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The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

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5th Freedom ^{25¢}

PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO GAY COMMUNITY

OCTOBER 1975

The People
TIME Forgot



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TO OUR READERS

During the first week of September, millions of people across the country were expressing reactions ranging from heartening joy to shocked revulsion. The occasion? TIME magazine's cover - with an imposing photo of Air Force T/Sgt. Lenny Matlovich and the big, bold words "I AM A HOMO-SEXUAL".

My first reaction was, "Wow! The National Gay Task Force must've pulled off a major tour de force." But that reaction was short lived, as I finished reading the cover story. A confusing presentation of token positive gestures, interlaced with language designed to titillate middle America's homophobia, the article is to be faulted as much for its errors in omission as those of commission.

TIME sensationalized those aspects of gay life which ignorant moralists are fond of pointing to as totally representative of our lifestyle, while failing to include sufficient, valid evidence that documents the existence of an overwhelming majority of gays who defy rigid classification.

Indicative of TIME's treatment is one of the story sections titled "The Gay Culture: Fast and Loose." The title sets the tone, as TIME rambles on about bars being for those "looking for action" and representing "a sexual marketplace." The writers of the TIME article obviously used the August '75 issue of Human Behavior - which contained a well-written article on gay bars - as a source of reference. But, TIME carefully omitted one valuable conclusion made by Human Behavior on just what role gay bars do play: "Most predominantly or exclusively homosexual people still do not go to bars... The need to search out and be with one's own kind," and not the need for sex, "is the most fundamental reason for the existence and increasing popularity of different gay bars which are at present the major social institutions where people can be honest about an important aspect of human sexual and emotional nature."

Lesbians are given a token few paragraphs, but the thrust of the article revolves around gay males. Whether

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EDITORIAL

We, the editorial collective of the 5th Freedom, feel that Charles Hope's letter (elsewhere in this issue) best represents one particular response we have received from our readers. His letter reflects an opinion that perhaps stems from a misunderstanding of our editorial policy. We now hope to clear up any misconceptions any of our other readers may have.

The 5th Freedom is an open forum magazine. It is our policy to print any article, which is both intelligently and reasonably presented, and which deals with some aspect of the gay community. In keeping with this policy, we, as a collective, have an obligation to keep an open mind on all issues, regardless of our personal views, even if some of these issues seem negative to the community. If a problem exists (or seems to) it cannot be ignored. Therefore we try to avoid the

use of censorship. To do otherwise would not only close all avenues for discussion and learning, but would say, in essence, that our viewpoints are the only ones worth reading.

Censorship implies that only one viewpoint should be permitted, to the exclusion of others. We constantly complain (and rightly so) of the censorship, lack of understanding, and bad press gays receive elsewhere (see TO OUR READERS on coverage we received in TIME). Should we then turn around to ignore and censor those within and without the gay community, who continue to deal with us, but seek to point out our faults? It is foolish to say, absolutely, that gays do not harass straights - that sexism and racism, on any level, do not exist in the gay community.

As a publication by (and for) the gay community, we cannot ignore any form of oppres-

sion that comes to our attention, even if it comes from within the community. Any form of sexism that our readers present to us, becomes an important issue. It is our responsibility to our readers to present these incidents, and all (or at least a representative sample of) responses to them. It is unrealistic to say that only straights need to deal with these problems.

We believe that debate, even when it extends to radical disagreement, is an essential part of expression, thus the title: 5th Freedom. We could not be a collective and believe otherwise. This magazine is your magazine. We are anxious to publish thoughts and ideas that reflect the gay community as a whole, as well as those who deal with the gay community on a regular basis. This, however, is impossible without feedback from you, our readers. We are waiting to hear from you.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

Dear 5th Freedom:

You can't imagine how surprised I was when I was told by friends at G.A.A. here that "someone who looked a lot like me" was on the cover of some magazine from Buffalo!

I thought you might want to hear from me, as I am in fact the prototype for the balletic fairy on your "Christopher Street '75" cover (September issue). The year before in the Boston Gay Pride Parade, I was dressed in a similar, black outfit, and got photographed by local network TV doing an absolutely gauche "tour jete".

Anyway, it's really nice to see my little private fantasy adding something to our whole, collective gay culture, thru the medium of your magazine. Thanks for giving me an opportunity to contribute to all of us. It's really a moving honor...

The slogan, by the way, I took from the placard carried by an unidentifiable dyke in the 1974 Worcester, Massachusetts (I think it was) Parade.

I read it (or rather, saw the photo) in Gay Community News. Credit where credit is due!

In love,
Jim Saslow, N.Y.C.

Dear Friends,

In connection with Lenny Matlovich's case, and other current civil rights and liberties cases involving gay people in the armed forces, I'd like to make "a modest proposal" - that young gay men and women who have no desire or intention to serve in the military go as individuals to their local Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marines recruiting office and give the soldier on duty something like the following rap:

(In this instance, a young man is speaking) "Look, sarge, I really want to join the Army because it'd finally give me the chance to become a real man - you know, a "man among men." I mean, I'd be surrounded by all those fine upstanding macho types, by thousands of gorgeous hunks - oops, I mean "ideals" - naked half the


time, taking showers and sleeping together, the other half cruising around in those tight sexy uniforms - and getting paid for it, too. I mean, well, sarge, I'm gay, and lately I've been hearing that there're lots of gay men in today's Army, maybe 10-20%, more inside than out maybe, and that the brass knows but doesn't do anything about it. I read in this one magazine, for instance, how they're hip to what's going on on and off the bases, yet they tell the MP's not to bust or even take names of any of the hundreds of soldiers, of every rank, they see every night in every one of the gay bars near every military installation in this amazing country. Well, the Army just sounds like the greatest kind of life for my kind of guy, and I'm really gung-ho to join. Please, sarge, puleezeze."

This sort of thing might give the soldier on duty something to think about. (By the way, it's more or less what many young men, gay and

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MAILBAG, cont.

straight, used to say to the physical and psychological examiners for Selective Service, in order not to be drafted. But in this case, of course, it would be entirely voluntary - indeed, willful.) At the very least, I imagine, it would give the gay person bringing it off quite a few laughs. I myself find it a delicious notion even just to contemplate.

Affectionately,
 Burton Weiss

No activity of a people so exposes their humanity or inhumanity, their character, their capacity for charity in its most generous dimension, as they accord persons convicted of crime.....

As the steel doors closed behind me and the handcuffs were removed, I found myself in what is known as the "rotunda", behind the walls of Big Mac. It was my second trip but still as frightening as the first and I was only 21 years old. The stories of 'rape' and 'homosexual gangs' are far from true, at least in this prison, but the stories themselves are enough to frighten the strongest of men. In my 3½ years behind these walls I've seen "the most destructive riot in history", the beating of several fellow human beings and friends, the death of many along with the every day life in prison.

Most gays here hide their identity, not because of inmate acceptance but because of the harassment of prison personnel, which at times becomes almost unbearable. Being one of the few who've never hidden in the closet, I've faced a great deal of this harassment but always pull through with my head held high because shame cannot be produced where there is none.

On my first trip I was refused a parole because I refused to deny being gay. This was while I was in a reformatory, and after my open admission I found myself transferred two weeks later to the walls.

At present I'm housed in an area known as "administrative segregation." I've been here for almost 3 months and although I've had one rule infraction in 2½ years, I don't foresee being in 'general population' for quite some time.

The reasons given was that it was deemed necessary that I be separated from another inmate, who is also gay and just happens to be my 'lover', so the real reason is left to the imagination. This is not an isolated incident. The administration has separated several individuals because they "were becoming too close." The oppression of the gay male is something very real in prison and even tho' the shouts of "freedom of expression" are loud, they're seldom, if ever, heard. The struggle goes on...

Would appreciate letters and comments,

Michael R. Jolly, #84519
 P.O. Box 97
 McAlester, Okla. 74501

TO OUR READERS, cont.

dealing with S&M, religion, psychiatry, or legal 'sanctifications', TIME's treatment is at best superficial. But, the lie results from TIME's failure to present the good, solid evidence that "gay is just as good as straight" - and often better. Gays as a group of people assigned "minority" status in this society, represent a far more extensive microcosm of society at large than any other such group. The evidence is overwhelming, but TIME fails to see it.

In a recent Majority Report article, Loretta Lotman (National Gay Task Force Media Director) describes the TV network's treatment of gays: "...The taboos against homosexuality were lifted - leaving mentally bankrupt producers, writers, and directors on their own to spice up a dull script with a "gay" angle. Unfortunately, we were used as a gimmick, something exotic, psychotic or titillating to bail out an improbable program. Our reality was nowhere to be found."

An apt description of our treatment by TIME. Oh, perhaps just having Matlovich on the TIME cover accrues some as yet intangible benefits, as well as the begrudging recognition that gays exist. In their "FORUM" section a few issues later, TIME borrowed from a homophobic letter and headlined us as "The Love That Won't Shut Up." They're so right. We won't shut up. And we won't go away. We'll keep telling it like it really is, until TIME and all the others catch up to our reality.

DON MICHAELS

S:1 A PROTOTYPE BOMBER?

by DON MICHAELS

NO! S-1 is...A BILL:
"To codify, revise, and reform title 18 of the United States Code; to make appropriate amendments to the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure; to make conforming amendments to criminal provisions of other titles of the United States Code; and for other purposes." (italics ours)

Better known as the "Criminal Justice Reform Act of 1975," S-1 is a monstrous, 753 page bill that's soon to come before the U.S. Senate for deliberation. S-1 is the first attempt to revise the U.S. Criminal Statutes since the late 1800's. These statutes codify your behavior and mine on just about everything imaginable from attacking a foreign power to sex offenses. And that's where we come in!

S-1's section on "sex offenses" holds a surprise for us all. Its strong feature is that it would remove, completely, any penalties for consensual sodomy. Having a Federal Criminal Code that excludes proscriptions on consensual sodomy would serve as a strong, positive model for penal codes on the state level. It would serve as additional leverage for gay activists seeking to repeal their state laws governing private, consensual sex acts. For all intents and purposes it would seem that the gay community should be rallying around S-1 and urging their Senators to support it. But, that's not happening - and there's good reason for it. The section on "Sex Offenses" takes up slightly more than 3 pages. The other 750 pages would make a shambles of our nation's Bill of Rights!

The history of S-1 traces back to 1966, when then President Johnson appointed a commission to recommend reform of the U.S. Criminal laws. In 1971 the commission issued its final draft, which was then generally accepted by both liberal and conservative groups as being a decent compromise. But then the Nixon administration's "Bobbsey Twins of law and Order" - John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst - got hold of it, revised it to their repressive tastes and submitted it to the Senate, where it has undergone little revision since and stands now as Senate Bill 1.

Nearly 2 years ago, GPU

News out of Milwaukee was the first major gay publication to warn of the perils of this bill (which at the time was S-1400), and rightly so. Scattered throughout S-1 are upwards of 30 provisions which endanger the forward strides made in civil liberties in recent times. Through obscure, shifty language various sections of S-1 yield tremendous power to the government to exercise arbitrary and capricious control over those that would dare criticize its actions or engage in "unacceptable" behavior.

Save for the omission of a statute on consensual sodomy, the "Sex Offenses" section falls short of an enlightened approach. (After studying other sections of S-1, the suspicion arises that the omission of consensual sodomy provisions was simply a gross oversight on the parts of mssrs. Mitchell and Kleindienst.) Its language in defining sex 'offenses' is so ambiguous that it produces apprehension of too much leeway for arbitrary interpretations by law enforcers. Age of consent is set at 16, and that's always an issue open to debate (Hawaii recently changed its age of consent to 14, patterning after Model Penal Code recommendations); and, in rape and sexual assault, that proverbial 'he' person is still exempted if living in a "husband and wife" situation.

The sections on "Disseminating Obscene Material" and on "Disorderly Conduct" are filled with naive assumptions about the make-up of society, as well as language that is so vague as to make both sections patently absurd and impossible to apply to real situations. The obscene materials section incorporates the worst of the most recent Supreme Court decisions, leaving the definition of what is "obscene" up to that of the "average person, applying contemporary community standards." (Will the real "average" person please stand up?!) The disorderly conduct offenses are so open to individual interpretation, as to make them ludicrous. In this section soliciting for "a sexual act...in a public place" is an offense that applies to all. No distinction is made for "deviate" sexual

acts, as is the case in so many local laws. Everyone's affected by this one! So when does one "solicit" (ask)? After you're home and behind closed doors? Presumably by that time the asking stage is over with!

Among the most alarming features of S-1 are the provisions that would arm the government with extensive power to stifle and intimidate movements, such as ours, that agitate for social change and equal justice. The sections on wiretapping extend the government's power to such an extent that wiretaps could be used for harrassment and wholesale spying. Sections dealing with the "overthrow or destruction of the government" and "physical interference" of a government function are so ill-defined that even the most basic of constitutional rights are subject to abuse. And in the section dealing with "riot offenses" a gathering of 5 or more persons could be charged with rioting under a definition that is so open-ended that arbitrary enforcement could well become the rule.

S-1 goes on and on, ad nauseum. And the most alarming thing about this whole bill is that it might pass the Senate! It will be coming up soon for consideration. It is too fraught with dangers to our constitutional rights to rely on the amending process to right all the wrongs. It must be defeated. As gays, we constitute a community of people seeking equal rights, justice, and freedom from oppression. Our gains have been accomplished through long, hard-fought battles. But we cannot afford to balance off S-1's encroachments on our civil liberties with what would surely prove to be an empty gain.

We must stress the importance of YOU letting your Senators and Representatives know that you're opposed to this bill. Write or call your Senators (in New York - Javits and Buckley), referring to S-1. (In the House of Representatives the bill numbers to refer to are HR 333 and HR 3907).

S-1 will be up for consideration in the Senate very

CONT. P. 22

RESTRUCTURING THE SEXES

or DEEPER INTO MYRA



Gore Vidal, in an act of deiform benevolence, has resuscitated his great satirical creation, Myra Breckinridge, lost to the world since the final chapter of the 1968 novel which bears her illustrious name. Those who read that popular work, or saw the literal-minded and heavy-handed film version (which only a film-freak like Myra herself could love) will recall that the voluptuous transsexual (nee Myron Breckinridge), whose stated goal was to save from extinction both Hollywood and the human race, met with an untimely and unseemly end. The victim of a hit-and-run accident which undid most of what Scandinavia's finest surgeons had labored to create, the powerful and provocative Myra once again became the meek and unassuming Myron, due to the surgical intervention of one Doctor (formerly Nurse) Mengers. Sic transit Myra, or so it seemed.

Five troubled years, two beleaguered administrations, one lost war and an impending depression later, Myra returns in MYRON to continue her crusade to restore the world to its Golden Age, circa 1935-45. It was the era when,

as she says, "no irrelevant film was made in Hollywood", and the pullulating loins of men had yet to engulf our undernourished planet with the last fatal wave of hungry progeny.

In both novels her plan for saving Hollywood is essentially reactionary, a return to the L.B.Mayer dream factory of Andy Hardy movies and 'Forties service comedies, like Myra's favorite, FOUR JILLS AND A JEEP. Her design for rescuing the human race, however, though no less grandiose, is far more radical in its intentions, entailing, as it does, "the reduction of world population through a complete change in man's sexual image".

In MYRA BRECKINRIDGE this vast socio-psychological concept could be reduced to the simple formula: "bugger the studs". And, indeed, in the single, memorable instance where it was applied, with the aid of a large dildo, this formula proved highly satisfactory. In MYRON the plans for the restructuring of the sexes go even farther, and involve the transformation of the aforementioned studs into what Myra calls "fun-loving sterile Amazons", through the skillful use of the surgeon's scalpel and massive doses of estrogen. When Myra schemes she aims for the stars.

Myra's plans, however, are endangered by her detested doppelganger, Myron Breckinridge. Myron, having gained ascendancy over the other half of his split personality following the accident, proceeded, in the final chapters of the earlier book, to recover, with Dr. Menger's help, the essential of what Myra's Scandinavian operation had previously cost him. When we meet him again, in the later novel, half a decade has passed and Myron has settled into a life of perfect Nixonian Normalcy, acquiring in the process such

prerequisites as an attractive wife, a set of terriers, a Chinese catering service, and a home in the San Fernando Valley. But of course, in time, Myra must revolt against this creature of complacency, and in doing so she stages a suitably spectacular comeback.

Trying to summarize the plot of MYRON is almost as difficult as extricating a live mastodon from the La Brea Tar Pits. Suffice it to say that through an act of fictional legerdemain Myron is transported in space from his living-room, where he had been watching the umpteenth re-run of MGM's SIREN OF BABYLON to the Hollywood set of the film, and, in time, from 1973 to 1948, the year of the filming.

Alice-like, he encounters a number of curious characters, mostly hapless TV viewers of the film, like himself, who came to the SIREN set in the same mysterious fashion. Among them are a male hairdresser named Maude and a randy cook called Whittaker Kaiser, who bear a strange (and surely coincidental) resemblance to Vidal's literary and video rivals, Truman Capote and Norman Mailer.

While trying to find a way to return to his beloved home and year, Myron experiences a series of mental "black-outs" during which Myra returns to take control of his physical form.

The rest of the book is a series of alternating, first-person accounts of the twin protagonists' struggles to gain control of the poor, mangled body which they unwillingly share, and to silence forever the other, unwanted half. It's DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE in Hollywood of 1948, except that in the Stevenson book at least both characters could agree on one thing-wearing men's clothes. In MYRON Myra favors

CONT. P. 22

H E P A T I T I S

THE NEW VD? BY DONN HOLLEY

Hepatitis is hardly new, nor is it strictly a venereal disease, but it is on the increase, especially in the gay community. Many people are asking why it has recently spread and are wondering how to avoid it.

Exactly what is hepatitis? It is not one specific disease, but the name of a condition that could have several different causes. Hepatitis means literally "inflammation of the liver" and can be caused by certain chemicals, drugs (including alcohol) and viruses. It is this last type, viral hepatitis, that is causing all the concern, and is the type most people mean when they say "hepatitis."

The symptoms of hepatitis were first described about 2,500 years ago, but it became known as infectious hepatitis only in the nineteenth century. Little has been learned about the disease until very recently. Research in the last ten years has answered many questions about viral hepatitis, but in the process has raised new ones. Because so much has been learned recently, there is a great deal of inaccurate and contradictory information on the subject. Even a doctor who doesn't have direct contact with the academic community is apt to have some misinformation. In order to get accurate, reliable information myself, I contacted the Hepatitis Study Center at Children's Hospital. This group of researchers are studying the body's response to the hepatitis virus and possible modes of transmission.

Viral hepatitis can be one of two types: type "A" or type "B". You might have heard them referred to as infectious and serum, respectively. These names were derived from the early misconception that "serum" hepatitis was transmitted only by contact with contaminated serum or blood. It is now known that both types are infectious - both can be transmitted by routes other than contact with contaminated or infectious blood. The two types differ in how the body reacts to the virus and the nature of the resulting disease.

Hepatitis A is a more acute condition, meaning it is of short duration. The person is infected, and after a relatively short (about a month) incubation period, certain blood levels rise rapidly and the person becomes sick. The levels remain high for a time, then rapidly fall back to normal. It is associated with epidemics, is transmitted usually by fecal (anal)-oral routes or by contaminated food. While major outbreaks of hepatitis A are rare in developed countries where sanitation is good, there continues to be occasional small outbreaks, often due to an infected food handler contaminating food and infecting large numbers of people. If you know you've been exposed to hepatitis A, a shot of gamma globulin may lessen the severity or eliminate the disease entirely, but only if you get the shot before you show any symptoms.

Hepatitis B is a different disease. It is differentiated from "A" by the existence of a substance in the blood, hepatitis B antigen (part of the hepatitis B virus) and also by the course of the disease. Although hepatitis B can be acute and resemble hepatitis A in the course and length of disease, it usually is of much longer duration. Blood levels tend to rise much more slowly, peak longer, and take much longer to return to normal, meaning the person remains sick longer. The incubation period (the time between being infected and the appearance of the first symptoms) varies from one to six months and depends on the amount of the original infection and the way it was transmitted.

Unlike hepatitis A, hepatitis B infection can result in diseases other than ordinary hepatitis. These include chronic liver diseases, and a healthy carrier state. A person with a chronic form of the disease may have a mild case of hepatitis, or have reoccurring attacks of the disease, and may remain contagious for years. A disease-free carrier may never show any signs of the disease at all, yet possibly be contagious for long periods of time. There is

another form that's somewhere between the two. Yet another form results in permanent liver damage and if left untreated could result in death. There are, however, drugs available to halt the course of this type of viral hepatitis.

How common are these forms of the disease? It is not known. It is estimated that perhaps .5% (5 out of every 1,000) of the general (supposedly healthy) population are chronic carriers of hepatitis B. It is also estimated incidence in the gay male population could be *ten times* that amount, *or even more*. Research is sketchy and statistics of this sort can never be exact anyways, but it is known that gay men are a very "high risk" group for hepatitis B.

Exactly how hepatitis B is spread is not known, but with the identification of the hepatitis B antigen just 8 years ago it is now possible to more accurately trace the modes of transmission. It is now known that the virus can be in virtually all body fluids, including saliva, nasal secretions, semen or vaginal secretions, as well as in the blood, urine and fecal matter. It is not known conclusively whether there is enough of the virus in these fluids to infect someone. It would certainly be questionable ethically to infect someone with these fluids to find out.

Evidence taken from people who contract the disease points to a venereal mode of transmission, in addition to the already recognized fecal-oral or anal-oral route and from contact with infected blood.

CONT. NEXT PG.

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Men are more likely than women to get hepatitis, and gay men are more likely to get it than non-gay men. This may be caused by: the body's immune responses - women could be better able to combat the disease; by a venereal mode of transmission - men, especially gay men, are statistically more likely to get VD; it may be that gay male sex is a more "efficient" way to transmit the disease; or it could be a combination of any or all of these factors. That there is a venereal mode of transmission of hepatitis is not seriously doubted. Proving it and discovering exactly how it is spread venereally is difficult, and serious ethical questions are raised in any study that would attempt experimental venereal transmission.

Avoiding hepatitis B is a difficult problem, even more complicated than avoiding or preventing syphilis and gonorrhea. If you are healthy you are less apt to contract the disease, so good nutrition, enough sleep and especially good personal hygiene will go a long way in avoiding hepatitis. Healthy carriers may be the primary factor in the present increase in cases of hepatitis B. Get your blood tested regularly, and urge your friends to. There is no permanent hepatitis clinic here in Buffalo, but the Hepatitis Study Center is willing to take tests free of charge at this time. Contact Karl Beutner, 878-7312 or 878-7623, or call the Gay Community Center, 881-5335.

If you do get hepatitis, don't panic. It's a serious disease, but rarely fatal. BE SURE TO SEEK MEDICAL HELP. Avoid sexual contact with others until your blood tests are negative. Sterilize your dishes (bleach in the wash water should do it) and be careful about clothes, towels, etc. There is absolutely no need to physically isolate yourself or to avoid physical contact, as long as you avoid kissing and sex (or any other contact with your body fluids).

Hepatitis is NOT something you can only get from shooting up with dirty needles, or even by having sex with someone who does. It is possible to get it from anyone you have sex with, and it is probable they did not know they had it when they gave it to you. Knowing more about the disease can't hurt, but

ignorance can. Get a blood test, educate your friends and lovers, and urge them to get blood tests, too. It is hoped that through a better educated population, we can help decrease the incidence of hepatitis. Also, if we can demonstrate the need for a hepatitis clinic, the county might be willing to provide for that need.

(I wish to thank the people at the Hepatitis Study Center at Children's Hospital, whose technical and editorial assistance was invaluable in the preparation of this article.)

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THOUGHTS

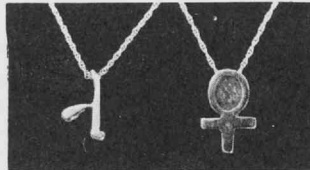
by brian macarthur

With communication we share all the things that make us ourselves - we laugh, we cry, we love, we hate, and we become what is truly ourselves through the people we meet and the things we do. Without each other, we are not ourselves, for we must have each other to be each one. We must have conflicting points of view so that we can see an entire spectrum of possibilities we can explore, thereby discovering ourselves. By recognizing that we are individuals, we can accept, and therefore absorb all those many things that make up this world. When we lose the ability to accept one another as individuals, we become a people so concerned with conformity that we close our minds, thus heightening our fear of witnessing human variety. We lose the possible benefit of a viewpoint that could widen ours. We need to see, to discover, and to learn more. Think about it. Open-mindedness.

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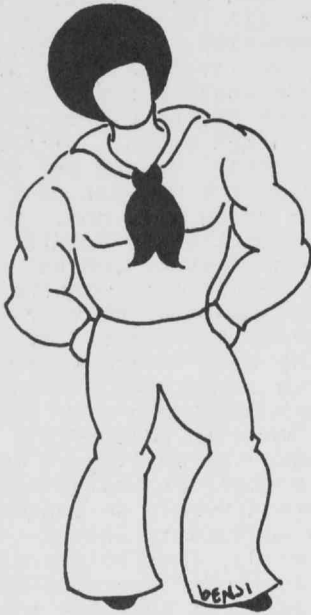
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THE LONGEST RUNNING COMEDY IN AMERICAN HISTORY by BENJI



When I first started to write this article, it was to be about "what it was like to be a gay male in the military", but I soon came to realize that a lot more was involved. Not only was it oppressive to be a gay male in the military, but to be black, young, old, female and even more so...male. The military is a fantastic institution in the respect that it places so much emphasis on the male macho image (racism, sexism, classism, etc. not far behind).

Rather than write about my whole four years spent in the service (Navy), I would rather write about my three months spent in bootcamp and the experiences I had there. Although bootcamp did not represent all of the experiences I was to encounter in the coming years, it was pretty indicative of the attitudes that exist throughout the military machine. Some people, those who had their shit in one sock, quit before all the macho bullshit came down on them. Those who had "smarts", like myself, were too dumb to get out then. No, we had to prove to ourselves that we were men and could stick it out. As they (father Sam) told us, it was only the sissies who quit and I sure enough didn't want to be a sissy. I wanted to be a "man" (chuckle, chuckle).

Bootcamp is a memorable ex-

perience for anyone going into the military, particularly the Navy (with which I am well acquainted). Though quite destructive in a mental sort of way, I was sort of impressed with the reception we received on our first day. On arriving we were greeted by another recruit, who having been fed into the "male machine", was obviously on some sort of ego trip. He had only been there five weeks but he gave us the impression that he had been in the Navy a helluva lot longer. He was a typical redneck (they tend to stay in and go on to become lifers) who reminded me of all those "superjocks" you meet in high school and college sports who give the impression of being a supercool dude. You know, the John Wayne type who lets nothing faze them in the least. He came down like he was altoghter and we were nothing. As I remember, the first thing he said to us was "Hello wimps". Yep, we were wimps and we didn't get to be a "maggot" until our fifth week in bootcamp. My understanding is that these labels were supposed to somehow instill in the labeler a feeling of being superior and we recruits were supposed to feel like shit. BOY, DID WE FEEL LIKE SHIT. Then he went into this whole rap about how we were in the Navy now and escape was useless, there being armed guards around the camp.

These guards get brownie points for every recruit they catch going AWOL (Absent without Leave).

After being greeted, inspected, put-down and insulted, we were given the gov't. stamp of approval, at least temporarily. Next we were to be given our roles/places in the company. Now this is the process whereby each man's status in the company was to be decided on no other criteria other than size, color, age and looks. Very democratic and somewhat discriminatory. If you had some experience like in the glee club, you get to be religious P.O. (Petty Officer), Drilling...Senior Man, etc. I should have considered myself lucky in that I got to be Senior Man (SM). Oh, I didn't get it because I had experience in drilling but be-

cause I was the only black in the company. Since I was the only black (which meant I had a deep-rooted hate for whites), I was considered the best person for the job. Senior Men are not supposed to have any friends in that at any time they may have to give out shit jobs, and believe me there were many such details (cleaning walls and floors with a toothbrush, etc.). Other responsibilities included marching the men to chow, teaching them to drill, teaching them to fold their clothes properly, giving them their mail, and most important, making sure each man was in "his" own rack at lights out. I kinda exempted myself from the last one.

I must give a point of information here about the caste system (class system, it's all the same) in the Navy. It determines very much how you get along in the Navy and if you follow the rules, you're all right, at least in their (Navy) eyes. The Navy is divided into groups and you can belong in one or many: officers, enlisted men (pukes as we were sometimes called by officers), rated, non-rated, black (or any minority), white, male, female redneck and on and on and on. The list can be endless.

Now it is against military tradition (more like law) for any officer to be seen in the company of an enlisted man (unless he is so high near the top he might as well be an officer) outside of any setting other than duty. To go out socializing with an enlisted man is unheard of. If a black were to marry a white it would cause very few ripples (that being vogue since it reflects how liberal the military can be) but help us all if an officer should marry an enlisted man or woman.

And believe it or not, even the enlisted men have their own caste system. People in rates E-1 to E-3 were non-rated personnel. They are the ones who always get shit details. The next group, E-4 to E-9, are considered rated, meaning they have enough skill in their particular field that they don't have to do shit details but stick to improving themselves vocationally. Now the fun part: not only did the rated not socialize with the non-rated, but an E-4 did not socialize with an E-5 and

CONT NEXT PG.

LONGEST COMEDY, cont.

an E-5 did not socialize with an E-6 and on up the line. If you were lucky enough to be on a ship and the ship large enough, you can bet a monkey's crank that there would have been separate places for you to eat as well.

I could go on and on but it would get to the point of being ridiculous. Blacks hung with blacks, rated with rated, officers in their own closets, etc. If you could find a group, you stayed with it.

Alright, now we are marched to chow. This turned out to be my favorite time of the day. There we are marching, in a very high schoolish fashion to this tacky looking building that looked like a converted barn. As we are paraded inside we come up against another recruit who also has his bit to do for Uncle Sam. "Alright you fucking wimps, let's tighten up that line. I want to see nuts to butts. Make that guy in front of you smile." I must admit that I did a lot of smiling in that three months, though I wasn't the only one. I began to like chow (although not the food) because it was the only time that I could hump the person in front of me with the Navy telling me to do so. I was to learn that the Navy had many such ways we could enjoy ourselves without benefit of the opposite sex and still retain our masculinity (at least what we thought to be masculinity). Next stop... the johns.

"The john." That was an institution in itself or should be. Most of my fondest memories started in the john. Why if it weren't for johns, our great armed forces would have collapsed long ago. The john - a place of cleanliness, fun, and relaxation. "Meating" friends, a growing closer as in sharing water.

First let me describe the john. It is a place somewhat larger than a bread box and able to accommodate 30 men at one time. In bootcamp, you have little or no privacy. As I remember there were something like ten toilets lined up against one wall, partitioned from one another but with no door. Since we all shit in a different way, it was down-right unconstitutional to force any man to expose himself in such a manner. The reason for the "no doors on the toilets" (and I got this from a very reliable source) is that

there was a very large outbreak of warts and insanity among recruits before they took the doors off their hinges. Why, I heard some people even went blind and others had to start learning to shave their hands. Does all this sound familiar?

No one looked at anyone else in the john. Most were afraid of being accused of natural responses and/or coming to the realization that we may not measure up against our fellow recruit. We didn't even dare touch one another. "TOUCH" was forbidden (at least until the fifth week).

The fifth week! Strange things happened the fifth week. Things which were forbidden were now allowed. You see many of us (yep - even me) left many loved ones behind, particularly a woman. But most of my cohorts said "my chick". Now these "chicks" whose picture they slept with and who have loved them since birth were now learning that they ("chicks") can exist alone. Hence, "dear John". If it hasn't done anything else, bootcamp has at least prevented future divorces. When I got my "Dear John" you should have seen how broken up I was (yeah - sure). When 90% of those guys who did have "chicks" got their separation notice, you wouldn't believe (I did) how touchy-feely everyone got (loved it). Everyone became better friends because of it. At the beginning, only a few of us were making head calls (head - military lingo for john. Kinky, huh?) past 1 o'clock at night, being careful that no two of us did so at the same time (roving guard and all). Now no one gave a shit and started to make all kinds of visits to the head, even in groups.

You could never, or would never, believe some of the games we thought of to amuse ourselves since we were segregated from the opposite sex. Such goodies were "grope the groin", "bump the butt", and my favorite, "burning bushes" (where a group of us would strip down and rub pubic hairs together).

I learned all of the manly arts, things that are paramount if we are to become real men in our country's armed forces. Drinking I learned quite well, although I did not have much time to perfect the art in bootcamp. Also we learned a few choice words, ones that distinguish the pussies from

the men. Fucking is the one most used. Everything was fucking - fucking bed, fucking maggot, fucking food, fucking everything. If something got to you - you fucked it. A lot of great military minds operate on that principle. If the fucking got to you, you passed it on to the person below you. After all, shit rolls downhill.

If you want to learn all the wrong things about what it takes to be a man(?), go to bootcamp. After all, it is the longest running comedy in the history of America.

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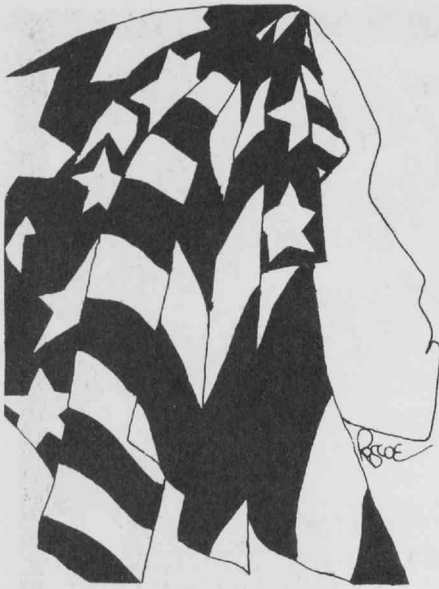
Many will agree Buffalo needs more bars, it will help everyone's business...The Flair Lounge at 629 Main St. near Chippewa, a yet nameless bar at Main and Hertal, and Meyerhoffer's on South Elmwood are the newest tries...all small neighborhood bars...each may be nice for a quiet drink but certainly will offer no alternative to "Buffalo's favorite nite spot"...Rumor has it, however, that Buffalo may have a new favorite nite spot... It's described as a super bar every bit as big and action packed as many other cities offer...The maybe opening date could be spring. Let's hope...Overheard: a Bath owner from another large city make some nasty remarks about Buffalo area baths and returned home to study the possibility of opening a new Bath in this area...Of course, the biggest block to any alternatives in this city is our self-appointed moralists in City Hall and the Police Dept...but after the Hibachi Room beat the legal shit out of the local State Liquor Authority, we may find that their bark is worse than their bite...The Studio Arena and the Century Theatre have announced some super theatrical fare and the Gay Center is willing to get group rates for people so look over their publicity and call the Center and tell us what you would like to see. We'll try to arrange it. When Buffalo people decide to spend a weekend out of town it seems they always go to Toronto or Rochester... why not try Cleveland or Akron in Ohio? Cleveland's only three hours away by the thruway and Akron is another forty-five minutes from there...Ohio bars are open 'till 2:30am and if you're 18-21 you can only drink beer...in Cleveland is the Bayou Landing at 1012 Sumner Ave. at East 9th St....it's open at 8pm seven days a week...this is the super disco bar of Ohio... it holds 700 people and has a fantastic light show and the latest music. Features weekend shows such as upcoming Charles Pierce Show, Roxanne Russell, Michael Greer and Sex Inc. It also has two plush quiet rooms with bar, a game room and soon to open on the first floor, a shopping mall...this is a huge place with super friendly people. There's a \$2.00 cover charge every nite. The best bet in Ohio...Also in Cleveland: the Six Twenty Club at 620 Frankfort. jukebox music, large dance floor, English carriage house interior. A place to talk but not to meet new people...Twiggy's at 2537 St. Clair Ave...live disco...and the Rainbow Room at 2211 East 9th St....for a bath try Cleveland's Club Bath, open 24 hours. you must have a membership. \$3.00 for a locker and \$5.00 for a room...it's small, no extras, but is good to crash the nite if nothing else...In Akron you'll find the American Hotel & Restaurant at 412-19 Kenmore Blvd. Open at 9pm Mon.-Sat. and 11pm on Sun...it's medium large sized and packed on weekends, super friendly \$1.00 cover charge every nite. best bet in Akron... opening soon is the Eagle's Nest Room to enlarge the American Hotel's capacity...Also in Akron: the Hayloft at 77 N. Adams St. friendly bar...small dance floor... no cover... Satan's at 899 Sallington St....a women's bar...fairly large, jukebox, no cover...Toronto and Rochester are still plugging away with an additional bar in Toronto...still worth the trip...call the Center for specific addresses... Hear tell that Montreal still swings but the city fathers are "cleaning it up" for the Olympics...only time will tell what that will mean...gay athletes need a nite out too, you know...See you "elsewhere".....

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YOU AND "ERA"

by Rawson C. Crawshaw, III



There seems to be some misunderstanding in our community about the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). We feel we have the obligation to present the issues to our readers, this is particularly important, as the ERA comes to the people for vote in this November's elections. The decision you make on this vote could be more important than you think.

First of all, what is the Equal Rights Amendment? It says simply:

Sec. I: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Sec. II: The Congress shall have the power to enforce by legislation, the provisions of the article.

Sec. III: The amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

Many people are not quite sure of what will happen if ERA is ratified. Read and answer the following true-false statements. Then see how your answers compare with the facts.

(1) ERA will force sexual integration of public restrooms and sleeping facilities.

FALSE. In 1965, in the case of *Griswold vs. Connecticut*, the Supreme Court guaranteed the right of privacy to the individual. However, ERA will not force the separation of sexes in public restrooms. Thus, it would end hassles of

transvestites and transsexuals.

(2) Even though New York State ratified ERA in 1972, it is important to vote in the coming election.

TRUE. In 1972, New York ratified ERA to the U.S. Constitution. In 1974, the N.Y. State Legislature gave first passage to an ERA to the New York State Constitution. The proposed ERA would add a Section 13 to Article One of the State Constitution:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the State of New York or any subdivision thereof on account of sex."

(3) ERA needs only the ratification by two-thirds of the states to become a federal law.

FALSE. Three-fourths of the states must ratify ERA within a period of seven years. So far, only 33 states have ratified ERA.

(4) ERA will undermine the American family structure by forcing women into the labor market.

FALSE. ERA only guarantees that a working spouse (man or woman) has a duty to support the spouse who runs the home, as a compensation of his or her duties.

ERA will also change the divorce laws. Alimony will be based on who can better afford payment, and who is more responsible for problems, whether the man or the woman.

(5) The New York State ERA could be in effect by January 1st, 1976.

TRUE. Whether or not the national amendment receives the required amount of states behind it, the passing of the State ERA would guarantee that it would take effect in New York in 1976.

(6) ERA will not invalidate present laws protecting women against rape and sex crimes.

TRUE. In fact, sexist assault laws would be expanded to cover both sexes. Statutory rape laws would also be extended to cover the sexual abuse of minors by either men or women.

(7) ERA is not needed because previous legislation covers women's rights.

FALSE. Present laws have failed to reach discrimination

in many areas, and are often used too slowly.

(8) ERA is unimportant to the Gay Community.

FALSE. ERA will open the doors to more and better legislation toward the equality of all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation.

(9) ERA will provide constitutional protection needed to end inconsistencies of the courts in case by case deliberations based on sex.

TRUE. The courts are often too slow, and sometimes too reticent to deal properly with sexual discrimination.

(10) It is unimportant for me to vote - other people will do it.

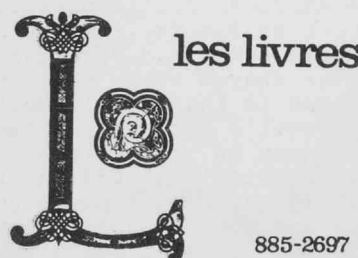
FALSE. Do not depend on others to do your work.

Now, you ask, how does this concern me? If you are Gay, it means you have the opportunity to take one step forward in the fight against sexism, something we all run up against on one level or another. Vote for ERA. It may be more important than you think!

STUDENT GROUP FORMED

For the first time in its history the State College at Buffalo has a gay student group. The Student Alliance for Gay Equality (SAGE) was formed in early September by concerned students, with the support of the student government.

SAGE has a table in the Student Union every Tues. & Thurs., 11AM-3PM and is making plans for getting speakers, films, library and on-campus social events. For further information contact Alan Schlesinger at 882-6898.



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BODY BEAUTIFUL

BY S.O.S WRITERS' COLLECTIVE

Body Beautiful - what does that mean to a dyke? We know as women that if Hollywood, videoland and Madison Avenue had their way all women would have the body of Raquel Welch, the face of Angie Dickenson and the mentality of Charo. In videoland hetero fantasies mold the mass standards of beauty to exclude women from races other than Caucasian and then they zero down on tall, fat, short, skinny. Whatever you are too much of will make you the "17" year old Janice Ian sings about.

Girdles, rollers, painting your face with make-up, ironing your hair, fighting off fat attacks - they are all devised to try and make women look like the cover of Seventeen magazine. Well, a lot of lesbians have found that they are beautiful without having to conform to "Covergirl's" conception of beauty." Freeing ourselves from these hetero-stereotypes is helping us to have more positive images of our bodies.

Recently the Writer's Collective canvassed members of Sisters of Sappho to find out how they feel about their bodies. Here's what some of them had to say:

"When I first came out I saw myself trapped in a shell (closet!) that was dark and stifling...Coming out meant caring for my body as a part of me, not destroying it by overeating, eating junk, drinking coffee, smoking... When I get depressed I take it out on my body. The struggle is to unify my mind and body and not have them fighting each other."

"I'm not a classy dresser or the image of body-beautiful and I felt oppressed because I was not attractive. My reactions were always to make my body strong and functional. My self-image is positively positive since I got out of the hetero status syndrome of adorning and enhancing."

"One thing I really like about my body are my muscles, which have been developing over the past 5 years since I started doing Karate. I think muscular women are beautiful because their bodies are obviously more than ornaments;

they do something and in the process they get healthier."

"In general, my image of myself was (used to be) that I was small in height, pretty weak and I dressed to play up that image of the 'little girl' (quite a contradiction when all the time I wished I had no breasts and didn't get my period!). Since I came out my self-image changed radically - I don't think of myself as being small anymore and I definitely see myself as strong. Where I used to cultivate a kind of fragile, thin image I now see my body as more under my control and I'm constantly amazed at what my body can do for me (mentally and physically) and how much stress it can endure. A good example is: I used to be proud of my bony arms with the thin shoulders and the elbows that stuck out through my shirts. Now I get a lot of satisfaction out of looking at my biceps and thinking about moving refrigerators..."

"I feel that my body as it is now is something very special to me. I take care of it the best way I know how. I admire both men and women who take care of their bodies."

"My body is becoming - it is in the process of joining with my mind and feelings. I am beginning to be comfortable with the physical sides of myself. It is not so much 'the other,' to be criticized, evaluated... The major obstacle that I find in accepting myself are the standards set by people around me. I feel a lot of pressure to fit a physical mold at times."

Developing self-confidence and pride in our bodies, unifying body and mind is a struggle. But because of the common feeling we as lesbians have experienced we can support each other. Who needs Cosmopolitan?

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IN RESPONSE

You've asked for responses to your magazine - what we (readers) like and dislike. Voila-

On the whole I really like your magazine and look forward to it - it's interesting, informative, and current. However, in the last few issues I've read a few articles that have annoyed me and left me wondering where your editors were when the F.F. went to press.

I've assumed that the purpose of your publication was for the benefit and enjoyment of the gays. By and large I think it is both of these. But I fail to understand all the put-downs you've been coming up with lately.

Firstly, I believe it was three issues back when you printed an article from a man who works in some boutique on Allen Street. Throughout his letter he chastised gays, and (to me) sounded very condescending and haughty.

I do not doubt that gays have indeed hassled or annoyed him in his store. There are some people who are obnoxious, and some gays, of course, fall into this category. However, I'm sure the gays who were bothering this poor, defenseless little man were few in number. As for myself and every one of my gay friends, none of us had even heard of his store, until he received an entire page of free advertising in your magazine with his rude letter.

That he was piqued, I can understand. That he was angry enough to write a letter to you (who had nothing to do with the incident) I can almost understand. That you chose to print his letter I honestly CANNOT understand. I really would like to know the reasoning behind publishing his letter. I felt as if the Fifth Freedom was scolding us for being naughty.

I thought your publication was for the enjoyment of gays - not for the satisfaction of irate "straights". I have heard enough straights putting down gays - must I also find it in the F.F., of all places?!

If this was an attempt on your part to show the straight community how "fair" and "cool" you can be - please don't forget about us gays. Remember us? We're the ones who want the Fifth Freedom and who sup-

port it...and we hope that you in turn will support us also.

Next issue I see an article with the ludicrous title DO GAY MEN RAPE LESBIAN WOMEN? I thought the entire article was absurd and once again wondered where the editors were hiding - what then was the purpose of this article? To engender anger between the lesbians and gay men? I should hope not - but then why the slurs on men?

Again, I find this article dealing with a few wrongdoers but essentially reprimanding us all (gay men). Why weren't the culprits reproached at the time? There's a guard present and people there to supervise. I have never before been aware of this problem - never have I seen it when I go to the Center nor had I previously heard of it. Then this big, officious article appears in the F.F. like there's an epidemic. Once again the gays (reserved for males only this time) get the shaft from a publication presumably for their enjoyment. I really resented her thoughtless and ignorant statements like "MOST men have a rape mentality." Who is she anyhow? Who is this omnipotent Goddess? Frankly, I really don't give a fuck who she is or what she thinks - but I do care what's printed in your magazine. And I don't see anything to be gained by printing articles that put down gays (of either sex), directly or indirectly.

Then in the last issue this is again touched on by Paula Battaglia in her "ramble #3" wherein she adds a few choice terms like "animalistic men" and "male ego" - both terms being used negatively by her.

I fail to understand why such things are printed by a staff who Dane Winters says are "lay people in the field of gay betterment". I loved reading articles like THIS IS ELAINE NOBLE and GEARING TO GAY NEEDS, both of which were excellent and a real boost to my morale. Each of them made me feel happy and vibrant and proud to be gay - unlike these others which were depressing and rude.

I'm not trying to say that the entire gay community is without fault...doubtless it isn't. But the problems caused by only a few should be dealt with individually and not thrown at the whole gay community in reproach.

Sincerely, Charles Hope

PROFILE: BOBBI PREBIS

(Note: On August 31, 1975 at Womansday festivities in Delaware Park, Bobbi Prebis was cited by the local chapters of the National Organization of Women as a "Woman of the Year" for her many years of work in the Gay and Woman's movements. We are all grateful for her energies and are very proud of her.)

To live at the intersection of two powerful forces, and to be touched by each, can be both illuminating and confusing. Bobbi stated that she had thought all of her life, that she was part of a small, select group of individuals who were fated (or cursed as she was severely warned) to be lovers of their own sex and to experience a small portion of joy and a large amount of pain because of it. She was not aware that either "gayness" or "womanness" was something of which to be proud. They existed within her and she with in them. Thinking about her place in society as a woman and as a Lesbian only caused discomfort. She chose, instead, to ignore the issues and replaced them with a frantic search for satisfaction and acceptance in a world that considered her inferior at best.

In 1969, a group of harassed and outraged Gay people got together in Buffalo to protest their pariah status and to build some sense of purpose within the severely splintered Gay community. Bobbi attended those early meetings and found, for the first time, a budding sense of pride in what she was and in what she had to offer. She also found an anger that had been carefully suppressed, rising to the surface. "Maybe it was just the right timing, but those few people who became the core of the Mattachine Society were energetic and dedicated people who learned quickly that together was the only way we could accomplish anything. "I found in those gatherings, an awakening." She was excited, full of ideas and energy; high on turning the world inside out.

After five years of work in Mattachine, Bobbi has learned that, "Our dreams usu-

CONT P. 22

POETRY



untitled

Once,
when I could still see
the sweat around your eyes
you put your wet mouth to my ear
and whispered
"Come again?" and oh god
I did just that.

**for a favorite
workswoman**

On warm nights
you drink sherry and chocolate cream
then carve women and wood
into elaborately gentle designs
And when
a particularly fine violin
begins to take shape
or an especially sweet woman
screams your name
your dusty fingers
get hot and sticky --
and you moan,
just a little.

untitled

Listen, beautiful!
This year, fall will definitely
come gold against the brown of
my skin
but I see your eyes are diamond-black
and so waterfalls have impressed themselves
on your color scheme.
That's all right.
I can get into blue-gold
if you can feel that golden-blue
is what you want.
Understand?

BY MICKIE WILLIAMS

untitled

The memory of your tongue in
my mouth
had scarcely died out
before I found myself
lie-ing
on someone else's silk sheets
But while she licked
whipped cream
from my breasts
I fantasized
(my thighs were wet)
about you---
you with
pollen
on your lips.

untitled

They asked her why
she loved to dance.
She felt:
My hips emit perfect rays
of molasses brown
recalling the beauty of my skin
My arms and legs are
extensions of my aura
and the tips of my breasts
flush with each turn
around the pulse I have created
by whipping my body into its
own wind.
They asked her why she loved to dance.
She thought:
The earth is a circle
woman forms a ninety degree angle
to it when she stands upright
She denies the horizontal line
from which life gives birth
Therefore I bend, in rhythm,
as an offering against
my sacrilege.
They asked
her why
she loved
to dance.
She said:
Because it makes me feel good.

untitled

A
way down by the river
WOMAN MUST PRESERVE HER DIGNITY
a poetess rests her feet.
HOWEVER HOPELESS, BECAUSE SHE HAS NOTHING
she spit her images
ELSE TO CLAIM
out on paper long enough ago
IN A MAN'S WORLD.
to know they're not real.
SISTERS, NOW IS THE TIME
so she curves herself
TO REACH----
onto a tree limb
WE'VE GOT A FEMALE EARTH
to test the art of being high.
UNDER OUR BACKS,
then she sings old blues
SO WE CAN'T GO DOWN
for herself and the water
ONLY BACK TO OURSELVES
all afternoon.
AND UP.

memo: to arrogant artists

It's cool
that you're creative
cause tears
bring smiles
(and other corny
but pertinent
stuff.)
I repeat,
it's cool
that sometimes people
give you special privileges
maybe
you need license
to deal with the suffering
such perception
brings.
(Although at times
I think
you give yourselves airs.)
But there are people
who see as clearly
as you do
but don't have
their own special
(maybe "magic")
way of saying it.
That's a kind
of anguish too
but I don't hear you
recognize it
and you should
because it's
a crime
to hurt without
a voice.....

SHOTS SHORT

Matlovich Loses First Round

T/Sgt. Leonard Matlovich has been given a general (less than honorable) discharge for being gay in the military. Matlovich took the stand at his review board hearing and announced his refusal to "contract to be celibate, not to practice homosexuality" while serving in the Air Force. The Air Force had implied that Matlovich's remaining in the military depended on his abstaining from "practicing" his homosexuality. Like Keith, Matlovich vows to appeal his discharge all the way through federal courts, in order to challenge the military's anti-gay regulations.

Gay Saves Ford

Gays and the military made additional news when ex-Marine Oliver Sipple saved President Ford's life by knocking the gun out of Mrs. Moore's hand as she shot at Ford. In subsequent news articles lauding Sipple's action, the implication was made that Sipple was gay and that was a probable reason for the White House not having extended an official "thank you" for his bravery. However, the publicity of Sipple's homosexuality has had an adverse effect on relations with his family and friends, and caused Sipple considerable anguish. At last report, Sipple has filed a multi-million dollar lawsuit against the San Francisco Chronicle for unauthorized statements concerning his sexual orientation.

Boycott

The Gay Media Coalition (GMC), totaling more than 35 gay and feminist organizations, is calling for a boycott of the Village Voice. The weekly Voice has long been criticized by the gay community. GMC is urging people to stop buying the Voice, to cancel subscriptions, and to stop all advertising. (The Advocate)

Erie County Copout

The Erie County Librarians Association recently negotiated a new contract with Erie County (which includes Buffalo). One of their demands was enumeration of an anti-discrimination clause. In addition to the standard age, race, religion, sex, etc., the Association wanted the words "sexual preference." However, in the final contract, "sexual preference" was omitted. It's been reported that during a meeting between the Association and the County, Peter Wax, the County's labor negotiator flatly stated, "We are not going to give you people preferential sex." After the laughter subsided, the Association's representative retorted, "And certainly not on library time."

In a letter to Madeline Davis - an Erie County librarian and past president of Mattachine - the Librarians Association's former president, Robert M. Gurn, advised that the County was adamant about not including sexual preference in the written contract. However, he added, "the Association's negotiators feel that we do have a clear understanding with the county", that there would be no discrimination "on this basis." We believe the gay community might not have so clear an understanding!

Parents

Mrs. Betty Fairchild, founding member of Parents of Gays, is seeking manuscripts that show correspondence between gay people of all ages and their parents and others. The book envisioned will be a sympathetic and realistic presentation of the variety and scope of personal experiences, problems, and feelings of various family members in dealing with the presence of gay sexuality. In addition, short essays or poems directly dealing with parent/gay child/family relationships will be of interest. Address to: Betty Fairchild, 3700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

Gay Congress Cancelled

Rafael A. Cruet, president of Comunidad de Orgullo Gay, reports that the proposed Second International Gay Rights Congress scheduled for 1975 in San Juan will not take place. He complains that the Congress which was supposed to remain in Edinburgh until transferred has been completely dissolved and that San Juan gays "have so much work to do locally that we do not have the time to work in an international level." A Latin American Gay Congress, however, is tentatively scheduled for April 1976, and information may be had from Sr. Cruet, Apartado 5523, Puerta de Tierra, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00906. (Integrity)

Official Comes Out

Deeply moved by the troubles of T/Sgt. Lenny Matlovich, the Harris County, Texas (Houston) Comptroller publicly announced his homosexuality - and was subsequently fired. Gary J. Van Ooteghem anticipated the outcome, however, noting that the step he took was something he has been "toying with" for a long time. "I feel like a hypocrite promoting myself as a heterosexual when in fact I was a homosexual," he commented. Ooteghem's plans for the future include working closely with the National Gay Task Force to lobby for gay rights. He expresses the hope that "Those of us who are gay who are prominent in business, education, or government will come alive and be counted. It might have a domino effect. If enough prominent citizens came forward, we'd have a good chance of selling our case to the public." (Source: Advocate)

Marxist Plot

El Caudillo, a magazine put out by the Argentine Ministry of Social Welfare, recently published an article entitled, "Put an End to Homosexuals," which denounced homosexuality as a "Marxist plot" and called for the internment of gays in work camps. The article also called for the formation of street brigades to "Go out and comb the streets and hunt down these characters who dress like women, speak like women, and think like women." The article concluded, "Put them in jail, or kill them." (NewsWest)

Fifth Defeat

The New York City gay civil rights bill suffered defeat number 5 in its long and controversial history. Intro 554 failed in committee by 3 votes, in the face of impressive favorable testimony. Try, try, try again!

Kidnap Connection

FBI agents are keeping mum about reports that there's a connection with the New York gay scene and the recent Samuel Bronfman III kidnapping. According to unpublished reports, there is a likelihood that Bronfman met his abductors in Uncle Charlie's South, a Manhattan gay club. Employees of the club have refused to talk to anyone about the reports, including CBS News and the N.Y. Post. FBI agents began making a connection, when they found photos of male nudes in the Brooklyn apartment in which Bronfman was held captive. (NewsWest)

Honorable Copout

On September 10th, Air Force Staff Sergeant Skip Keith was given an honorable discharge. Some time ago Keith had announced to a race relations class that he was gay. He immediately became subject to Air Force regulations prohibiting gays from serving. The bulk of testimony in Keith's seven-hour hearing was favorable, but the hearing officers declined to deal with whether the military regulation was right or wrong. Instead, they issued a recommendation for honorable discharge after basing their deliberations around whether Keith was subject to the regulations. Keith plans to appeal the decision, with it winding up in the Supreme Court, if necessary.

Sweet Goodbyes

The Allendale Theater - one of Buffalo's seedier skinflick houses - has been closed down tight by the Sheriff's Department. Authorities confiscated all the Allendale's projectors, etc. as a result of unpaid fines. The closing is one of a long series of anti-porno efforts by uptight area law ('morality') enforcers. But, no tears are being shed over the Allendale's demise. Having been the scene of countless vice squad entrapments of defenseless gay male patrons, the Allendale has been the source of untold anguish suffered by those men. No amount of grief heaped upon the Allendale owners - with whose complicity the vice squad entrapped at will - would compensate for the unnecessary pain caused to others.

Women On Wheels

A group of gay women announces what they think is the nation's first lesbian motorcycle club, The Sun Ray Beams Motorcycle Club of Miami - Fort Lauderdale. The women say they are striving for nationwide recognition and "invite lesbians from across the country to join." The Club may be reached by writing to its president, Janice Crane at: 1300 West Broward Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312.

Aspirant Answers

Asked for his position on gay rights, presidential aspirant Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson (Dem., Washington) replied: "I am not about to give into gay liberation and codify into law the business of homosexuality...It is the beginning of a breakdown of society. It strikes at the heart of family life and I'm not about to encourage this sort of thing... This is the way civilizations crumble. The logical end of homosexuality is the end of the human race." (GPU News)

Rights Meeting In NYC

On Monday, September 22nd, gay activists from around the state met with Werner Kramarski, New York State human rights commissioner. It was impressed on the commissioner that firm leadership from the Carey administration was needed in order to achieve much needed rights protection for gays. Mr. Kramarski promised personal support in the area of state legislation and indicated a willingness to pursue the possibility of an executive order from the Governor's office. Issuance of an executive order protecting gays in areas of state governmental jurisdiction was stressed as a positive first step in achieving comprehensive gay rights protection statewide. Representing gays from various areas of the state, were: Jean O'Leary and Bruce Voeller, National Gay Task Force; Eleanor Cooper, Lesbian Feminist Liberation (N.Y.C.); Ted Aldrich, N.Y. State Coalition of Gay Organizations lobbying consultant; Elaine Lafferty, Vice President of Mattachine New York (City); Lynne Taylor, Cornell-Ithaca Gay Liberation; and Don Michaels, President, Mattachine Buffalo.

In Come Out Comix

"Old, new, or non-dyke, you'll laugh out loud" advised Carol Clement, writing in Majority Report about a new comic book for women. Come Out Comix, by Mary Wings, "deals with all those hesitations and the excitement of that first gay party, after you've realized that, yes, you're a dyke," writes Clement. Comix hits the nerve centers of lesbian oppression through humor and without the burdensome rhetoric used in other mediums. Come Out Comix is available for 75¢ (plus 15¢ postage) from: Out and About, c/o A Woman's Place Bookstore, 1533 East Burnside, Portland, Oregon 97214. Bulk rates are available.

Irony

While Comptroller Ooteghem was being fired in Houston, the city council in Austin, Texas added their city to the growing list of municipalities in the United States to afford employment protection for gays. By passing a comprehensive equal employment ordinance on July 10th, Austin became the first city in Texas and the 23rd in the U.S. to prohibit employment discrimination against gays. (Advocate)

Analogy of the Year Award

Gerald Hannon, writing on obscenity laws in the October Body Politic, offers this analogy for those who view participation in sexual acts with equanimity, but shudder in horror at the consequences of looking at erotic material: "It is like expecting us to believe that though fine dining is a pleasurable and socially valuable experience, pictures of a well appointed table might provoke aberrant and hungry hordes to plunder the local deli."

Gay Activist Sues

David Thorstadt, president of Gay Activist Alliance, N.Y.C. has filed suit in N.Y. County Court to challenge the constitutionality of the state's sodomy law. Thorstadt advises that details will be made available soon.

RESTRUCTURING, cont.

'Forties movie queen drag whenever she takes over, while Myron prefers macho cowboy outfits during his innings. And you thought Bridey Murphy had problems?

Though much hindered by the other's presence, both Myron and Myra implacably pursue their separate goals. His is to find a way off the set and hers is to stay there forever, and thus acquire a head start on saving the still-functioning studio system and de-fusing the population bomb.

In the novel's ingenious conclusion each gets the chance to achieve his goal, but one succeeds and the other fails--at least temporarily. The last page of the book suggests, however, that la guerre des Breckinridge n'est pas finie. With any luck, we can expect a continuation of their saga in a few years' time.

MYRON, like its predecessor, is no great shakes as a psychological novel. The characters, even the brilliantly conceived Myra/Myron, are as thin as celluloid. The studs, for instance, whom Myra picks for her crusade against pater-nity are almost Platonic essences of machismo; consequently when she rides roughshod over them there's no messy empathy to hinder our enjoyment of their humiliation.

The whole rather loose structure of both books provides Vidal with the opportunity to show off his celebrated acerbic wit, as well as the vast resources of his general knowledge, particularly his immense stock of movie lore. He seems to have seen every movie made during Hollywood's Golden Age, and knows the names and mannerisms not only of the stars, but of the featured players, as well. If they had indexes these two novels might serve as inexpensive guides to Late Show viewing.

At least Vidal forbears. in MYRON, from inserting so many of those carefully articulated, mini-essays on politics, cinema and sex which studded (no pun intended) the pages of MYRA BRECKINRIDGE. Consequently MYRON is less overtly didactic and more satisfying in its structure.

The only drawback to Gore Vidal's returning to the same source of satiric wit, however, is that in the years since his first Breckinridge book came

out much of the novelty of its subject has faded, a victim of media exploitation, to which MYRA BRECKINRIDGE, unwittingly or not, gave much of the impetus. No longer are transsexuality and camp movie mania, of the type associated with Myron's favorite critic, Parker Tyler, quite such exotic subjects. And, as a result, MYRON suffers from a slight sense of deja vu.

Yet even this factor should not deter the true followers of the messianic MYRA, or the heretofore unconverted, from rejoicing in her latest manifestation. May she have as many comebacks as Gloria Swanson, whose triumphal return in Sunset Boulevard she undoubtedly would consider a mild prophecy of her own more glorious destiny as savior of "The Industry" and recreator of the sexes.

A PROTOTYPE, cont.

soon - so get off that letter and/or phone call now!

For Senator Javits or Buckley, send to: 110 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.

For Your Representative, send to: Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

BOBBI PREBIS, cont.

ally stretch far beyond our accomplishments." She has also found this to be both necessary and exciting. Bobbi has worked in the organization in several capacities, including the Vice Presidency, Speakers' Bureau, Health Committee, Counseling staff, and various activities committees, and has continuously maintained a place on the Board of Directors. Board membership has been of special value to her, because she has felt the importance of having women's views expressed in an organization that could easily have become male-dominated.

Bobbi was not always aware of the need for women to be heard. Her Gayness had been obvious to her since childhood, and through the newly formed Gay movement, she became more aware and proud of her lifestyle. But, "I had no concept of the emotional and social differences between Gay men and women. It was not until 1971 that I even began to con-

sider the importance of women, not only in terms of our special place in the Gay movement, but our roles in society at large."

1971 was the year of her introduction to Women's Liberation. For a long time she dismissed its participants as unwashed, inexperienced college students whose knowledge of living in the world was so limited as to make their opinions irrelevant to her life. "I was not listening. I didn't want to hear. We intimidated each other. We were aliens in each other's worlds." It took many meetings, many discussions and strangely enough, it took the obvious kind of excitement that is part of all marches and demonstrations to bring Bobbi to awareness. "Walking down streets in Albany, New York City and Buffalo with my Gay sisters, I was struck by the sense of closeness and support, and began to listen." For a woman who had spent many years as a male-identified Lesbian, the words and feelings expressed by women-identified women were a revelation. "I was one of them. We were a part of each other. Our differing backgrounds, ages and experiences, combined in the realization of a common bond of womanhood, a bond that incorporated generations of oppression and a striving for our rightful place.

Bobbi has worked with the Lesbian/Woman's movement in Buffalo since that time. She was a co-founder of the Sisters of Sappho and was active with Radicalesbians and Lesbians Uniting. It has been through association with Lesbians with strong women's consciousness and Gay consciousness that she has been able to solidify her personal views and energize those views to aid in producing a viable Gay women's movement in the city and the state.

Although she has expended time and effort, some of which has been understandably frustrating, Bobbi says that she has been doubly rewarded for this in knowing that these efforts are helping to make a world that will be healthier and happier than the one in which she has lived. "I am also grateful for having had the privilege of being born at the crossroads of two powerfully striving groups - women and Gays - my people."

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