressed as people because our humanity is routinely devoured by the carnivorous system of Capitalism.

2) We are oppressed as Third World people by the economically inherent racism of white American society.

3) We are oppressed by the sexism of the white society and the verbal and physical abuse of masculinity-deprived Third World males.

The right of self-determination over dominion of one's own body is a human right and this right must be defended with one's body being put on the line.

By the actions you have taken against your gay brothers and sisters of the Third World you who throughout your lives have suffered the torments of social oppression and sexual repression, have now placed yourselves in the role of oppressor.

Anti-homosexuality fosters sexual repression, male-supremacy, weakness in revolutionary drive, and results in an inaccurate non-objective political perspective

#### LOS OPRIMIDOS NO SE CONVERTIRAN EN OPRESORES

Hermanas y hermanos del 3er Mundo: Uds., que se llaman revolucionarios, no se han enfrentado a sus actitudes sexistas. En cambio, se han aferrado al machismo y en consecuencia al papel de opresor. Aún Uds. luchan por la posición privilegiada del machismo, y cada una de Uds., hermanas, sigue detrás de los "hombres".

Por vuestra lucha contrarrevolucionaria para mantener (y forzar) la heterosexuality y el núcleo familiar, Uds. perpetúan las viejas ideas remanentes del capitalismo.

Por vuestra posición anti-homosexual han usado las armas del opresor, en consecuencia convirtiéndose en agente del mismo.

Está en Uds., hombres del 3er mundo, — definir la masculinidad de un modo más realista, Porque son Uds. quienes a través de sus vidas han luchado para alcanzar esta posición precaria poniéndose por encima de las mujeres y los homosexuales, en consecuencia perpetuando en Uds. mismos y en la comunidad las nociones capitalistas blancas del machismo, las cuales se encuentran básicamente en vuestra propia opresión.

Nosotros, gente homosexual del 3er Mundo, sufrimos una triple opresión:

1) Estamos oprimidos como personas, pues nuestra humanidad esta sistemáticamente devorada por el sistema carnívoro capitalista.

2) Estamos oprimidos como gente del 3er Mundo por el racismo derivado del sistemas económico de la sociedad americana-blanca.

3) Estamos oprimidos por el sexismo de — esta misma sociedad blanca y a menudo manoseados verbal y físicamente por el machismo de los hombres del 3er mundo. El derecho de autodeterminación sobre el propio cuerpo es un derecho humano y este derecho será defendido con la vida.

A consecuencia de las acciones que Uds. han tomado contra sus hermanos y hermanas homosexuales del 3er mundo, Uds., que a través de sus vidas sufrieron los tormentos de la opresión social y la represión sexual, se han puesto ahora en el papel de opresor.

Antihomosexualidad alienta y promueve represión sexual, machismo, debilidad en el empuje revolucionario, y una inexacta no-objetiva perspectiva política.



# 'they man'

by  
steve  
dansky

Every man growing up in this culture is programmed to systematically oppress, dehumanize, objectify and rape women. A man's cock, a biological accident, becomes the modus operandi by which a male child is bestowed with power by this culture. A mere couple of inches of flesh places this male child in a position above half the human race and there is no man who does not benefit and glorify in the power inherent in this birth right. Every expression of manhood is a reassertion of this cock privilege. All men are male supremacists. Gay men are no exception to the maxim.

The ability to express homosexuality, however, carries with it a severe penalty in our culture because of the nature of the taboo placed upon homosexuality by this male-dominated heterosexual society. Straight men abhor homosexuality because of their inability and inadequacy when it comes to expressing love for another man. Heterosexual men are driven to abuse women because they can't directly express the love they have for each other. They literally fuck their friends' women because they are unable to fuck their friend. This observation has been born of the experience of most women in the communal situation in the hip counter-culture.

Homosexuality is a manifestation of the breaking down of male roles. This "unacceptable" affront to conventional manhood forces male straight society up against the wall, so much so that they must suppress, repress and oppress all signs of a life-giving homosexuality and force it into their warped death-dealing definitions. Their task, then, becomes a bludgeoning of homosexuality into parodistic expressions within this culture. Gay men are violently driven toward a false goal: the mutation of homosexuality into a male heterosexual personae. This results in the constant struggle of gay men to fit themselves into a heterosexual ideation of manhood. The gay man is asked to love, emulate, and worship his oppressor. The oppression gay men suffer has shown the validity and absolute necessity for a struggle for gay liberation. We have begun in our struggle for liberation to reject the internalization of this male heterosexual identity. Gay men must examine all forms of their homosexuality and be suspicious of all of them because the ways we express homosexuality have been molded by male supremacy. The gay liberation struggle will not reach beyond the civil libertarian goals of the homophile movement until it can see how deeply ingrained and oppressive is this idealization of male heterosexuality within each of us.

As was suggested by both Robin Morgan and Rita Mae Brown in their RAT articles, Gay Liberation Front men have avoided the questions of male supremacy, as if they were exempt. Indeed, it is the most crucial question relevant to any struggle for gay liberation. Male homosexuality could be the first attempt at the non-assertion of cultural manhood. It could be the beginning of the process by which we can reach a gender redefinition of Man: the "non-man." Homosexuality from this standpoint is the first step in the process of "de-manning." The men of G.L.F. have instead consistently asserted their manhood resulting in an attempt to stifle the struggle of women to free themselves from the shackles of male domination. What is worse is that G.L.F. men have further used the presence of women to legitimize their homosexuality. An examination of G.L.F. results in the conclusion that the gay men are no less afraid of each other than are straight men without "their women." What is pervasive in G.L.F. is a resistance to examining our sexual repression, inhibition and puritanism. If sexuality is expressed it is done behind closed doors. G.L.F. men have dutifully continued to use The Man's exploitative institutions, which are designed to keep us in our oppression. To be blunt, we have accepted The Man's roles and go to him to get laid. One of the goals of G.L.F. is the establishment of a community center. The community center is proposed as an alternative to these exploitative institutions. But haven't we avoided the alternative which already exists in each of us? We can't wait for a building as if it, a pile of bricks, was the answer to our oppression. We have been kept in isolation, we have been oppressed, exploited, and our identity has been taken from us. We have been told how to be gay and where to go to express it. It is no accident that we have been forced into the Gay Liberation Front to fight. Our homosexuality can be a revolutionary tool only if we abandon our self-destructive attempts to fit the warped roles given us by the male heterosexual system. The fear that one might be thought homosexual by another man - this fear is a powerful goad keeping men, both homosexual and heterosexual, in line as the oppressors of women. It is one of the many ways that men hold on to their privileges derived from oppression. Our task lies before us: our goal is stopping the propagation of the male heterosexual ethos by any means necessary..

Anothe project of Gay Liberation Front is the holding of dances. This is supposed to be an alternative to the bars. At the dances we have used women as pawns, rejoicing in our heterosexual experimentation. We are not proud of the fact that women don't feel like sex objects around gay men. Our omnipresent male flesh and how we throw it around have made women see the necessity of having separate dances. Gay men, you

can fuck women. It's male straight society that categorizes you, and tells you what you can and cannot do. But that's not the point. We are sexual beings, but at present, male sexuality is the means by which we both fuck and fuck over women. At the dances G.L.F. men have tolerated the presence of straight men who have come with their tongues and cocks dangling, ready to show G.L.F. women that all lesbians need is a good lay. All the pornographic material certainly suggest that heterosexual men, believe it or not, get a charge out of female homosexuality. Playboy even promotes what they call Bisexuality in women -- but not in men.

G.L.F. men have subverted the obvious: that is lesbianism in practice is exclusive of men. That puts men uptight, whether they be gay or straight. G.L.F. men have forced themselves upon lesbians, who because of the oppression they suffer from men, have realized that the only possible means of obtaining equality is in relationship with other women. That is why women, from G.L.F., from the women's bars, or the women's movement, don't come to our male dominated G.L.F. dances -- they are overwhelmed by our male presence and either leave at the door or are forced to elbow their way through attempting to find other women.

G.L.F. men have either avoided or attacked the most important movement in the world today: the struggle for the liberation of women. Any organization which does not recognize this struggle is objectively counter-revolutionary. We have fought male supremacy in every one of our relationships with men. We should know what women are talking about. In order to join the struggle for women's liberation, we as gay men must relinquish all power in G.L.F. to the women. We must give them final veto power. Until G.L.F. men join the struggle we will either drive the women out or continue to subvert them, thus becoming the young, hip, counter-culture version of the Mattachine Society. It is in the interests, however, of G.L.F. to join this struggle. Combatting male supremacy, in ourselves and in other men, is in fact at the very heart -- or should be -- of our struggle against our oppression.

The commitment needed for a struggle for liberation carries with it heavy demands. We must begin to make demands on each male G.L.F. member. G.L.F. must demand the complete negation of the use of gay bars, tea rooms, trucks, baths, streets, and other traditional cruising institutions. These are exploitative institutions designed to keep gay men in the roles given to them by a male heterosexual system. The use of these institutions by G.L.F. men must be seen as copping out to The Man's oppression of homosexuals.

In order that we fight our oppressor we must band together in living collectives. It will be the task of each Revolutionary Male Homosexual (RMH) collective to examine and confront the romantic notions with which we have been programmed to accept. Each RMH collective will have at least three men but no more than twelve. Within the RMH collective we will reject our parody of male heterosexual society's pairing off. We will instead begin to remould our homosexuality by developing a communistic sexuality of sharing, cooperation, selflessness and total community. Our commitment to fight for gay liberation will be the means by which we can devise the necessary tactics for the destruction of all exploitative gay institutions and of all male supremacist institutions. Our recognition of male heterosexuality as our oppressor will mean that we will have to confront every male heterosexual with whom we come into contact.

The RMH collective will take on the responsibility of adopting and raising male homeless children. We will attempt to raise these children so that they do not acquire the male supremacist ideation of manhood. The RMH collective will fight all brutalizing versions of homosexuality as existed in other cultures such as Athens or Rome; that now exist in prisons. We will stop the army's exploitation of homosexuality, natural to men, as a means of making men kill. We will stop the brutalization of gay men by straight trade.

At the G.L.F. dances we have danced the circle dance as a show of community. Our circle dance is the ritual -- an orgy of discharged energy -- before we enter the struggle. We in our circle dance have felt our sensibilities surge close to the surface. With acute aggressiveness we have encircled ourselves with protection against our oppressor. The time has now come to move out. Gay people will no longer be oppressed. We are angry at the theft of our identity. We will collectively recapture what we know is ours and has been taken from us.

We are backed to the wall. There is no turning back. Our rage will no longer eat at our bowels. We have seen who has done it. We can feel him; identify him. At the Firehouse old RAT men called a meeting with the community to devise with community support, tactics by which they could sabotage the RAT women's collective. At the Firehouse I met my oppressor. I met The Man. My "brothers" in the

movement. They pleaded: "Don't be divisive. Work with me for the revolution." But it is a revolution born of their discontent: it is a Man revolution. The Man revolution with women to fuck, bear their children, lick their wounds, and cook their meals. Faggots to be put away. They are the same men who put me behind barbed wire in Cuba. They watched me peek out at what I had fought along side of them for; what I had died with them for. They are the same white supremacist who told blacks they had gone too far. They didn't give up their white skin privileges. Instead they waited for blacks to come home. But blacks didn't come home to Mastah Man and neither will women. That night RAT men called the women fascists and spelt the women's Rat collective with a K. But RAT men we know you are Amerika. You are not revolutionaries but the capitalist ideal of rugged individualism. Women and gay people will stop your revolution. It is male counter-revolution.

I don't want your help, understanding or sympathy. I can recognize that, your male supremacist jive. Your love is oppression; it means bondage. I will fight the capitalists, that is inevitable. Capitalism is another word for male supremacy. You, movement heterosexual man...Man, you are the ruling class. Hey Man, are you fighting to keep your inherited power. Listen Man, give it up or go under. Your universe is being smashed. Your fantasy is being challenged. My soul won't be cast-ironed-out by your drunken raps. A timing of barricades will come: on which side will you be?

#### GAY DEALER



# From the men:

# Games Male Chauvinists Play

by Perry Brass

The games people play go on and on and on. This is especially true of that cruelist of human games known as cruising. In cruising, the hunt is on and the hunter becomes the hunted. Eventually the tension becomes so high that the whole aspect of meeting someone with the prospect of an evening, a week, or even a lifetime of satisfaction, or even pleasure, becomes lost in this confrontation of wills. Cruising is one of the great male chauvinist games: I can be tougher than you can be. I can hold out longer than you can hold out. I don't need you. I can't open up to you until you open up to me. Most men try to set up their own roles in the first moments of this contest of wills. Whether the playing ground be some street in the Village, one of the Avenues, or any bar or beach there are always the same roles, often enough being played by the same men only wearing different faces. We could begin with the extreme caricature of masculinity who believes that it is below his masculine dignity to ever approach anyone else. He will usually stand like the steadfast tin soldier for hours on end, wondering why this isn't his particular night. Next to him is the aggressive animal, the tiger stalking his way through the situation, looking at everyone but not looking at anyone. He is really looking for that perfect fulfillment of some adolescent sex fantasy (referred to as his 'type') who was possibly his first love at the age of twelve (his first 'type') and whom he expects to walk by momentarily.

There is also the verbal bully who thinks the best way to captivate his latest is to out-man him (voice three

octaves below normal) or outwit him (except that you've heard it all before) or out talk him (most of which you've heard even before he tried to outwit you).

And there are of course also the always-with-us clothes queens (nothing below Bonwits), size queens, body queens, height queens (nothing below six feet), race queens, blonde queens, chicken queens, astrology queens (his sign always agrees with yours), drug queens, campus queens (world's oldest frat men), muscle queens, and even queen queens.

There are the 'numbers' guys who have to announce to you that you're going to be their first of the evening or the week or whatever. They also have to constantly tell you what the cruising report is for every port between here, San Juan, and Dubrovnik. In other words, this is to make you feel like another swell number in his address book. If you're lucky.

And the put-up artist who has to first off embarrass you with how you're the most beautiful thing he's ever seen since the last most beautiful thing he has ever seen.

Or the put-down artist who thinks he has to shake you up to get you out.

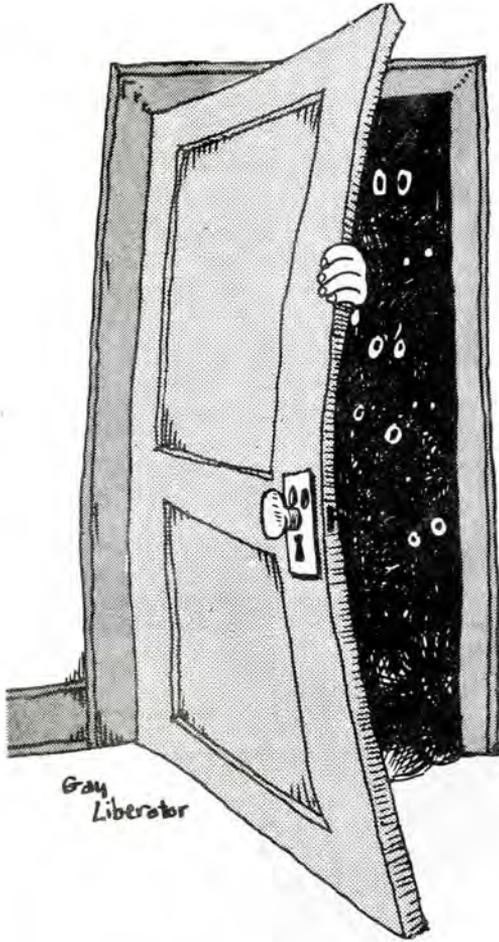
There are the fantasy creeps who stare at you all night until you walk over to them and then they walk away. They'd rather not know you, too well.

All of these men add up to a frightening lack of self-understanding and self-confidence. They can not face up to a situation without the roles pre-defined, the definitions roled out. We are all too afraid to find out that that certain gorgeous 'number' over there is just like we are inside: afraid and alone. Trapped in the role that he has learned how to play very successfully, but has outgrown years ago, whether it be the gorgeous 'number' role or the twittering little boy of thirty.

Gay roles in the whole of society are designed by fear. Just as we act in straight society out of fear that they will discover us, we react with each other out of fear that we will discover ourselves also.

It is no small wonder that from out of this self straight-jacketing, many gay men develop a real hatred for men, just as many straight men hate women because of the roles they must act out. Because we are forced to live in a society that condemns us as half-men, many of us feel that we must become men and a half. This means to shut out all of the real tenderness and sensitivities associated with femininity. Gay life is a gay drag when it forces a man to reject most of himself and only leaves him a shell or role he must show in order to live with the reality of our situation: that we are all outcasts.

We must reject what straight society has straight-jacketed us with and form our own life as real people not merely the old male chauvinist roles left over from a dodo society. It's very simple, men. It's just a matter of getting together or falling apart.



Gay  
Liberator

# MY SOUL VANISHED FROM SIGHT -

## A CALIFORNIA SAGA OF GAY LIBERATION

By Konstantin Berlandt

1951. I was five, staying with my father on his small Salinas farm. The corn was sweeter than I'd ever tasted in the city. As I fed him some apple a neighbor's horse bit my fingers. "Feed him out of your palm? I caught a whole jar of banana spiders off the tomato plants. With some other kids we climbed through the hills, passed a dead dog bleeding into the stream above where we had drunk, camped in a fort of cane marsh, flew kites on string forever long across a barren ploughed field or housing site. I held the ball of string for a while and let it out slowly. I stayed the night at their house and the other five-year-old in bed with me suggested we try fucking. I lay on my stomach; he lay his body on top of mine, putting his penis next to my ass. And then his ten-year-old brother came up on the side of the bed and accused: "I know what you're going. You're fucking. I'm going to tell." The flames grew up along the side of the bed.

HELL FIRE.

In the morning I remember one of the beautiful boy's beautiful bottoms in a streak of sunlight as he ran around the house naked before breakfast.

I stayed blanketed, afraid to get up and expose my naked shameful body.

+ + +

EIGHTH GRADE, Washington Junior High School, Salinas, California.

Before my first P.E. class I had a hard-on, and I prayed to God, if you exist, go down, make it go down before I strip in front of these guys. Don't think about your cock -- fuck fear -- think about something else. My cock went down in the rush and my soul vanished from sight for many years.

My memories of P.E. are of the shower heads, the water spurting in my face, and the yellow tile floors, soapy water running down legs and into the drain. Three minutes to strip for fast shower, hurry and dress and spend some time combing your hair. Don't watch me. Three minutes to strip and change and be out on that field running in place, running in formation. "Now, Berlandt," always called by my last name, a name I never identified with. Berlandt No. 2. How many chin-ups can you do while the class watches. How many push-ups till you're red trying to prove something. I'm always first to make a fool of myself. Choose teams. I'm always second to last to be chosen. And that last kid is such a wimp. At least I get on base sometimes. I play right field so very few balls come out for me to miss. I try to get somebody small to block, afraid I'm going to get run over. I wonder if he ever felt afraid across from me.

I used to say I'm sorry every time I missed the basket or swept passed the tennis ball. I used to feel I was a hindrance to any team who had me on it. Today I enjoy playing softball with my friends. I try to catch the ball for my own pleasure. I have nothing to prove.



The best six weeks were when I broke my finger and played battleship in the library with a friend who had a heart condition. Eighth grade. And then I remember being sick a lot in the morning before I had to go to school. I stayed home all day listening to soap operas on the radio -- Helen Trent's "eternal search for love and happiness" and "My True Story." I played fantasy baseball teams against each other and figures out their percentages. I masturbated. I once dressed up in my mother's nightgown and masturbated. Masturbated taking off my jock strap.

I used to come home after school and masturbate in front of the mirror or to the memory of Rick Kammen's tanned leg between his cuff and his sock which I would stare at during seventh period American history class. And I'm still masturbating in front of the mirror when no one is looking. I still look away when I am attracted to someone.

Look where you want to look.  
Let your eyes go where they want to go.  
Let your cock do what it wants to do.

We were separated into men and women separate rest rooms, separate gym classes, separate world, when we are all man and woman, all capable of loving each other. When we recognize we are all sexual creatures capable of relating to each other there will be orgies in P.E. or higher walls between the stalls.

\* \* \*

Exercise: Walk into your P.E. class (or golf locker room) today and look at the other people in the shower with you. Look at their beautiful bodies. Look at your own beautiful body. This is not illegal. But someone might think you're queer. You might be. You might get a hard-on like you do in the shower at home. You might start looking at each other again, appreciating each other all over not for how much better they are than you are than they but for what we are. For your groovy mind and groovy body. Instead of looking away all the time, instead of avoiding connections.

\* \* \*

I am an Aegean sailor washed up in the surf and seaweed  
I am so beautiful drying in the sun  
badge in pocket.  
deciding never having  
Come and get me.

\* \* \*

I used to be outside things  
standing

\* \* \*



Michael lived across the street from my grandmother's house. We both had eight o'clock classes, and he drove me in from El Cerrito on the back of his motorcycle. We enjoyed arguing. We also talked about girls: He was afraid of them. I was dating a hundred of them and sleeping with three. I blind-dated hi with a couple of the more fantastic ones and we double-dated.

"Blue, Navy Blue, I'm as blue as I can be  
'Cause my steady boy said ship ahoy and joined the Navy."

We heard it on his car radio, on a double-date eating French fries at a drive-in restaurant. A week later he went down and joined the Navy for four years. He wrote me a letter, just a regular letter, and I cried. I didn't understand why I cried. I was in love with him.

\* \* \*

Berkeley is my home town, my elementary education. I came to Cal a high school honor student and loving John F. Kennedy.

Same Sproul Hall, same Dwinelle Hall rat maze. 'Mommie, I'll go in this door and I'll try to find my way out to the front door.' It's not so difficult now as I find my way to French class

The first man I ever met who said he was homosexual. Mattachine Society of San Francisco set up the interview at their office. He was attractive looking, tall, trim, short dark hair, a black turtle neck sweater and tight black slacks. His name was Bob. I liked him a lot. I asked him questions for about two hours and then he took me to a gay bar, the Missouri Mule on Market Street.

It was dark inside. My leg brushed against a man sitting in the crowded bar and I apologized profusely. I don't want to give the wrong impression that I'm interested in you. I'm a straight boy on assignment. Can I have another interview next week?

I left the bar high, excited, jumping, running. I greeted my friends with a huge grin. I've just discovered a whole new world: Homosexuals are people, beautiful people who really exist, party, rap, hold each other tight when riding motorcycles. I'm going back next week to interview another one.

But the following Saturday afternoon I am an intrepid boy on an AC Transit bus from Berkeley.

I'm too involved. My cock starts to rise. Just an interview for a sociology project and a newspaper article, but my cock starts to rise. The fear climbs up around me. I have always loved going to San Francisco. Now it is frightening, crawling with homosexuals, old men who want to make me. I don't want anybody to see me, and yet I've worn a bright shirt and tight levis. The city is dark, the shadows hanging over the patches of sun.

\* \* \*

Friday night after the newspaper was put to bed I drove over to the City in the publications car to a gay afterhours bar another Daily Cal staff member had told me about to help me with my sociology paper and an article I wanted to write about a Cal homosexual. Maybe I could meet one there.

I sat nervously at the edge of the circle listening to the new homosexual side of the juke box music.

The boy next to me stares at me. A sexual advance? I try to return the stare. "I just have to ask you this," he says. "Are you Konstantin Berlandt?"

My god, is there no anonymity? I'm exposed. I can be seen. "Yes, who are you?" A friend from high school, another foot taller and grown a beard. We had been in a play together. He was a very good dancer, very cute, and very popular with the girls. He had complimented me on the way I skipped once before I broke into a run across the stage. "What are you doing in a place like this," he asks now.

"I'm writing a paper for a sociology class, and putting together an article, trying to find a Cal homosexual. Do you know any?" He could have said, Look into yourself, but we have all been so polite with people who say they're straight.

Another man approached me with, "Is that a new fixture?" A cherub lamp on the red satin wall. "I don't know. I've never been here before," I told him. We talked about why I was there. The Petula Clark record about Jack and John. Would I like to go home with him? "Yes." I'm doing this out of academic curiosity. If I'm going to write about it, I might as well find out what it's all about.

His beard on my cheek when he kisses me feels revolting. Wait, baby, if you are going to get into this don't hold back.

I enjoyed masturbabting his cock. It felt like my own. I enjoyed feeling something not me that felt like me. And, I said to myself as I did it, "Might as well do it and enjoy it because I'm not going to get another chance. I'm not gay and I'm not going to make it with another guy."

"Can I give you my phone number," he asks.

"No, because I'll never use it."

But by the end of the next week I really wanted to see him again. I drove to his house and put a letter in his mailbox..

"Do it. You know you want to kiss it. You know you want to suck it. Try it. See if you like it. I don't come in your mouth now if it freaks you."

I like it. What a surprise.

\* \* \*

I used to be a reporter. I covered things objectively, standing outside, feeling safe with my press badge in my back pocket. Never deciding anything, never having to. Was I prepared to get arrested for his cause? I didn't have to decide. I was covering the event.

But eventually my cover lifted. My objectivity melted into real emotion. "In the name of the people of California I order you to disperse." Break into ones and twos and run down your city streets away from each other. Separate till you fade into the store fronts. Someone is shooting at those who are too obvious. "Disperse! Disperse! Divide! Disintegrate!"

\* \* \*

A homosexual picks me up hitching a ride home from Bancroft and Telegraph late at night. "Straight boy, do you do this sort of thing? Straight boy, would you like a blow job?" "I don't know." Of course, I do, but are you exploiting me or am I exploiting you?

"What's the difference between a man's mouth and a girl's mouth on my cock?" I asked Gene later.

"If you talk much more like that, Konstantin, I'm going to think again about being your roommate."

I didn't bring up homosexuality in a first person context again. After I came out -- recognized my own homosexuality and my love for Gene, recognized my frustration on our double-dates together and sleeping in separate beds when I visited him. I wrote it all out in a seven page confession to give to him. "But if I tell you this about myself you may not be my friend any more." "Don't tell me," he said.

I walk through the Cal library undergraduate reading rooms now, afraid of being picked up. I look at everyone's eyes but lower them again when I see the same thing in them that I feel in mine.

I'm discovering who I am and I'm afraid of it. See me looking at you. Don't think I'm queer.

Of course, I'm not. I've just done the research. I know that the third floor head in the library is a cruising spot for homosexuals and I'm afraid to go in there.

\* \* \*

Class, let me tell you about them:

"Homosexuals use the same words the straight society uses for them. There words are derogatory when used by straights. For example, this word: I'll write it on the board and leave out a letter so as not to offend anyone. ~~C~~-CKSUCKER." This was during Berkeley's four-letter word controversy which I was parodying.

I sat on a desk in front of my speech class and told them what homosexuals were according to Life Magazine -- fuzzy sweaters and tight Levis. I sat before them in tight cream Levis and a ski sweater. The visual message -- homosexuals look just like me, but the whole rap, detached, academic, objective, third person, said, "I'm not a homosexual." Homosexuals are just like us, I said, except they make love to each other, hate themselves and each other, and we hate them too as we hate ourselves as we are them and as we separate ourselves from them who are not them but us.

The next class speaker, a burly football-player built, crew-cut, madras shirt, erased ~~C~~-CKSUCKER from the board with anger.

\* \* \*

Readers, let me tell you about them:

"The Daily Californian today begins a new series of articles on minorities -- racial, sexual, political religious." I started the series with Blacks and then homosexuals.

Headline: "Minorities -- 2700 Homosexuals at Cal" -- a one in ten figure based on 1948 Kinsey study estimates about the proportion of the general population who by choice have a majority of their sexual experiences with members of the same sex. Underneath ran a picture of a University library shitroom, every other stall door removed and an article about police tactics against homosexual activities on campus. In 18 months Cal's special police entrapment squad had arrested 240 people for homosexual activity and now they had removed head doors to prevent homosexuals from sitting in neighboring stalls and passing notes to each other or blowing each other through glory-holes.

Notes on toilet paper:

"What do you like to do?"

"Are you vice squad?"

"Have you a place?"

"I want to see your face."

The notes are exchanged under the shit stall walls in the Harmon Gymnasium boys bathroom at Berkeley. It is how a friend of mine picks up tricks at Cal.

Can I see what you look like? But there haven't been any campus social activities for homosexuals to get together.

\* \* \*

I'd be ashamed for people to know I jacked off in the john, I blew a man through a gloryhole, I blew a man at all.

I like making it in a restroom. There's romance in the fear of being caught, the excitement of making it with a complete stranger, someone you don't know and you can be so close, so sexually intimate and unafraid to put your cock in his mouth and taking his in yours and feeling strong because you can fuck. If I can't ever show my cock in public now I can show it to a public stranger who loves it.

And make the world all sex.  
No piss-elegant romantic trappings  
(No bed, no fucking million dollar diamond ring  
to prove our forever love for each other)  
just cold tile floor  
and cold ceramic toilet bowl,  
just what we are with no pretensions  
now without future involvements to pretend other things for

But on the other hand, when I'm loving myself for longer period of time I'd like to make it with you in bed and smile in the morning without putting it on.

There's honesty in fucking fast and fearful

Having to perform is such a drag.  
that morning smile after sex  
that morning smile to your boss  
that morning smile to closet friends  
-- "Didn't do nothin' wrong last night,  
except it was with a guy."  
How could I have loved you last night  
-- sorry about that.  
Good morning.  
what suit should I wear today,  
what smile and opening lines for the friends downtown.

Good morning boy.  
was I really attracted to you last night?  
was I really such a pervert as to like your cock and your body?  
Funny, I don't feel that this morning.  
Feeling straight,  
giving you my plastic appreciation smile.  
Well, I proved I'm not gay myself anyway.

\* \* \*

The second article, an interview with a boyfriend of mine, blew the roof off the school. "I never walked into a john at Cal when there wasn't someone waiting... Cal was so cruisy I couldn't make it from class to class." He rapped on about a Cal football star who lived with his gay lover and a fraternity that picks up homosexuals to blow the frat men while they watch stag movies.

The student senate passed a censure on the Daily Cal for the series. "It was something I wouldn't want my younger brother to see," said a female senator. The Publishers Board held a three-hour personnel session debating my firing along with several other editors. "A head should not be offered up at this time," the University Public Information Director had recommended to the Chancellor. I apologized and the other student editors printed an apology to the fraternities and sports world while cutting and burying the rest of the series.

The California State Senate Investigating Committee published an attack on the University in the spring using the series to charge that the Berkeley campus since the Free Speech Movement had become "a haven for communists and homosexuals."

Bring in the police to protect straight boys from temptation. Maybe you don't want to relate to people while you are sitting on the toilet. Maybe you don't want to be freaked by a hand coming out from under the stall wall or people watching you while you pee. I mean, I am so uptight I can't pee at all unless there isn't anyone else in the restroom. Afraid someone might be interested in my cock, afraid if I can't make it work now while the spotlight is on me I'm not a man. And then, while I stand there unable to pee I start to worry that instead of another faggot at the next urinal it might be a vice squad officer who will accuse me of soliciting while I hold out my cock.

Finally, I flush, pretending I have used it, wash my hands, comb my hair, dry my hands, and walk out planning my return in a few minutes when these people will all be gone.

But then I smile at a hippie girl at the lavatory door who is waiting for her boyfriend and I remember that I'm strong and wonderful and beautiful like she is and no one is going to keep me from peeing. I go back in.

Exercise: Stand at the urinal and look at the cock of the man standing next to you. Is it ugly? Is it beautiful? Is it yours? Do you want to make it feel good? You'll never see him again. You might be in love with him. Let him look at your cock. Is it ugly? Is it beautiful? Do you want to make it feel good? Can he make it feel good? Is it getting hard? Yes, it is. Let's go get a cup of coffee and reassure each other we're not cops.

\* \* \*

Anonymous homosexuals wrote in to the paper defending the image of the homosexual. The letter I laughed at and liked the best complained of a lack of understanding and added, "One thing is for sure, Mr. Berlandt is not a homosexual." My masculine image protected I wrote a "Freedom for Homosexuals" button and laughed along with everyone who read it and laughed.

FOUR YEARS LATER: Arguing with the city editor of the Daily Cal over the importance of a gay liberation demonstration against the San Francisco Examiner, over whether it merited coverage in the Daily Cal. He says, "I haven't seen any evidence that there are any homosexuals on campus besides yourself and his one letter we got."

I visited my father in New York in the summer of my coming out.

My father and his girlfriend saw "Zorba, the Greek" and put it down as a homosexual movie. I talked about girls I met dancing till dawn.

I slept all day and after every evening with him and his friends I took the subway down to 42nd Street and talked with the hustlers that I had read about in John Rechy's City of Night. I recognized the place from the cover picture in the book.

My hustler friend introduced me to a man who was writing a book on homosexuality to be produced by Bennett Cerf. I was impressed. We both talked. He wanted to know how big my cock was.

I made it the first night with a black hustler who said hello to me. He had very little money, lived in a tiny room with another hustler. "Buy me a hot dog," he asked. I did. Am I being exploited? I wondered. Is this the game? We went up to his room. He lavished over how big my cock was and then I was astonished at the size of his. "I wish I had some money to pay you," he said afterwards. Only money is real. I'm not.

I tried hustling too. I bought a nice red shirt with the money.

My last night in New York I met a man who had just gotten out of the army. He had a wife and three children. It was 3 a.m. and we talked by the sunrise on the Hudson River until 9 a.m. when my father had gone to work and we went to my house and made love. Six hours of anticipation as he became more and more beautiful and then he fucked me and it felt so good.

I wrote him three letters from California. He finally answered one pledging that while "most gay relationships don't last, our love would last forever." I don't remember answering his letter.

\* \* \*

"Another thing, Wally, the more guys I'm sleeping with, the more I'm getting out of girls because I expect more from them."

From the back of the motorcycle I held tightly to Wally's waist and watched the road through his blond hair. I was glad to talk to someone approving about my homosexual experiences.

I never said I liked him though.

I had met Wally before I came out -- realized my homosexuality or admitted it to myself.

I was attracted to him, talked to him all afternoon and then on the phone for hours, and he was excited by our similar experiences: hating sports, hating our step-fathers, loving our mothers. We liked each other. I introduced him to my girlfriend and we competed over her. Only we really dug it that we were sleeping with the same girl. But Wally and I would have come closer if we'd been fucking each other.

I was hitching down from my summer job as switchboard operator at the Bohemian Grove on the Russian River to trick out at the Rendezvous. I had five tricks in a day and a half, making up for all the sex I hadn't had, hadn't had with Wally at the Grove, hadn't had all my life. I lost my job for the next year there for taking off so much.

The Rendezvous became my summer home. It was San Francisco's most popular gay bar -- a doll house, a thousand young men standing around on Saturday night, looking beautiful, too beautiful to touch, too beautiful to approach.

"He's got to be good looking  
'Cause he's so hard to see.  
Come together."

Can I be beautiful while yet so ugly. Nothing but a queer. When I graduated from college and became open about my homosexuality, I was still just a queer. My relatives proud of me as editor of the Daily Cal, proud of me going to Cal, proud if I had graduated, would do well, would find himself and be successful. "I'm homosexual Mom." "I'm ashamed. I'm sorry. You're destroying your chances for success. You're hurting yourself and your family. I was hoping you'd grow out of this. You're not going to be mature for another ten years. You can overcome this. Your father did."

"You can overcome heterosexuality."

\* \* \*

Naked theater. Abbie Hoffman's FREE suggested it to me. Meetings are for coming together, he said. Groove on it all: the tight jawed people who try to concertedly continue their progress reports while trying to pretend they don't see me and won't look in my direction; frowning, disapproving, disgusted people: the friendly, laughin, glad to see us out in front again today people.

Gay liberation theater -- the fall offensive. At the Radical Student Union's Freshman Disorientation Fair below Berkeley's student union. We performed a gay liberation allegory to the Who's Tommy, starring blond, innocent, sincere Gale Whittington: "My name is Gale and I became aware this year....I'm learning to be myself and love myself....I'm striking my classes, I'm turning on, I'm a homosexual."

Mom: "I knew it, you're high on something right now, aren't you?"

Dad: "You're a disgrace."

Chrous: "Pervert, faggot, queer, sissy, pansy, cocksucker."

Gale: "Hip, radical, Black, Gay. Don't let anybody fuck you over. Be yourself."

Chorus: "Who are you?"

Gale: "I'm Gale when I'm naked and I'm beautiful."

And after confrontations with his closet queen boss, his closet queen friends and a radical uptight friend, and his priest, Gale tells him: "All you're telling me is bullshit. You're not my god. Come, my gay disciples." Twelve of us follow him out into the audience spreading the teachings, gay liberation slogans, until pigs arrest him and the Black Barrabas.

Pontius Pilate: "Ecce Homo, Behold the Man. Children of the Universe, which one shall be crucified and which one shall be freed?"

Chorus and Audience: "Free them both! Free them both!  
'We want our right and we don't care how;  
We want a revolution now.'"

\* \* \*

### THREE AFFAIRS.

Ben.

I wore my white tight Levi shorts over my Russian River tan. Ben complimented me on it. I said, "Thank you," and began to turn away. "He is too skinny," I said to myself. "Don't you want to get beyond superficial physical characteristics?" I asked myself and turned back around.

"Strangers in the night, exchanging glances  
Wondering in the night what were the chances  
We'd be sharing love before the night was through  
Ever since that night we've been together  
Lovers in the night in love forever  
It turned out so right for strangers in the night."

I sang that song in Europe where he had sent me to forget him, live an independent life. I sang that song to give me encouragement and inspiration for making it work, making it last, trying again when I got home. I cried, I pleaded, I tied him to the bed one night so he wouldn't go out. I argued with him for hours, days. And I drank Scotch and fantasized on suicide. There will never be anything again so intense as that first love, I thought. Don't let it go. It can never be recovered.

For a year I wanted to live with him. He'd take me to dinner one night, ignore me the next. In the bar he rapped about an orgy he had been to the night before. Laughing, he said to me, "I've probably been to bed with over 500 people," You're nothing special, sex is nothing special, you're nothing, I don't love you, go away little romantic boy.

I walked down the street pouring out my tears, hoping he would drive up in his silver convertible and save me. I have to go away where he will never find me. I'll go to my grandmother's (where he knows he can find me).

I was crying in the bedroom the next afternoon when he drove by, picked me up with my things. "You're coming to live with me."

"I'm so happy," I said to myself. "This is what I've always wanted." I said all the lines I had heard in the movies and in Helen Trent, but instead of exhilarated I felt empty. Only the challenge. Now he loves me. I got what I wanted. Will he let me drive his car? Sleep late in his lovely white house? Masturbate in the afternoon while he's at work, kiss him warmly when he comes home, eat the food he buys me at gay restaurants?

I sit in your white house on your thick white rug and look out at the view of lonely San Francisco and Berkeley where I used to live, the home and life I left to come here. (I'm still commuting to that separate secondary life -- bad grades and incompletes. My friends think I have a girlfriend in the City.)

I sit in your clean white house on your thick white rug before you come home and after you go out. I always feel cold in this house. I curl up by the heater, sip Scotch, feel jealous and hurt until 1:45 when I pull the drapes, light the candles, put Vince Guaraldi on the phonograph, lie naked and seductive on the couch. You laugh when you come in. How cute. How romantic. How silly. Tonight you say you want to get some sleep and will sleep in the other bed alone.

My life is devoted to you!

"I want you devoted to me. I want you to be yourself."

\* \* \*

Chris.

Chris and I were classmates, studied together. He was very lonely at Berkeley and I was his first close friend there. I took him to the Rendezvous on the bar's anniversary ostensibly to hear the Grateful Dead. I wanted him to know I was gay and find out if he was. He recognized immediately that it was a gay bar but he paired me up in his head with the girl, an old friend, who I asked to come with us. He and I were together every night ostensibly to study, but we mostly talked. I wanted to touch him very much, kiss him very much and didn't, waited, frustrated.

I told him if I didn't get out of the draft any other way, I'd tell them I was homosexual. I never overtly said I was homosexual. He never said he was. I cried in frustration after he left one night, angry at myself: "It's just sex. It's just sex," I cried. "I don't even know him. I only just met him."

He wrote me a letter: "Konstantin, I like you as a friend. And I like to touch my friends. It is something a girl with whom I was very much in love taught me. For you see, Konstantin, I am not homosexual like you."

I felt we had a homosexual relationship. I would be his friend in a physically sexual relationship and be frustrated at times but I would not try to seduce him, not try to bring him out. If he wanted to come out, he now knew where the Rendezvous was. He touched my shoulder and said he liked me and wanted to continue to be my friend. Another night as we walked to his house he took my hand. I took him into the shade and kissed him. He withdrew again for a few days and then, filling himself up with beer, he initiated our making love.

He told me later he had always known he was homosexual but had had a recent love affair with a girl and proved to himself he was straight after all. He wanted to work for the government and letting his homosexuality come out again conflicted with his life's ambitions.

"Don't call my house any more. Don't come over except when I tell you my parents aren't home. My parents know you're homosexual and I don't want them to know I am." He thought they could tell because my laugh is sometimes high and because I called so often. We were living together. If his parents came to visit I rolled my face to the wall as his lethargic, nameless roommate. When other people knocked, we messed up one bed before we answered the door. If people stayed overnight, we slept apart. If we went to parties together we danced with the girls and pretended we weren't interested in each other.

Surprise! Your father's coming through the front door. Quick down into the basement until he leaves. An hour with the spiders and my toasted cheese sandwich.

We have to be careful in case his parents come home. Quick with you and your clothes into the closet and get dressed without a thump. His mother is talking to him in front of the closet door. I breathe with open mouth and no sound behind it. He sneaks me out of the back of the house when she's vaccuuming another room. It's exciting. But I resent being hidden. I wish he loved me more than he feared hurting his parents. I guess I took wanted their acceptance. I'd rather be openly angry with his mother than seemingly sinister. They foud out anyway that we had been living together. She asked him in a dream state under sodium penathol after an operation: "Dan tells me you and Konstantin are living together. Does that mean anything?" (Well, Mother, it means I'm pregnant.) "No," he said.

\* \* \*

Gene.

T-shirt and tight Levis and a smoothe olive skin. I felt physical attraction throbbing in me when I first met Gene. And then he lived in my town, and so he joined my night staff so he could get a ride home conveniently with me. We drove home once a week together and talked about girls. And I introduced him to that same girl, a longtime friend. They had a long affair through which she really tore him up or he tore himself up or let himself be torn up.

Gene and I went to Monterey for an acid trip together. We stayed with a gay friend. His lover came over and we all got stoned around the fireplace. Our host prodded Gene a lot. Gene said very seriously he had recently learned about feelings homosexual in others and himself. "Oh goodness," laughed our host.

Gene and I had to share a bed. He told me he didn't want to have sex that night. "That's cool," I said. I wasn't really expecting to.

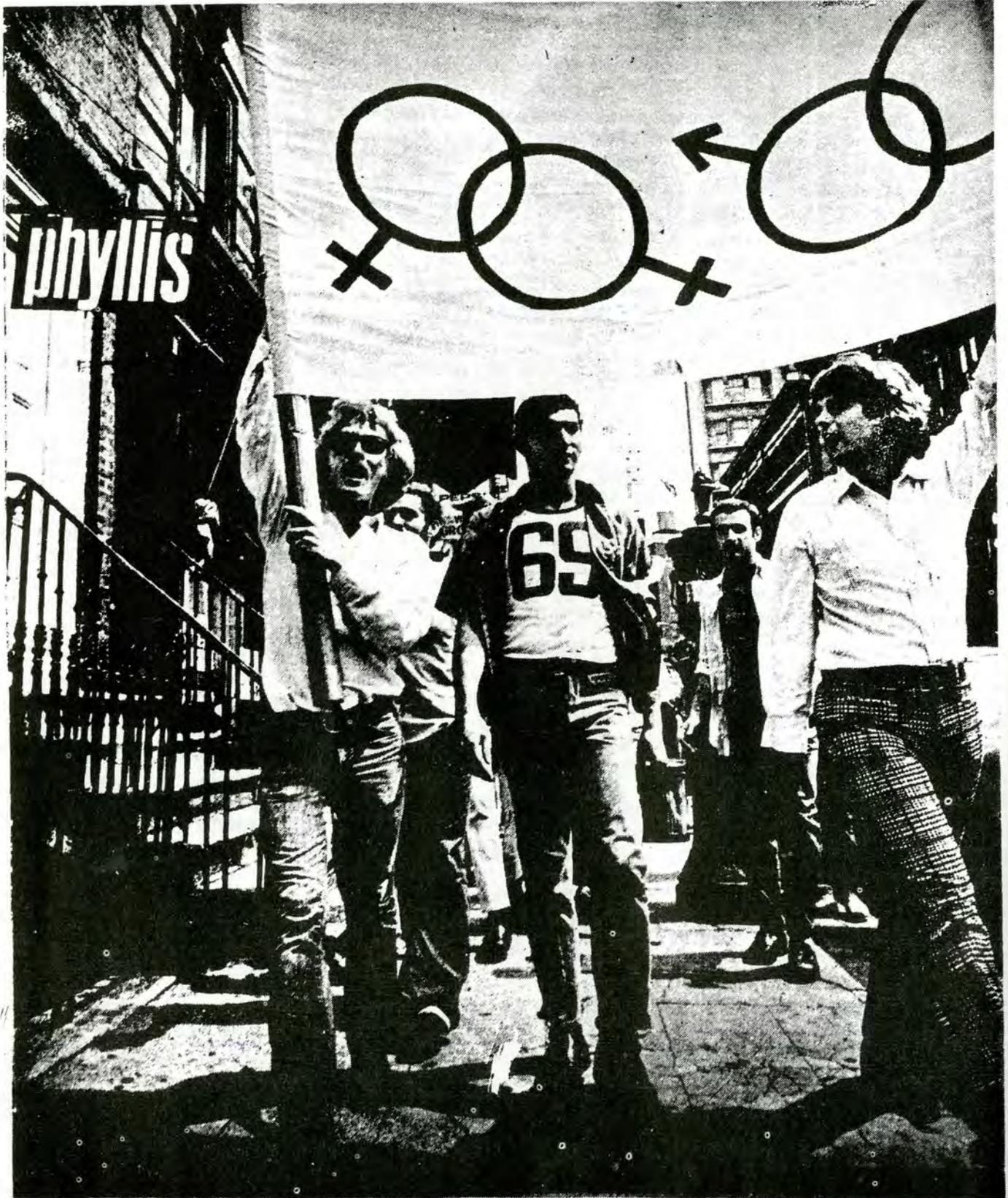
On the beach I thought a monster hermit crab was tapping me on the shoulder. "Gene, hold me. I'm afraid." He put his arm around my back and I felt safe again.

I visited him often after that. We talked openly about the attraction that developed as we sat across the table from each other. He said he felt good where he was living. He felt safe. He didn't want to relate to the past. He didn't want to make it with me.

"You are what you think you are," he said. (You don't have to be homosexual.) "And I know as you come over again and again you will expect more each time."

"Gene, you think I'm hugging you for some sort of return. I'm hugging because I want to hug you, because I need to and it makes me feel good." I hugged him goodnight and felt good as I left though I could see he felt bad."

After I came out, I recognized the sexuality of my love for Gene, recognized my frustration on our double dates, and sleeping in separate beds when I visited him. Four of us went to see "The Leather Boys" in San Francisco, and at his home later Gene insisted it was completely unbelievable that the two heroes would be friends so long and one not know the other was Gay. I said I thought it was quite plausible. "You sleep on the cot tonight," he said.



I read about gay liberation in the old Berkeley Barb, a picket line at States Lines Steamship Company where Gale Whittington had been fired from his job for his picture's appearing in the Barb hugging Leo Laurence in an article on Gay Revolution.

A friend asked me if I wouldn't write an article on gay liberation for the Daily Cal to help a group get started in Berkeley. I went to a Committee for Homosexual Freedom meeting to interview Leo Laurence, sat in on the meeting and joined the picket line at States Lines the following Wednesday.

We formed a small circle on the sidewalk below the skyscrapers. A thousand straight people in suits and nylons passing by, some not looking; young businessmen concertedly talking to each other and avoiding the pickets like we were trees in pots; some disapproving, reading the signs, frowning, looking at us, frowning, disgusted; some friendly, smiling, glad to see us out in front again today.

I laughed at freaked-out uptight attitudes of the people who listened to our chants, read our signs: "Gay is Good" "Black Power, Gay Power, All Power to the People" "We are the people our mothers warned us about" and "Out of your Closets and into the streets."

At first I was a little nervous. My head bowed a little as I internalized the disapproving stares. Then I shouted, shouted louder. "Say it loud. We're gay and we're proud. Say it loud, we're gay and we're proud." What do we want? "Freedom!" When do we want it? "NOW!"

Into the summer with a gay encounter group. We talk about where we're still hung up. Anti-effeminate -- "He's a brother," Morgan reminds us. We're being straight when we separate and stand on our brothers.

That queen is honest. Sea, sky, mountain cliffs, sand, hare krishna, and you're still groveling in your closet.

\* \* \*

Exercise: Write, Shout: "Gay is Good" 500 times across the blackboard  
across the sky,

across the bathroom wall,  
across the men's clothing store  
window

\* \* \*

Weekly meetings of the Committee for Homosexual Freedom, weekly picketing, daily struggling. In any conversation a thought comes up that reveals I'm gay.

\* \* \*

In July [1969] I went to the United States Student Press Association convention to see old friends and give a session on gay liberation. I made out my name tag listing gay liberation fourth after other titles, obscuring my homosexuality: yes, I'm gay, but don't hate me; I'm all those other things that you can love.

I was uptight until the session. "I'm a homosexual. I'm frustrated at radical parties because there's no gay dancing, no one admitting he's gay. I'm frustrated in the same way at this convention." The rest of the conversation among the group of thirty journalists was third person concerning homosexuality, but attractive, tall John Zeh asked me, "Isn't the next step in your liberation, now that you are open about being identified as a homosexual, to say you want to make it with whoever you are attracted to, to kiss guys you feel like kissing." To be on the offensive instead of the defensive. "Yes, it is," I realized, "and I'd better learn to defend myself against people who get violently uptight over it."

I happen in on the organization's national executive board meeting, suggest they drive a riot tank into the middle of the student editors at the next convention to bring them the reality of fascism. I got lost in the bullshit on another topic, feel like taking off my clothes, do. Feel free.

\* \* \*

Back in San Francisco. Moratorium Day, Oct. 15, 1969. I danced around the Capri, danced for hours, whipped my body around, fucking and being fucked and coming. Feeling natural, feeling high, feeling free. "Oh I see you got that natural rhythm." Charles laughs.

"Those guys are gross," I heard a fellow apologize to the girl he was dancing with. A lot of people seem to feel I'm obnoxious. I'm feeling liberated.

"Come and sing a simple song of freedom  
Sing it like you never sung before  
Sing it for me now, sing it anyhow  
We, the people, don't want more war."

I'm singing it tonight as a liberated homosexual. It's Moratorium Day. Why aren't we in arm, brothers? Don't you want to dance? Doesn't everyone want to dance? "It's a solo," a boy in blue workshirt and wire-framed glasses answers.

**Asking** people to dance feels archaic. I'm dancing if I want to be, not looking down at my beer waiting. Dancing with myself, somebody else, everybody. But the floor is mainly closed couples who fall back into their singular positions along the wall at the end of every dance with a polite exchange of thank yous.

Ten to two: lights up. I shout it out. "Lights up. Out of your ghettos into your streets." People turn angrily towards me. "I wish you hadn't said that," says Sean.

SNAP! WHAP! Back into your closets, Queers! Or we'll put you in cages ourselves.

\* \* \*

"Wear your gown all year round!" We screamed and chanted and picketed and danced in a chorus line in Market Street in protest of the Beaux Arts drag queen ball. Why only once a year? Why only on Hallowe'en? Why not whenever you want to do it? The streets belong to the people, we sang. I came in drag. I didn't have to shave my beard or my legs: I looked very sexy. At one point, however, the whole acting troupe disappeared into Fosters while I was eating an orange and talking to a spectator. When I looked around I was alone -- I became paranoid of being beaten up on my way home.



The bars are havens for the until-that-day crowd.

Standing in the Stud watching 500 men, lots of them stoned, squeeze together, touching to get by each other, holding hands, hugging each other, groping each other, opening up in the closet. Limits: No dancing except in the back, no dancing close, no kissing. The bar is owned by a gay commune who work together to keep it open. Jim, one of the partners, pulls Neil and me apart. "If you want to do that, go home and do it." Your kiss is obscene! Alcoholic Beverage Control is hassling you and you're hurting me.

Outside on the street the men from the bar separate, no touching, they walk off passing as straight men. The bedroom is a closet, the bar is a closet, the closet a jail cell. You're let out if you can go straight, act straight and don't get caught. Let's bust out of here. The Tenderloin queen stands in the middle of the street shouting at the cars going by. Why don't we all do it in the road?

\* \* \*

Gay Liberation held an open party across the street from the Berkeley campus -- "Come Together" -- to celebrate our second coming and the opening of our office -- a free space. This was the first open and mass homosexual get-together in Berkeley's history. Womb and the Crabs played for free. Some 500 people came out of their closets to dance and sing and kiss. Gay Liberation Theatre performed and Don Burton, a deep blue silk sheathe over his naked body, sang some gay civil rights type songs he had written. We sang one song together and I felt a brotherhood like never before.

In our faces was the same feeling -- we have faced the same battles, the same mothers and fathers, administrators and friends.

\* \* \*

Sitting around the new gay liberation office at Bancroft and Dana across the street from campus while the telephone man installs the phone. People walk by, see the sign in the window, come in.

Paul: "I'm sick and tired of having to go to Harmon Gym restroom to get a trick. But nothing else is happening."

Nan: "I'm graduating from Berkeley this year. I want to meet other people here like me."

Mike: "I've been at Berkeley since 1962."

Me: "I've been here since 1963."

London: "Where have you been all these years?"

Me: "I've been hiding."

Telephone man answering the new ring: "Gay liberation, honey."

We are everywhere. How can we hide from each other?

# REVOLUTIONARY LOVE

AN INTRODUCTION TO GAY LIBERATION

By Guy Nassberg

Homosexuals are an oppressed minority in American society. America has forced us -- I speak particularly of male homosexuals, because I am one -- into urban ghettos, almost the only place where we can find one another, and into the few jobs and professions where we can get by. We meet in dimly-lit dehumanizing gay bars; at private parties; or on the streets, where we have been beaten and murdered, and arrested by plainclothes pigs who entrap us. Often, we never meet, struggling with the "burden" of our homosexuality in isolated despair, committing suicide or dying as prisoners in mental hospitals. If we do come out to each other, most of us are compelled to lead double lives, at the cost of loss of jobs, housing, and contact with a vast portion of the human race.

We hide and torment ourselves because this society says we are "sick," and to varying degrees we believe it. America allows us to live only one way, in penance and shame for our "unnatural" natures. Accepting in one way or another what America says about us, we feel powerless to fight, and become slaves of what straight society calls our unchangeable "human nature."

The Gay Liberation Front (GLF) has been formed all across the country to fight the enslaving lies and myths which America hopes to perpetuate. We are following the example of the Third World and Women's Liberation movements in rejecting what we are told we must be, and fighting for an alternative to this oppressive society. We know that we are not sick. Beyond all the Freudian rot about our mothers and fathers, and the phony masculine myths about our inadequacies, lies something that bullshit theories can't explain away: we like making love with people of the same sex. We feel good and whole making love. We want to remain homosexual.

Homosexuality is the ability to relate sexually and spiritually to someone of the same sex. Human beings need to unite with other human beings, and homosexuals unite with people who have the same genitals. That's a great thing, and we who are homosexual, and groove on each other, have nothing to hide or escape.

People who are petrified of us (especially men), and who put us down, are off the wall. The only thing that is wrong with us is that America won't let us feel right in doing what we must do. America makes homosexuality our problem, and its problem, when homosexuality could be the basis of our pleasure and fulfillment. It is time for us to straighten out straight society.

All human relationships are a mess in America. What else can you expect in a capitalist system? America has everyone competing with each other, put-

ting everybody else down. Competition and its rewards (money, things, objects, property, a rich husband or wife, lots of alimony) are the economic basis of this society, and how people get the necessities of life (economics) determines in the end the quality of their lives, and how they will relate to each other. People can't relate very well when they are taught to view every person they meet as a potential competitive threat.

One consequence of capitalism in America is the rigid enforcement of male supremacy. Men are supposed to be strong and dominant, and women weak and passive. The male heterosexual-supremacist model of human relationships, combined with the throat-slashing marketplace of capitalism, reduces us all to objects, to things, with men on top, and women on bottom. You can't have a decent and whole relationship with another person when it's based on keeping one of the people down.

Because this system makes most people powerless (only a few men make the decisions that fundamentally determine the lives of most of the people on this earth), we feel threatened, and cling to the idea that the only way we can retain some control over our lives is by following the basic sexual roles of society. Men get their power by controlling women -- and women their worth by making themselves appealing and subservient to men. The system by which men oppress women, which is key to much of the economic and social slavery in the world today, is called sexism.

Homosexuality, especially proud and bold homosexuality, threatens all the rigidly formulated heterosexual-supremacist, male-chauvinist (= sexist) nonsense that goes by the name of love. Homosexuality scares straight men because they think that to be homosexual means to be feminine, on the bottom, passive, not in command. They believe that to actively engage in homosexual acts means the loss of all their power as the oppressor sex -- the loss of their manhood. A homosexual, in their world, is incomplete, a traitor to his sex and to himself, only half a man.

Many of us in GLF are traitors to our sex, and to this sexist society. We reject "manhood," "masculinity," and all that. Rather than run from the "feminine" qualities we discover within us (and within all men), we are beginning to embrace them, and search for new ways to express our "masculine" and "feminine" natures without getting into role playing. Some of us wear makeup, dress in drag, or get our sex changed -- the ultimate surrender of male privilege! Our means differ, but together we are shedding the levis and leather jackets that secured us in our closets, and with them, our fear of being recognized as "faggots."

We're no longer afraid to tell people we get fucked in the ass, because we understand that having our bodies penetrated can be free of the violation and exploitation which straight men practice on women. We experience fucking for what it is -- a fantastic way to give and receive pleasure. What repels straight men the most -- our affirmation of love for ourselves and other men -- has become our revolutionary identity.

Homosexuality, like women's liberation, allows us to reject all the dehumanizing masculine/feminine roles this society forces on people, and to build a new way of relating to each other as equal human beings. It allows us to examine, and to reject, the whole nuclear family structure, which locks woman to man, and children to both, in a box that limits human growth, and perpetuates the authoritarian, male-dominated model of human relationships. Homosexual liberation forms the basis for a new way of relating to people, where sex is the natural outcome of feelings you have for another person.

Homosexuals will no longer tolerate the miserable trip that America puts us on. We demand the right to stand tall as free human beings. The Gay Liberation Front unites homosexuals to fight for a free society, where love between people can be a reality. And we join together with all oppressed peoples in the struggle against this materialist, racist, sexist, imperialist country, because we know that we can be free only when all people are free.

Our first task is to get ourselves together. We are going to have to spend a lot of time talking openly to each other about our lives, our doubts, our fears, and our encounters with straight-walled fronts called people. We are going to have to come out, to confront, then rip apart the anti-homosexual notions that even our best friends hold against us.

Our strength will come through unity, and through the new relationships we will build with each other. Coming together, we will develop the sense of brotherhood and sisterhood that will give us strength so we can emerge from the closets of our oppression. Moving inward, our focus will always be on the goal of moving outward.

Outward to what? In the end we are going to have to take the space that is necessary for our survival. This society gives nothing to people who won't pay the price of self-hatred and life-destroying competitiveness. And we will not pay the price, or play the games of straight society. What America will not grant us, we are going to have to take for ourselves.

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## ON SEX ROLES

By A.N. Diaman

Total liberation demands the re-evaluation of all existing institutions in our society. What may have served us in another time and place may very well oppress us now. The validity of any institution is determined by whether it truly serves our human needs in a meaningful and fully satisfying way.

Marriage and the nuclear family are two of the most heavily defended institutions in American society. But the rising divorce rate alone would suggest there is something drastically wrong here. Then there is the bearing and raising of children within these traditional institutions, a matter which seems poorly managed. If one can judge by the myriad problems adults trace back to their childhood.

At first glance it would seem that these are things which only concern heterosexuals, but most of us are born into families, regardless of our sexual orientation, and are taught the dubious values of these institutions. Many gay people even use them as models

for their own relationships, either advocating or proclaiming gay marriages. We should take every opportunity to develop something better.

Both straights and gays perpetuate the myth that heterosexuals have long and happy relationships which homosexuals can never achieve. Straight couples often hang together only because it's easier than breaking up, so this can hardly be considered a positive relationship. I personally don't know anyone on either side who is involved in a really beautiful, creative, lasting monogamous relationship.

The search for the one perfect mate re-enforces our feelings of alienation and keeps us apart from others. People merely bound together by legal and economic pressures, unable to relate to each other at a deeper level as fully realized human beings, begin to hate themselves and each other because of the frustration which follows the failure to satisfy all their mutual needs. They expect too much from a narrow

world of two.

In *Women In Love*, D. H. Lawrence speaks of his need to have an intimate non-sexual relationship with a man as well as an intimate sexual relationship with a woman. Most heterosexual men are afraid to consider that possibility because of the homosexual overtones, even though sex is a natural expression of love between people who are close to each other in other ways.

The problems in relating positively to ourselves and those around us begin with the parent-child relationship. Here we develop concepts of love which form the basis of sexual expression. Over the years, the repetition of early behavior creates a pattern that becomes difficult to change in later life.

Sexual roles are laid down early in life, beginning at birth with the quaint custom of color coding the newly born: blue for little boys and pink for little girls. Children are encouraged to play with the proper toys of their sex,

the start of sexist indoctrination. In many families, girls are trained to help their mothers in the kitchen and boys trained to help their fathers with whatever is considered man's work.

Parents insist on pushing their children in certain areas they consider important to them, instead of allowing the children to explore their own personal interests. Fathers insist that their sons take an interest in sports. Mothers coax their daughters into dancing lessons or home economics. The pressures to conform are very strong and undue emphasis is put on sexual identity. What results is overcompensation by some children and increased alienation of others.

The baseball bat becomes a phallic symbol. Any boy who fails to take it up is called a sissy. Any girl who wants to join the game is called a tomboy. Already the insults have begun!

Most people in our society mistakenly consider these practices necessary to encourage proper sexual orientation; but the fact is that there is no such thing as proper sexual orientation. Men and women are equal. Heterosexuals and homosexuals are equal. Masculinity and femininity are artificial categories, as are heterosexuality and homosexuality, exaggerations of biological differences. The complete person is one who can experience the full range of his/her being.

I find that when I am with another

man or a group of men, whether we are relating socially or sexually, what I most often experience is that part of my psyche which society labels masculine. The physical presence of a man affirms my own maleness. When I am with a woman or a group of women, I usually experience that part of my psyche which is feminine.

As I write this, I begin to think, wow, what am I saying? What does this mean? The first thing that comes to my head is sex changes. If I had a woman's body, society would consider me a heterosexual. I shudder at the thought. I like the body I have. Then I remember something else. That it is the masculinity of women and the femininity of men which makes heterosexuality at all possible. I find it almost impossible to relate to super-feminine and supermasculine people of either sex.

Sexism is not unique to heterosexuals, but pervades homosexuality as well. The labels might differ but it is the same limiting, unequal situation, as long as roles are rigidly defined, as long as one person is considered superior to another. For straights it is male-female, master-mistress. For gays it is aggressive-passive, butch-femme. And the extreme, in either case, is sadist-masochist. Human beings become objectified, are treated as property, as if one person could own another.

I believe in equality all along the line, including sexual equality. Even in bed. Especially in bed! This does not mean that two people must do exactly the same thing, in the same way, at all times. What it does mean is that whatever is done is agreeable to both people, is pleasurable for both people, and that whatever one person does may be done by the other if he/she wishes. That no person is treated merely as a sexual object but as a human being. This involves respect for others as well as ourselves. Love for ourselves as well as others.

If marriage and the family, as we know it, are unable to meet the demands put upon them by our changing consciousness, then these institutions will have to be abandoned. One viable alternative is the living collective. Liberated men and women, straights and gays, can come together to explore revolutionary concepts of life that will better serve their needs for companionship, love, sex, all that is humanizing. Adults and children can develop most fully without the liabilities of hierarchy and roles. Cooperation can replace competition. All people will be able to live a full life within a caring community.

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The article by Guy Nassberg is a revised version of an article originally published in View From The Bottom, an underground paper in New Haven, Conn. A.N. Diaman's article is reprinted from Zygote. Both authors are active in New York's GLF.



# THE FLAMING FAGGOTS

(Note: About half-a-dozen men active in the gay liberation movement went to Cuba in the fall of 1970 in the third contingent of the Venceremos Brigade -- the first to participate as a group of open homosexuals in the brigade. The participation of gay people in the brigade -- which has some 420 members in all -- was not assured without a struggle. The following poem was written in the midst of this struggle. The poem is the product of a collective effort by "The Flaming Faggots," a revolutionary male homosexual collective based in New York City's Lower East Side.)

"So you're for the revolution,"  
    somebody always seems to say,  
    rubbing his white male macho hands.  
"Well, then, it's time to get serious, you know.  
    It had to come to this --  
    it's going on all over the globe,"  
--as if I didn't know  
    the whole third world is going up in flames  
    and unless they win, the species is in danger,  
    imperialism, the ecocidal enemy, in fact,  
    of all life everywhere

OK, if that's what you mean, right on, etcetera,  
    I say,  
but what's the catch?

"Nothing, except that, of course,  
    to be on our side, on the side of the people,  
    you'll certainly be willing to give up  
    certain little quirks  
    that hinder all of us getting down  
    to maximum work  
    in the minimum of time left to us."

Quirks?

"Well, like your homosexuality, like wearing  
    your hair too long, like acting -- well, just  
    generally being effeminate, urmanly;  
    that gets the people uptight as much as  
    women wanting to be engineers or something.  
We don't have time for games."

Sorry to report this typically tiresome stereotype  
of a thousand conversations  
but it's exactly here that I say  
Absolutely not!  
and he says, "Utopian faker,  
faggot, fairy, fuck off,"  
and I do.

Because my revolution is to the left of his,  
because his would preserve the old Prison of Gender  
which brutalizes  
millions of people, its inmates, daily  
because he would actually jail me for being queer  
as soon as he was in power;  
and therefore it had better not be him who wins,  
my comrades, it had better be all of us  
who refuse to settle for  
enslavement as the price of freedom,  
who will fight and die -- and win --  
for exactly what we are and want  
and have a right to  
and nothing less:  
a revolution total and permanent and never-ending.

To say it one last time, wiping out the kinds of  
human want the rich white straight man  
has afflicted the world with  
will be easy once we win  
the worldwide war against his madness  
and are free  
to begin the work of revolution itself.  
Who among us wouldn't volunteer for that?  
who wouldn't put in whatever hours are needed  
in whatever free fields and factories  
until we get the whole species  
on a non-crisis basis, everyone having  
enough to eat, enough of everything.

But with all of our liberated machines and  
imaginings, that might require everyone  
in the world -- a statistical fact --  
to "work" several whole  
hours a week. Gladly, gladly --  
because everything would belong  
to us -- and no one  
could fire us or starve us  
or jail us or anything.  
But my revolution is beyond that.

Mine catches glimpses of what we could be  
when there is no more religion or family or  
male domination  
or money or property or mine or yours or  
forced obedience

when women are free  
not only to shape their own lives  
but to realize a vision of liberation  
that will shape the lives of all of us  
when men are able  
to hug and kiss babies not for show,  
but able to care for them in every sense  
and for each other  
when I'm no longer called queer  
for wishing my father had held me  
with a love like that,  
for loving still any rare stray  
glimmer of tenderness in a man,  
for wanting to touch that transmutation  
in the flesh, but only to share,  
not to hoard, such a miracle  
when I no longer have to suspect myself of being  
resistant to struggle  
for wanting the collective help  
of my brothers  
in fighting my own male supremacy,  
for wanting to embrace in real arms  
all comrades brave enough  
to risk with me  
the righting of old old wrongs,  
no more the victimizer and victim,  
leader and led,  
lover and loved one.

Listen! No matter how powerless we are as yet,  
both our pain and our demands  
give us every right to face any  
roundtrip U.S. cane-cutter who tells us  
we don't know what it's like  
to be oppressed. He's really talking about  
his own white butch self, marking himself  
as a collaborator in our oppression, signer  
of the current Gender Nonaggression Pact  
with the likes of David Rockefeller.

Machismo is fascism, as the sisters  
of the Young Lords Party

--All the more reason why we have to get ready.  
The enemy thinks that our demands aren't  
important, that we won't fight for them  
By Any Means Necessary,  
that we will go on being that meek and unarmed  
people who "are slaves or are subject  
to slavery at any given moment."

We'd better make The Man understand  
right now

how wrong he is.

We're fighting a total fight  
in which it remains to be seen  
whether he can ever be  
part of the solution  
in any revolutionary future.

Because we're the majority -- and we're rising up,  
we're on the move:  
we're all those people  
who can't and won't and mustn't  
fit into his pattern  
of white male sado-dominance  
though we have so far been  
psychically lobotomized by him,  
gang-raped in prison and the army,  
fired from jobs or refused them, blackmailed,  
extorted, jeered at, beaten up, spit on,  
and finding no relief in alcoholism, addiction,  
self-mutilation, delusions of grandeur,  
no relief in his hireling psychiatrists  
who get rich telling us it's all personal,  
not political -- our fault, not his --  
our hang-up, our guilt, our shame  
--no wonder we are finally driven to suicide  
when we see no way out of his lies.

When witches were burned in the middle ages,  
the Inquisitors ordered the good burghers  
(all of them men, of course)  
to scour the dungeons for jailed queers,  
drag them out and tie them together in bundles,  
mix them in with the bundles of wood  
at the feet of the woman,  
and set them on fire  
to kindle a flame  
foul enough for a witch to burn in.

The sticks of wood in bundles like that  
were called faggots  
and that's what they called the queers, too,  
and call us still,  
meaning our extinction, our complete extermination,  
androcide and gynecide their one response to  
any heretical blasphemy against  
a god-given manliness.

Isn't it time we said yes,  
yes to faggot,  
proud to reclaim our martyrs  
-- who else will have them, or feel their pain  
but we brother-lovers, we flaming faggots who  
embrace the coal of final rebellion,  
women already ablaze,  
we catching fire from them this time,  
a whole planet groaning with relief  
as the bonds of  
an expiring masculinity  
glow like wicks, then break,  
slipping from all our backs.

In that holocaust, I will risk my whole self  
and body  
even should I perish.

My melting flesh --

My screams are only  
the death of everything they stand for.  
My pain short-circuits so quickly  
I can't believe it.  
My hand is a trellis of fire.  
I can do it. It's easier than I thought.  
The crisp odor has stopped.  
It's they who are fading away,  
perishing, our liberation their execution.  
My screams are bullets,  
blood stuttering through their skin.  
I can't hear my own words any more  
except that I think we must all  
still be chanting, demanding, welcoming

freedom freedom freedom



(Note: "The Flaming Faggots" originally appeared in Rat and Liberation News Service. "Phoenix of New Youth" was published in Come Out! "Bring the Beautiful Boys Home" is re-printed from Gay Flames.)

# PHOENIX OF NEW YOUTH

By Bob Bland

I'm twenty-three now  
But I won't be for long  
Day by Day, I'm growing older  
In a land where youth is a cult

AmeriKKKa  
land of the free  
home of the brave

And I am gay  
where age is feared  
and youth is worshipped

So  
I must try to know my youth  
and my aging

What they mean now  
And what they will become

AFTER  
THE  
REVOLUTION

I see the older men  
On Christopher Street  
and I wonder  
I've heard they search for youth  
and will pay

Does your age scare you?  
do you dye your hair?  
do you dress "young"?  
why?

We live in a dying nation  
an empire aging in his own shit  
which transmits his fear  
of age  
to all his citizens

Nations young do not have power  
or money  
and are prostituted  
by the powerful rich

But the rich grow old and senile  
and the prostitutes arise

Vietnam, the thin and short  
whose history is long  
but who is now young  
beats upon AmeriKKKa's door

While inside  
the black houseboy  
comes to fight him too  
With his cousins  
Zambia, Lesotho, Rwanda  
(whose names he never knew  
but whose sperm replenished  
his aging fattening arteries),  
conspire against him

Cuba, whom he once kept  
organizes all the other  
Latin boys

Yes  
AmeriKKKa  
Fascist Babylon  
NorteamerikKKa

Will Die

And

In his dying  
will be his birth  
The Phoenix of new youth  
risen from the ashes  
of age

And

In his deathbirth  
will be yours and mine  
As the Spirit of Youth  
spreads through all the people

I am young and do not wish to  
Grow Old -- here/now

I look to China  
older than any  
older than Rome  
older than Greece  
Yet now younger  
I look at the pictures of her aged  
men and women  
And I see the faces of young lovers

Eternal Youth?  
Perpetual Revolution!  
They are one.

We search for the first  
I to stay  
And you to return

Our search ends in  
picking up the gun  
and aiding those who do

It may be public  
or it may be hiding  
(we gays are good at that)

WE CAN BE TOGETHER



(Note: The following is a working paper prepared by Chicago Gay Liberation for the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention plenary session, held in Philadelphia, September 1970.)

## A. INTRODUCTION.

Although we recognize that homosexuals have been oppressed in all societies it is the struggle against that oppression in the context of American imperialism that faces us. In addition to the usual forms of oppression, we, as homosexuals, are forced to hide our identities in order to keep our jobs and avoid being social outcasts -- in order to "make it" in straight Amerika. As Gay Liberation we now take the position that, because of the rampant oppression we see -- of black, third world people, women, workers -- in addition to our own; because of the corrupt values, because of the injustices, we no longer want to "make it" in Amerika. For to make it is to accept the oppression of others (in addition to our own). We are joining the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention and reject what American imperialism has to offer us. Rather we will fight for our liberation and we will get it by any means necessary.

Our particular struggle is for sexual self-determination, the abolition of sex-role stereotypes and the human right to the use of one's own body without interference from the legal and social institutions of the state. Many of us have understood that our struggle cannot succeed without a fundamental change in society which will put the source of power (means of production) in the hands of the people who at present have nothing. Those now in power will oppose this change by violent repression, which in fact is already in motion. Not all of our sisters and brothers in Gay Liberation share this view, or may feel that personal solutions might work. But as our struggle grows it will be made clear by the changing objective conditions that our liberation is inextricably bound to the liberation of all oppressed people.

This position paper does not intend to speak for the Black caucus or Women's caucus of Chicago Gay Liberation; we recognize that Black homosexuals and female homosexuals live with doubly or triply oppressed conditions. But since anti-homosexual prejudice is rampant throughout society homosexuals can be treated as outcasts even within an already oppressed group. Therefore this paper should speak in a general way for homosexuals as homosexuals.

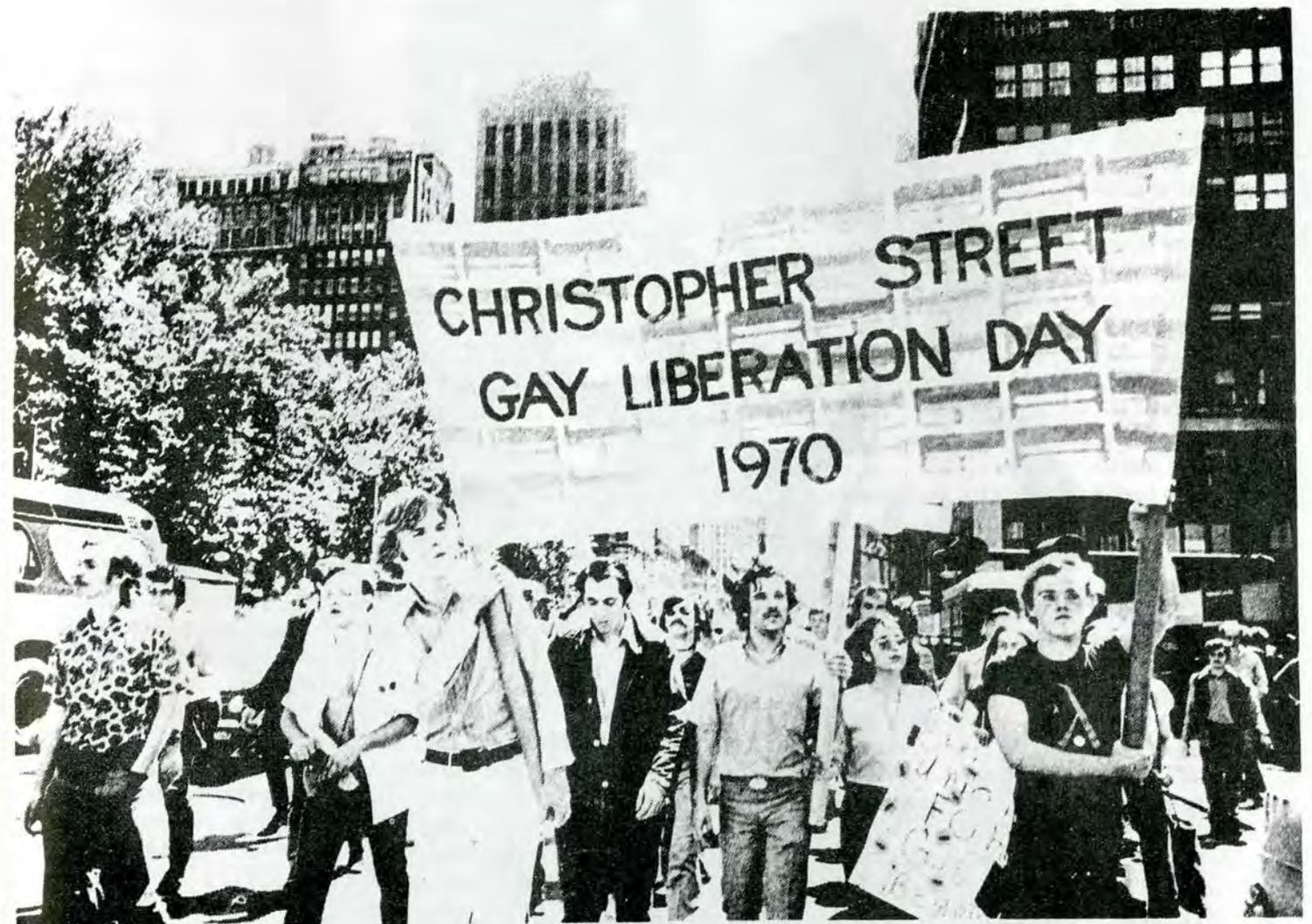
## B. GRIEVANCES COMMON TO ALL HOMOSEXUALS.

### 1. Employment and other economic factors.

a. Hiring: In addition to the particular discrimination against black, female and poor homosexuals, we are at a disadvantage because of discriminatory hiring practices -- unless, of course, we "pass." There is a tracking system which determines the positions open to homosexuals where we are able to work in the company of other homosexuals. We often take these jobs even though we may not like them and the pay may be low, just so we won't have to worry about being found out. Our women may become physical education teachers and nurses; our men may become beauticians or ribbon clerks for those reasons. There is nothing wrong with those jobs, but the choice should be based on interest and ability. There are no "gay jobs"; there are no "women's jobs." For known homosexuals there is no employment at all except in a few fields, e.g., theater, music, etc., which require special talents.

# WORKING PAPER:

## THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION



b. Firing: Since firing of known homosexuals is notorious, most of us hold jobs which would be closed to us if we didn't "pass." We do so at a tremendous and cruel personal cost, for we must hide what, in our hearts, we know to be important and beautiful -- our sexuality. Forced to wear a heterosexual mask, we are brainwashed (without even knowing it) into believing that our sex is shameful and unnatural -- this belief is usually expressed as a tendency toward compulsive promiscuity, sexual objectification of each other, and loneliness.

c. Income: The jobs into which we are tracked are often low-paying and certainly alienating. And the higher federal income taxation of "single" people; that is, those whose relationships are not recognized as legal, discriminates against us economically.

## 2. Political.

a. Electoral politics: As homosexuals we have no representation in the government, and never have had. Third world and female homosexuals are especially unrepresented but even the white male as a homosexual has no voice. Presently there are politicians in New York and California who are trying to attract the "gay vote." But they are not homosexual and cannot represent our needs and interests. Furthermore, their political parties are corrupted by racism, sexism (male chauvi-



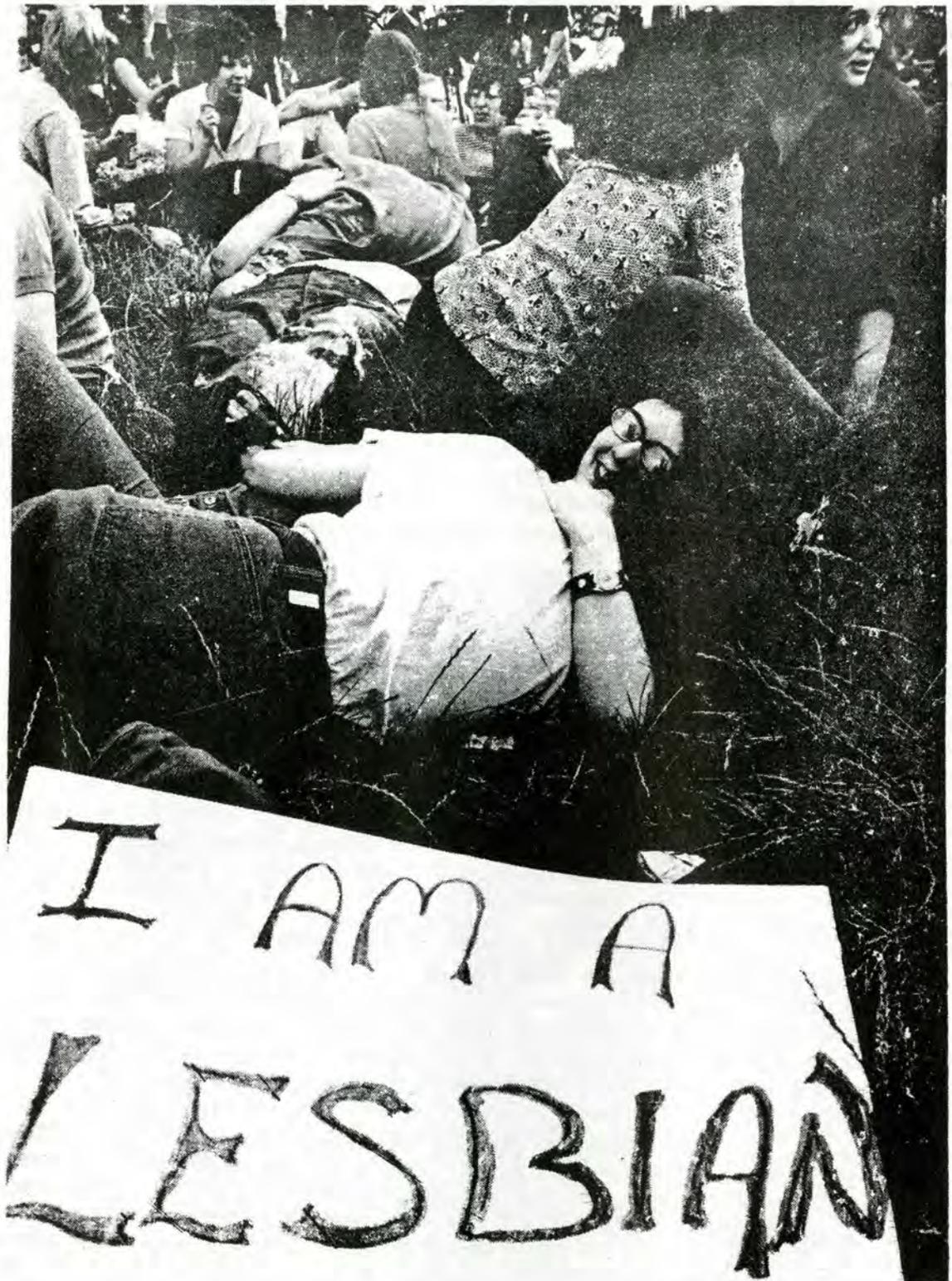
nism) and anti-homosexual prejudice and are tied economically to those who are responsible, ultimately, for our continued oppression. How can these politicians be on our side, in practice? We have never had an admitted homosexual in public office and our heterosexual "representatives" have never done anything for us although we have worked in their campaigns and given them our votes. But even if we could find spokesmen and women, they would be ineffective as part of a social system that is based on oppression anyway.

b. The "movement": As we in Gay Liberation look around us to find out who are our friends and potential allies, we see that the Black Panther Party personified by its Supreme Commander Huey P. Newton is the first national organization to give us such warm, public support, as well as official recognition. For years, many of us have worked in radical organizations always hiding our identities, always working in the struggles of others. Some so-called "Marxist" organizations do not allow homosexual membership. This has been very oppressive to us and has kept many of us from radicalization who were potential radicals. These groups and individuals treat us as badly as does their supposed enemy, the "ruling class" that they are always talking about. In abusing homosexuals they show they cannot tell the difference between their friends and their enemies and are probably unable to make principles political alliances. Failing to recognize our grievances as legitimate, these "revolutionaries" and "radicals" are not only inhumane but also counter-revolutionary. We will no longer work within such groups.

### 3. Social institutions.

a. The law and the state: Our most immediate oppressors are the pigs. We are beaten, entrapped, enticed, raided, taunted, arrested and jailed. In jail we are jeered at, gang-raped, beaten and killed, with full encouragement and participation by the pigs. Every homosexual lives in fear of the pigs except that we are beginning to fight back! The reasons are not that the pigs are just prejudiced (which they are) or that they "over-react." They are given silent approval by the power structure for their violence against us. Since our lives are defined as illegal, immoral, and unnatural, there is no reason why the pigs shouldn't harass us -- and they are never punished for it. The law is against us, but changing laws makes no difference. That must be crystal clear; any homosexual from Chicago, where homosexuality is legal, will tell you that changing the law makes no difference. The pigs must be fought, but we must see beyond them to ultimate sources of power -- an elite of super-rich, white males who control production and therefore the prevailing ideology. Their representatives may try to tempt us with reforms, "progress," divide us by class and skin privileges, buy us off with a piece of the pie or male supremacy because we have just begun to join the revolutionary and progressive people. But, common sense tells us that as long as the power rests in the hands of a few and not with the people -- both straight and gay -- that power can be used to oppress homosexuals.

b. Housing -- the homosexual ghetto: Homosexuals are frequently denied housing, much more so if they are also female or black. We avoid the anti-homosexual discrimination by "passing." But life for homosexuals is so psychologically oppressive in a heterosexual neighborhood that we tend to live in homosexual neighborhoods which take on ghetto-like characteristics. These conditions should not be confused with the immiseration and oppression in the black, brown and poor white ghettos, but there are some similarities. No sooner is it established that a neighborhood is "gay" than rents and real estate prices rise. Those that exploit us as consumers know that we will pay through the nose even when we aren't well off, for the psychological comfort of living among "our own kind." Most of us probably live outside of these communities but ghetto institutions are still part of our lives. We neither control the institutions which we use, nor own them. These bars, shops, movie-houses, etc., are owned by businessmen who serve their



own interests or the mafia's but do not serve us at all. The prices are notoriously high, and the practices are often racist, sexist and anti-working class. This materially oppresses female, black, and poor homosexuals and also reinforces the false consciousness (racism, sexism, class-chauvinism) which divides us as a group and, in the end, oppresses us all.

c. Education: We have no stake in education which is racist, male-chauvinist, anti-working class and anti-homosexual. The schools are not people's schools and therefore do not serve the people. They certainly do not serve us as homosexuals, teach ideology that is destructive to us and helps to keep us social outcasts. What child would have disdain for homosexuals? They have to be taught that. There are no positive educational programs on homosexuality which would alleviate anti-homosexual prejudice and alleviate our own self-hate which comes when we discover what we are. The subject is avoided in the schools, and is usually assumed to be taboo and dirty by the students. It is wrong to mislead the people this way and perpetuates attitudes which harm us. The only models for love and sexuality according to our "educators" are heterosexual ones in the context of state-sanctioned monogamous white relationships which oppress women. Homosexual authors are usually ignored especially if they write about their homosexuality, like James Baldwin. Others, like Walt Whitman or Gertrude Stein, are taught but never as homosexual writers. Like blacks and women we are taught, by omission, that we have no heroes and heroines and certainly no role-models.

d. Medical care: The branch of medicine we are most concerned with is psychiatry. The American medical profession is irrelevant to the needs of oppressed people, and psychiatrists are clearly hostile to homosexuality. They (not Freud) have created and spread the ideology that we are sick, neurotic, paranoid and other bullshit. Yet they never hesitate in taking money from brothers and sisters who are fed up with having to live in such a sick society, and who could use some honest advice. Because psychiatrists emphasize "adjustment" and conformity rather than liberation, because they tell us to become good citizens rather than good revolutionaries, because they favor individual solutions rather than social change, we recognize that they are not the helpers of homosexuals or any oppressed people, but serve our oppressors.

4. Culture. Although we have certainly contributed to this country's cultural life we, as a group, have been robbed of our culture. The culture of any period is defined by a ruling elite; and the rulers of Amerika have defined homosexuals as outcasts. The culture available to us is clearly heterosexual and alienating to us. Athletics are based upon men competing with each other, one winning at the other's expense; while homosexual men relate by loving each other, not by competition. In movies or on TV women are always shown as objects of the love (?) of men, but homosexual women love each other; and the standards of female beauty, defined by society as what men want is irrelevant to lesbians. Art, books, plays don't relate to homosexuality except in trying to say how bad it is. As individuals we are prevented from cultural expression, for sexuality cannot be suppressed without suppression of personality at the same time. And our sexuality must be suppressed because of the legal, economic and social penalties for it. We see culture not as the output of a few great men and women, but as a possession of all people and as activities (whether sports, hobbies or arts) which all people can participate in. In spite of the restrictions, homosexuals have, in fact, become artists, athletes, writers, but the masses of homosexuals have had no benefit from this fact. We have had to depend on the ruling elites who have taken over our talents and used them for their own profit, like the Kennedys who decorated their court with Gore Vidal. This is an expropriation of our cultural resources. We refuse to entertain them any longer with "camp" for their profit.



5. Class status and homosexuality. Homosexuals from the proletariat (whether working class or lumpen) lead a particularly prison-like, straight-jacketed existence. Because of their particular relationship (actual or potential) to production, the custom is to marry at a young age. It is not surprising that white working-class communities are among the most up-tight about homosexuals due to the role of the family structure in the capitalist mode of production. Homosexuals from these communities often marry and have children before discovering their homosexuality. All the doors that can be opened by middle-class privilege are closed. The women cannot afford to follow their homosexual preference; they are tied economically to men due to the low salaries and restricted job opportunities open to women in general. The men cannot afford divorce, support of their family and the expense of setting up a new life as a homosexual. Nor can they afford the notoriously high legal fees used to pay off the pigs, which keep middle-class and wealthy homosexuals out of jail.

#### 6. Sexual capitalism.

a. Social attitudes: The most frequently described grievance is the prejudice most homosexuals find in heterosexuals. Anti-homosexual feeling among the masses of Americans cannot be our ultimate problem; in fact straight people too are harmed by rigid, stereotyped ideas about sex and sex-roles. These ideas can only persist because of the institutions which support them: news media, entertainment media, schools, medical establishment, etc. These institutions are not owned by the people and only a small minority profit from them. Certainly the masses of American people receive no long-range benefits from their contempt for homosexuals.

b. Psychological attitudes: Possibly the most devastating aspect of these attitudes is that we learn them ourselves during our "formative years" and are therefore filled with self-contempt when we become homosexual. In American society, we are taught that people are supposed to get what they deserve rather than what they need. It is a "meritocracy" not a democracy. Translated into sexual life we see how this defeats us. Through advertising and the entertainment media, artificial standards of beauty are learned and internalized. Youth, white Aryan aggressive "masculinity" and submissive "femininity" are constantly stressed. We begin to act as though only certain "types" who approach these phony standards deserve our love and sexual attention and we become more and more unresponsive to people's needs for love and sex. We respond to what "turns us on" and we have learned to be "turned on" by

merit and not by other's needs. Taking on as individuals the ethic of the capitalist system which despises the needs of the people, especially the poor and oppressed, we act against our own long-run interests. Those who do not approach the stereotypes because they may be older, homely, physically deformed, etc., may be among the most miserable and lonely people in society. And we do not even have the family structure which helps most people to help these lonely persons forget how unhappy they are.



LONDON GOLF

# CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUPS

[This article is a collective effort by a New York consciousness-raising group composed of nine GLF men. We have adopted the process of consciousness-raising from the Women's Liberation Movement.]

New York Gay Liberation Front's first attempts at coming together have been the large Sunday night meetings, which after a year produced few decisions and no policy. The number of people at these meetings (from 50 - 150) made decisions impossible; discussions became arguments and, often, destructive personal attacks. Since a good part of the attendance varied from week to week, the past development of issues had to be relived each time they came up, retarding policy-making. In contradiction to GLF's basic structural principle of having no leaders, the defacto leaders were those men who spoke best in large groups. It was a replay of the competitive, hierarchical structure we wished to change: a few wielded power and the rest were dominated. This way of doing things brought out the "MAN" in gay men. But most of the women left this "male trip" GLF in disgust after half a year. Thus the large Sunday night group proved ineffectual and oppressive.

In our consciousness raising group, we have been trying to step outside the straight man's myths and institutions, to suspend the limited ways we deal with each other, and experiment with new ways of relating. Everyone's feelings are considered in consciousness-raising, and instead of shouting each other down, consensus, a solution that is to each person's interest, can be reached. If people are silent, they are asked to contribute. This is part of the collective process. We as men are struggling with our eagerness to dominate and ego-trip by being aware of the needs of others in the group, and struggling with our tendency to intellectualize by speaking from our experience. We are also learning what has been forbidden us - to relate to one another with respect and love. CR provides a format in which this potential can develop and operate.

We as gays must redefine ourselves IN OUR OWN TERMS, from our heads and our experience, because no political philosophy designed by white heterosexual men can be adequate for us. Thus we use CR to arrive at policy and positions, to plan actions and projects - to evolve a politics out of our experience.

A CR group is a serious and long-range effort. It is well to start with as many as 10-15 people, because members will surely drop out in the opening weeks. After the formative first weeks, the group constitutes itself and is closed to new people. The group meets weekly, alternating among the homes of the members.

The format of the sessions consists of each person's testimony on a given topic and a concluding discussion. Notes are kept from week to week. The topic chosen must be relevant to the members' life experiences and should be agreed upon by all. Usually chosen as a first topic is "coming out", one's first gay sexual experiences. When giving testimony a group member relates his personal experiences and feelings about the topic, avoiding any tendency to intellectualize or to draw conclusions. Each person speaks to the topic for as long as he wishes, and can only be interrupted for questions of clarification. The order of testimony is determined by the group, either rotating regularly around the room or, randomly, by "spinning the bottle". Giving personal testimony is difficult: it involves opening up to the other group members and beginning to trust them. Of course, testimony cannot be discussed outside the group. After everyone has given testimony, the group compares the evidence of their experiences. The significance of the similarities and differences in people's testimony is considered. Generalizations about the condition of gay men in our society emerge. This format of CR ensures that the discussion and conclusions are rooted in the members' experience and feelings.

The following is a list of some of the most important topics our group has used in the past months:

Series: age 1-5, early formative experiences  
grade school, acceptance or rejection of "male role"  
high school, pressure to conform to straight environment  
college, post high school - sexual repression or expression

Series on Sexual Relationships:  
coming out (first sexual experiences, acknowledging oneself as gay)  
sex roles  
sexual objectification  
cruising and bars  
masturbation  
sexual experience with women  
S and M  
sexual fantasies  
monogamy

jealousy and possessiveness  
domination or passivity in relationships  
what kind of men we're attracted to  
how do we approach men and how do we react to approaches  
from men  
sex acts - sucking, fucking, being fucked, etc. --  
experiences with and feelings about

parents  
siblings  
reaction to the terms "faggot" and "queer"  
relations with women  
relations with straight men  
racism  
class background and prejudices  
age-ism - the pressure to be young  
religious training and background

The group must give priority to dealing with a member's pressing immediate situation, using whenever possible the CR framework. Periodically, sessions should openly examine and confront personality conflicts and feelings among members.

All groups must constantly struggle with resistance to CR. There always seems to be a thousand other things to do, especially on the night of the group meeting. However only a major reason should cause a member to miss a session -- the group process is at stake. Once the group is assembled, people tend to put off the serious business of CR. For example, they will socialize and

gossip for hours to delay selecting a topic. They may often get hung-up in debating a potential topic. During testimony, resistance frequently takes the form of intellectualization and the expression of abstract ideas, negating concrete experience and feelings. Both during testimony and discussion, resistance to CR manifests itself as straying from the chosen topic. These manifestations may all be symptoms of the fear that people feel when they come in contact with their own oppression and begin to realize that they must make changes in their lives to deal with it. Of course, leaving the group is the ultimate resistance.

CR is often confused with other small group efforts such as group therapy, encounter and purely social formations. We must also distinguish it from all other political organizing processes. CR and psychotherapy are poles apart in their methods and purposes, and in their basic assumptions. Psychiatric theory defines the gay person's situation as that of individual sickness, while CR substitutes the perspective of gay people as collectively oppressed by society. In a therapy situation, there is always a leader and the authority of the body of psychoanalytic thought, while CR is without leaders and brings people together around their common experiences. On occasion we in CR borrow the techniques of encounter groups to help us express our feelings when we have problems relating, but encounter does not analyze the social



(-VERMONT FREEMAN)

causes of our alienation. CR is distinct from other political organizing processes in that it begins with no preconceived ideology or strategy for gay liberation. We do not deal in abstractions or rhetoric, but draw ideas from our life situations.

The results of our CR meetings have been many. While we began as nine isolated, alienated people, we have become a group politicized by the study of our experience. We found that our problems are not individual illnesses, but are generated by our oppression as a class. This discovery negated one of the most effective weapons of our oppressors, the false division between the personal and the political. Whether or not we'd had any previous political involvement, none of us saw homosexuality in political terms. The sharing of our experience has brought us to a collective consciousness as gay men. We have begun an analysis of gays as a class exploited by the white straight man, the sexist who rules our society. Gay consciousness for us now means gay anger as well as pride. While the pornographers, the psychiatrists, and the owners of gay bars and of the stores on cruising streets get rich exploiting us, we are kept socially and economically fragmented, separate amongst ourselves and from the other exploited classes of society -- blacks, workers, poor people, women, and the population of third world nations. Those in power in Amerika keep all of us down via the policy of "divide and conquer".



GAY DEALER



TRANSVESTITE  
AND  
TRANSEXUAL  
LIBERATION