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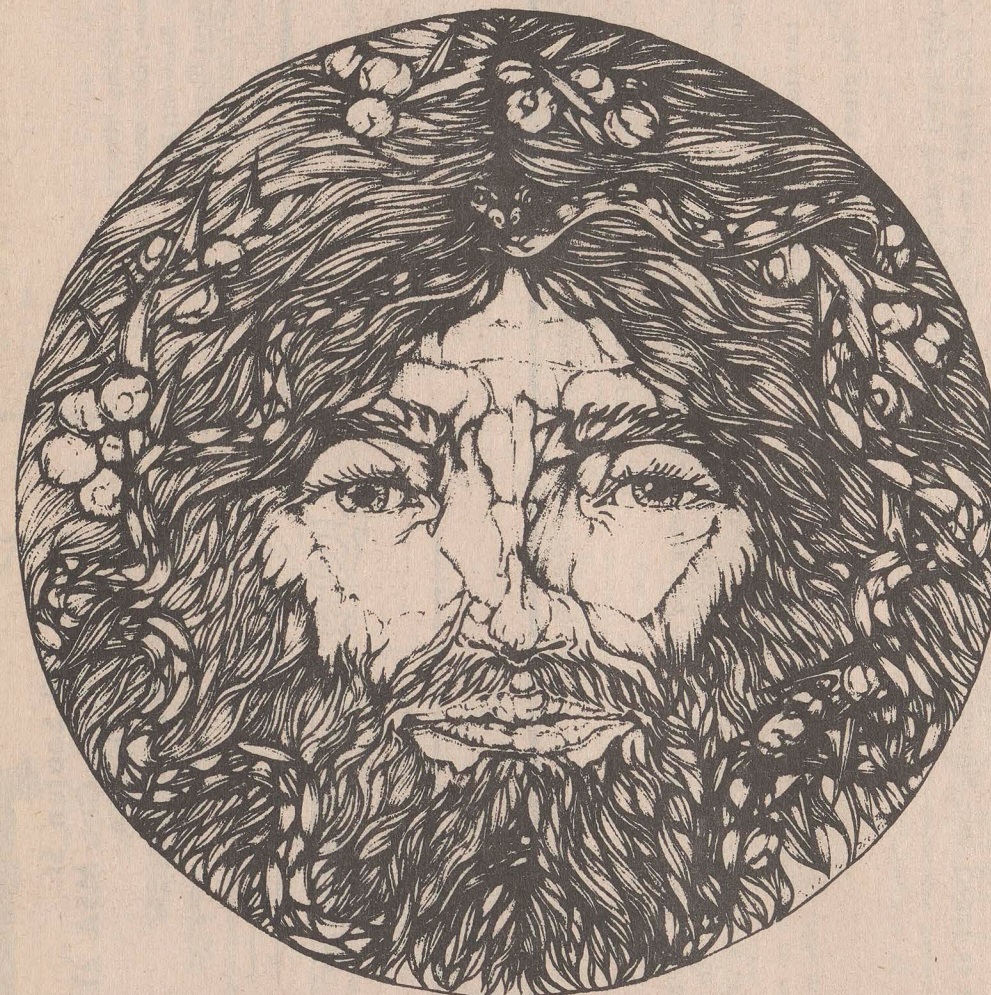
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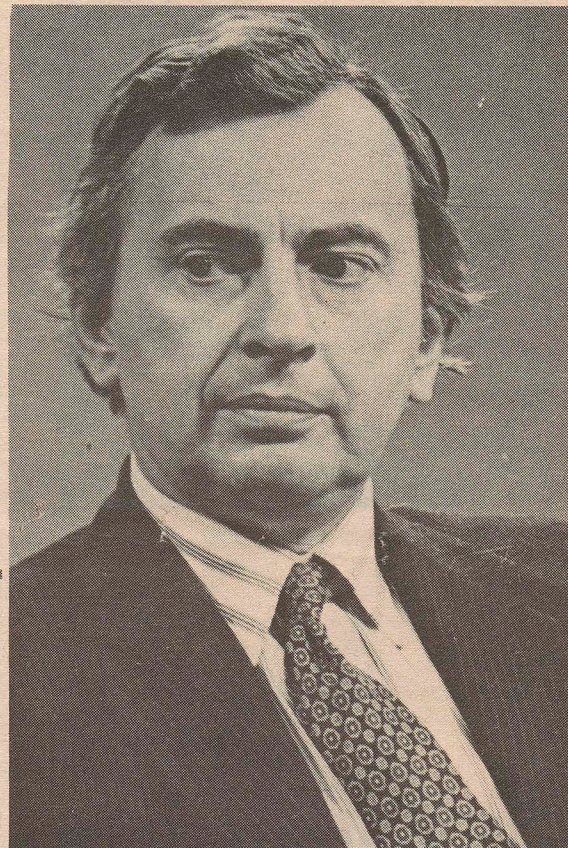
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WINTER—SPRING 1974

BOSTON, MASS.

(Eugene Luther) Gore Vidal, born in 1925, is the author of thirteen novels, a book of short stories, three books of essays, six Broadway plays, a book of teleplays, three mysteries, and he is, as one FAGRAG Staffer put it, "the most famous queer in the world" /sic/. His maternal grandfather was Thomas Gore, the first U. S. Senator from the state of Oklahoma, in whose vast library the young Vidal nurtured his love for reading and learning. Vidal's father was a West Point graduate, and later a sub-cabinet member in FDR's administration, with a specialty in aviation. After his parents were divorced, his first step-father was Hugh D. Auchincloss, who was later to become step-father to Jacqueline Bouvier (Kennedy, Onassis, ...). In 1943, Vidal graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy. He then joined the U.S. Army. In 1946, he published his first novel--WILLIOW. He was heralded as among the most promising writers of the "post war" period. In 1948, his third novel--THE CITY AND THE PILLAR--which dealt with the theme of homosexuality, was published. So controversial was the book, The New York TIMES refused to accept advertising for it, and Orville Prescott, as long as he remained editor of the Book Review Section, vowed that he would allow no favorable review of a Vidal book to appear in the magazine. In 1953, Vidal turned his talents to the new medium of television, and wrote a number of television plays. In 1960, he ran for the U. S. House of Representatives from his home district along the Hudson River in New York. He lost the election, but ran 20,000 votes ahead of the Democratic Party ticket leader--his friend JFK. He resumed writing, and in the last twelve years has had the distinction of having four of his novels gain the top place on the bestseller lists: JULIAN, WASHINGTON, D.C., MYRA BRECKINRIDGE, and BURR. In fact, as this is being written, Gore Vidal is the bestselling fiction writer in the English language.



GORE VIDAL

THE FAG RAG INTERVIEW

Steven Abbott and John Mitzel conducted and edited the following interview which took place at the Ritz Carleton Hotel on Sunday afternoon, November 2, 1973. Tom Reeves helped arrange the interview and was also present. Bob Hoffman and Charlie Lerrigo contributed their time and effort to the publication of the interview.

FAGRAG: Have allegations of homosexuality ever been used to ruin anyone in politics in your lifetime as far as you know?

VIDAL: The Senator from this state, David Ignatius Walsh, tried to make my father when my father was a West Point Cadet. Chased my father and his roommate, who had been down for the Inauguration of Woodrow Wilson, and Senator Walsh picked them up. They were both very innocent West Pointers. My father said it was just appalling. He chased them around the room. West Point was very innocent in those days. When my father went into Roosevelt's administration, he went absolutely to pieces when he had to go before a Senate committee. I always told him that way in the back of his mind there was the memory of his bad experience of Senator Walsh. So he regarded all Senators as potential rapists and pederasts. Walsh was caught during the war in a boy whorehouse /supposedly frequented by Nazi sympathizers/ in Brooklyn, with a man who will be nameless--Virgil Thompson. Not together, but Virgil was also caught. One newspaper started to break the story. Walsh was chairman of naval affairs, as well as the master of Massachusetts, and he was the Cardinal's business man. Roosevelt, under his wartime powers, said that any newspaper that printed this would be prosecuted and shut down. New York POST printed /it/ in the first edition, then got the word. No word ever appeared. And Walsh? Nothing ever happened to him. He was re-elected in due course. There wasn't anybody in Massachusetts from the little birds on the Common who didn't know what David Walsh was up to.

FAGRAG: I understood he particularly liked young boys.

VIDAL: Sailors, I suppose.

FAGRAG: The Jenkins thing made such an enormous scandal. At the same time, you apparently have no problem.

VIDAL: I stay away from YMCA men's rooms, for one thing.

FAGRAG: We understand that /J. Edgar/ Hoover actually sent him a bouquet of flowers. He was the only one in Washington who showed Jenkins any sympathy.

VIDAL: Hoover cared.

FAGRAG: He was helping to give Hoover work.

VIDAL: After all, I dedicated AN EVENING WITH RICHARD NIXON to "J. Edgar Hoover and...

FAGRAG: Clyde Tolson...

VIDAL: With appreciation."

FAGRAG: Have you been following the Conspiracy Theorists in The REALIST? Mae Brussel, the Glass House Tapes, etc. She has a Conspiracy Newsletter.

VIDAL: No. I haven't seen that yet. Is this Krassner?

FAGRAG: I think he is helping. He publishes her now in The REALIST. Her next big scoop is: Who killed J. Edgar Hoover? We understand the Watergate crowd was in on that too.

VIDAL: I think we must allow the zeitgeist at least one victory.

FAGRAG: One thing you've said is that you didn't think that anyone was a homosexual.

VIDAL: I've always said it /homosexual/ was just an adjective. It's not a noun,

though it's always used as a noun. Put it the other way. What is a heterosexual person? I've never met one. When you say Lyndon Johnson and Adlai Stevenson behaved like two typical heterosexuals over the weekend, in their response, well, I don't know what they had in common. To me, it's just descriptive of an act.

FAGRAG: What about faggot or fag, the way we use it today? For example, in the title of the paper FAGRAG?

VIDAL: I prefer the word faggot which I tend to use myself. I have never allowed actively in my life the word gay to pass my lips. I don't know why I hate that word.

FAGRAG: I think it's because the ADVOCATE and the bourgeois press has picked up on it and made it into a noun.

VIDAL: Also, I mean, historically it meant a girl of easy virtue in the 17th Century. They'd say: Is she gay? Which meant: Is she available? And this, I don't think, is highly descriptive of anybody. It's just a bad word. You see, I don't think you need a word for it. This is what you have to evolve. These words have got to wither away in a true Hegelian cycle.

FAGRAG: A lot of homosexuals seem to be very concerned about whether they are called gays, faggots, fairys, or homosexuals.

VIDAL: I would give as a general warning: it may not apply to anybody in your generation, but certainly in the case of mine that I could have been from 1948 on the Official Spokesman. But I have no plans to be so limited. I'm a generalist, and I'm interested in a great many other things. Knowing the mania of the media, they want everybody



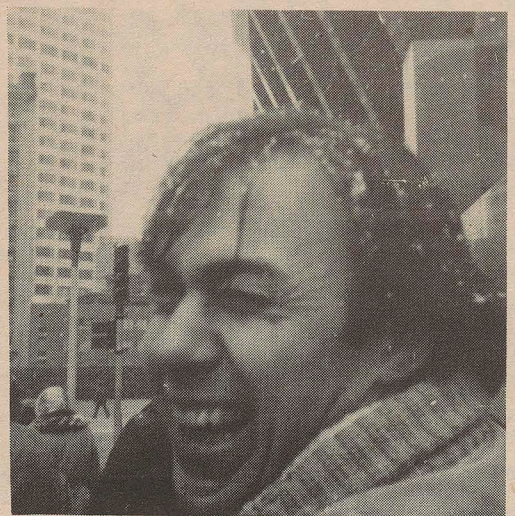
The 200th Anniversary of the Boston Tea Party. This time around there were faggots and dykes in a group carrying signs, screaming, protesting and generally having a good time. The weather was terrible; it snowed, then rained. Big lavender sign screeched GAY REVOLUTION. Exxon got dumped into the Harbor. Off the king! And let queens live!

Photo credits:

Charley Lerrigo: pages 1, 4, 6, 9
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Douglas Bessette: covers and pages 16, 22, 24, 26, 28 (top)
Don Meuse: pages 11, 18, 19, 29
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Jesse: pages 21, 27
Allyn: pages 23, 30, 34



rainwater malice
we walked waves
over snow ploughs
chrome steel shone
on his red pants
neck exposed
when I just
touched him
he snapped
without moving
his lips or eyes
fixed appliances
potatoe chips
in a romance
turned to ice

--Charley Shively

GOOD NEWS!

RESOLVED BY THE AMERICAN PYSCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION:

- I. Removal of homosexuality per se from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders and substitution of the following new category and definition:

302.0 Sexual orientation disturbance:

This category is for individuals whose sexual interests are directed primarily toward people of the same sex and who are either bothered by, in conflict with, or wish to change their sexual orientations. This diagnostic category is distinguished from homosexuality, which by itself does not constitute a psychiatric disorder. Homosexuality per se is a form of sexual behavior and like other forms of sexual behavior which are not by themselves psychiatric disorders, is not listed in this nomenclature of mental disorders.

II. Civil rights and sodomy repeal statement:

Whereas homosexuality per se implies no impairment of judgement, stability, reliability or general social or vocational capabilities, therefore, be it resolved, that the American Psychiatric Assn. deplores all public and private discrimination against homosexuals in such areas as employment, housing, public accommodations and licensing, and declares that no burden of proof of such judgement, capacity or reliability shall be placed upon homosexuals greater than that imposed on any other person. Further, the American Psychiatric Assn. supports and urges the repeal of all legislation making criminal offenses of sexual acts performed by consenting adults in private.

(The American Psychiatric Assn. is, of course, aware that many other persons in addition to homosexuals are irrationally denied their civil rights on the basis of pejorative connotations derived from diagnostic or descriptive terminology used in psychiatry, such as schizophrenia, and deplores all such discrimination. This resolution singles out discrimination against homosexuals only because of the pervasive discriminatory acts directed against homosexual behavior.)

Both resolutions are authored by Dr. Robert L. Spitzer of New York, a member of the APA Task Force on Nomenclature and Statistics. They have been voted on favorably over the past two months by the APA Assembly of District Branches, the Council on Research and Development, and the Reference Committee.

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how to *participate* in Fag Rag:

Send us your drawings, photos, writings, criticisms, or money.

Join discussions on what-to-do-next, opinions on what's been submitted (Steve Abbott will be mailing xeroxes of submissions to all who want to read it before meetings), and editing. We usually start the process about 2 or 3 months before the issue comes out, with meetings every few weeks, and then layout in a couple of days at the end.

Write to us at Fag Rag, P. O. Box 331, Kenmore Station, Boston, 02215.

to be in a pigeonhole. Oh, yes, he's The Official Fag. Oh, yes, he's The Official Marxist. And I have never allowed myself to be pigeonholed like that. Also I don't regard myself as one thing over another. The point is, why not discard all the words? Say that all sexual acts have parity. Which is my line.

FAGRAG: If they are not forced.

VIDAL: Well, obviously. A voluntary act, voluntarily received, is equal to any other. And why make any fuss about what it is?

FAGRAG: In FAGRAG FIVE there appeared a reprint from McDonald's magazine, POLITICS, of an article by Robert Duncan entitled "The Homosexual in Society." Duncan used the word "jam" and I'd never heard it.

VIDAL: "Jam" was a much-used word.

FAGRAG: Referring to?

VIDAL: Kind of Trade, but not really Trade. Pretty hard to get. Perhaps when the fact was removed, the word withered away too. No one seemed to be impossible. "Jam" only referred to boys.

FAGRAG: Were there other words like that which have since atrophied?

VIDAL: I don't know. You'll find "jam" in THE CITY AND THE PILLAR, I think. I did a little glossary in there in my encyclopedic or World Almanac way. "Dirt" was a word. That was for a bad piece of trade. I'm supposed to have coined the phrase "Last year's Trade is this year's competition." That's in THE CITY AND THE PILLAR. I noticed it was quoted in FAGRAG SIX. I don't think it was original with me, but I get the credit because I was the first to write it.

FAGRAG: GAY SUNSHINE has had a series of interviews with gay writers. Something that strikes me in every one of them is that at some point or another they deal with the issue of their own homosexuality and their writing. They act as though homosexuality, the desire for sex, particularly sex with youth--which may not be at all an issue with you--is an obstacle to writing. The desire for sex, although it produces some of the creativity, somehow interferes with the writing. During the period of sexual activity there is a great deal less writing.

VIDAL: I don't understand that at all. But Hemingway said something very much like that. He always liked to maintain sexual continence when he was writing seriously.

FAGRAG: Are you sexually active when you write?

VIDAL: The more active I am, the better I write. I'm much more interested in economics and class than sex. All this is part of the middle class. Part of the Puritan work ethic. You keep your seed in your bank, and it collects interest; you have too many drafts on it, you weaken it. This is a Protestant, work ethic, middle class thing. It was my very good fortune not to be born middle class. So I'm at a completely different vantage point.

FAGRAG: Do you think you're similar to the working class, in this respect?

VIDAL: Well, that's what's always been claimed by the British, and I think it /similar/. The fact is that for us there was really no fuss about sex. You did as much as you could. I'm fascinated by this book about Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson /PORTRAIT OF A MARRIAGE/. That is really mind blowing to middle class Americans. Happy marriage with children. Mature, vaginal heterosexuality. Marvin and Marion are just wonderful, warm people. He /Harold Nicolson/ was a relentless chaser of Guardsmen and she /Vita Sackville-West/ of cunt. This is the condition of people who are not trapped into that economic middle-class tightness, and the worry of always keeping up appearances, the worry that they're always going to be "done in" by somebody. The working class, God knows, they're filled with terrible passion and prejudice, but give them a sexual act to perform that seems amusing. In Texas--that relentless Bible belt--there's nobody who is not available. It is like Italy.



Sen. David Ignatius Walsh's statue rests by the Fiedler Footbridge--gateway from the Block to the Esplanade. Born in 1872, Holy Cross graduate, Gov., Sen., 1919-25, defeated & re-elected, 1925-47--Walsh was an early pioneer in ethnic politics. He was one of the first to forge what's now called the New Deal Coalition--although he voted for immigration restriction in 1924 and was a latecomer to FDR's 1932 bandwagon. Defeated in 1946, Walsh died in 1947. An interesting question: Did his arrest in the baths contribute in any way to his 1946 defeat? or was it just the political pendulum swinging against Democrats?

FAGRAG: Is there legal prostitution in Italy? Are there bordellos?

VIDAL: No. Rome is actually very Puritan. That is because the Pope lives there.

FAGRAG: Banning miniskirts in the Vatican.

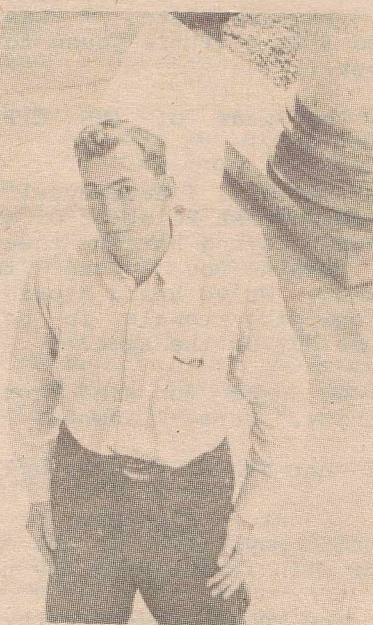
VIDAL: Yeah.

FAGRAG: I was amazed after reading so much about Lindsay's crackdown in Times Square. I was there a week ago and found it to be just...

VIDAL: Just as cheerful as ever. I love Times Square. It's never been better.

FAGRAG: We have been discussing the issue of S & M at FAGRAG. How should we deal with it? I have a friend from a repressed Jewish background. He is now a mad queen and has exploded...

VIDAL: That's it.



FAGRAG: He can't be held back. Cockrings, dog collars and the whole thing. Are there sex toy shops in Rome? And how do you contrast the sort of decadent Puritanism with sensuality--of which you've always been an advocate--in Italy?

VIDAL: The Italians are naturally sensual and opportunistic about sex. They don't fuss. That's one of the reasons why there are really no queer bars. Pornography is really outlawed, though there probably would be if the law allowed it.

FAGRAG: Do all middle class men have mistresses?

VIDAL: Yeah. Till the traffic got so you couldn't get across town.

FAGRAG: From five to seven stuck in a traffic jam. What is your attitude toward S & M? Do you think it only a Northern European, Anglo phenomenon?

VIDAL: Doesn't seem very Latin to me. You don't see anything like that in Latin countries.

FAGRAG: In Greece?

VIDAL: I've spent a lot of time around Athens and in the islands and I never saw any sign of it. I don't know very much about it.

FAGRAG: The interviews that writers usually give to GAY SUNSHINE always seem to dwell on promiscuity. Your life seems to be very different.

VIDAL: As promiscuous as I can make it.

FAGRAG: Yeah. But you have more style than almost any writer. I loved that story in one of your essays about your going to bed with Kerouac.

VIDAL: /Laughter/

FAGRAG: So much for the "Tell..."

VIDAL: "Tell It Like It Is" school.

FAGRAG: When at Boston University, Ray Mungo was a big and up-and-coming star. I don't know whether you have read his books. Maybe he just fizzled out after Woodstock and what not. But that same kind of "We're groovy. We're hip. We're with it and we smoke dope. But don't touch our rear ends." He finally got fucked in a hay loft in New Hampshire. It came out in his last novel. Since then, he went to India.

VIDAL: Oh, dear.

FAGRAG: He couldn't deal with sodomy and his Irish background.

VIDAL: Became very spiritual after that.

FAGRAG: Boston is predominately Irish. And even if the sex act is accomplished, I think most of the time it is not enjoyed.

VIDAL: Is that still a problem?

FAGRAG: It still is. Some of the working class cannot enjoy sex. Even with the desire, they do not seek to educate themselves to become expressive in sex or allow themselves to enjoy it. It's "Wham Bam, Thank you" /as Bowie puts it/ and out the door. Still.

VIDAL: The Irish are a very special case. In Ireland, itself, there is no sex at all of any kind as far as we've observed. They are just drunk. They don't like women at all. They're really misogynous. I think they're attracted to men, and it is much easier to go and get drunk with a man. I know a very attractive English girl. She's wild about the Irish boys. She said: "to trap one into bed. You just have to plan for days. You have to get him drunk enough so that he will do it, but just before he gets too drunk and cannot do it." She said: "you have to pounce at the exact moment."

FAGRAG: Boston has a bit of that left. The Irish are the type I chase. If they are married, I come on very strong as a gay liberationist. I wrote that thing entitled "Is Today's Trade Tomorrow's Competition?" Many people on the FAGRAG Staff did not believe it. If they're married, it's once. And then maybe a phone call. But, invariably, I never see

them again. They live with their guilt. They can never come back and admit that...

VIDAL: You have perhaps not faced the fact that your performance was not good enough to attract them. /Laughter/

FAGRAG: Recently I met an 18 year-old South Boston Irish Catholic. The amount of fear and psychic crippling in him seemed great. Is it the Irish or the system?

VIDAL: A lower-class Wasp boy in Virginia is totally different. And yet they have the Bible belt. They are Baptists. They believe all that hell-fire stuff. And absolutely no sexual guilt at all in the South.

FAGRAG: They marry and settle down.

VIDAL: They used to. I think marriage and settling down now is no longer what it was.

FAGRAG: Child rearing is going out now too.

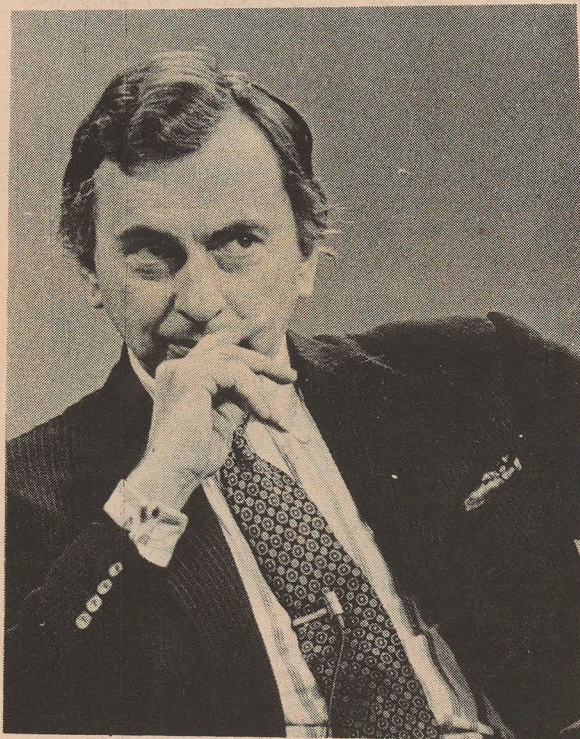
VIDAL: And as children go out, there's no more need. Marriage will be all through.

FAGRAG: Do you have any children?

VIDAL: I may have a daughter, yes.

FAGRAG: We were wondering. You were very coy in TWO SISTERS.

VIDAL: Well, it's true. I don't know. It was either me or a German photographer. I did pay for the abortion. She had the baby anyway.



FAGRAG: You have been very open in your life in dealing with taboo. First in THE CITY AND THE PILLAR, in many of your essays, and then with MYRA BRECKINRIDGE. Where do you draw the line? Is the line constantly shifting? In the VIVA interview, you were asked: "Was your first experience with a man or a woman?"

VIDAL: I think I had a very funny answer. I don't think she got it right. I said: "I was much too polite to ask."

FAGRAG: She /The Interviewer/ should have been.

VIDAL: "Was it a man or woman?" "I was much too polite to ask."

FAGRAG: She did not get that?

VIDAL: I thought it was a very funny line. A gentleman never asks the sex of the person he is going to bed with.

FAGRAG: Can I ask you a qualifier on that question?

VIDAL: Yeah.

FAGRAG: Were you younger than 18 when you had your first experience?

VIDAL: Oh my god. I was eleven. And I was brought up in the South.

FAGRAG: Washington, D.C.? Virginia? The South?

VIDAL: Incredible South.

FAGRAG: You loved your father very much, didn't you?

VIDAL: I adored him, yes.

FAGRAG: And Hugh D. Auchincloss was your step-father?

VIDAL: Yeah. I liked Hughdie. But he's a magnum of chloroform.

FAGRAG: Do you still see the Auchinclosses much?

VIDAL: I see my sister. There are so many Auchinclosses, you are bound to see some. They are always around.

FAGRAG: Were you an only child?

VIDAL: I was an only child until I was about 13.

FAGRAG: Even though you were not middle class, was there ever a time in that whole period that you felt you worried about your sexuality?

VIDAL: Never. Absolutely never.

FAGRAG: No identity crisis? No breakdown?

VIDAL: I did exactly what I wanted to do all the time.

FAGRAG: You were very beautiful when you were young. You're good-looking now, too, but pretty in your youth.

VIDAL: So I read in all these memoirs of my great beauty.

FAGRAG: Yes. Truman /Capote/ said you took him to the Everard /Baths/.

VIDAL: I did take Truman to the Everard. Couldn't have been funnier. "I just don't like it..." /mimicks Truman Capote/

FAGRAG: Does Truman go to the Trucks? What does he do?

VIDAL: He falls in love passionately with air conditioning repair men. He had a tragic affair recently with an air conditioning repair man.

FAGRAG: There is one thing you said about Capote's writing: "So like Faith Baldwin." If that's true about his life, he's got the inspiration.

VIDAL: I can't read him because I'm diabetic.

FAGRAG: Regarding youth, are you never attracted by younger people?

VIDAL: Oh yes. I said I don't flatter the young, either as a writer or as a performer. And I don't flatter them sexually. That doesn't mean I do not like them.

FAGRAG: Do you enjoy being seduced as much as seducing.

VIDAL: No. I hate it.

FAGRAG: Getting back to the right-wing closet, repressed mentality...We have a Study Group in Boston in which we talk about repression, the matrilinear origins of civilization, your novels, Sontag, Firbank, etc. I was born in 1948, so I am a little young to remember this, but...

VIDAL: The year of THE CITY AND THE PILLAR.

FAGRAG: Exactly. I date myself from it. They rebroadcast Point of Order, and it has been playing here in theaters. The David Schine-Roy Cohn thing is intriguing. We've heard stories of them naked snapping towels in hotels. Did that come out at the time?

VIDAL: We used to sing "Come Cohn or Come Schine." Sure. /Laughter/

FAGRAG: That it was a cover-up?

VIDAL: Senator Flanders of Vermont, noble old boy, tried to not only knock them off with it but McCarthy himself.

FAGRAG: The whole Army-McCarthy hearings

were meant as a cover up for this homosexual relationship?

VIDAL: Yeah. McCarthy himself was a homosexual. This sort of wing of "preverts."

FAGRAG: Do you have a conscious feeling about your writing and politics? Do you feel you've got a political role?

VIDAL: No.

FAGRAG: Even though you're not in politics, you have a base. When I saw you on /Dick/ Cavett the other night, after you destroyed that poor Jesuit, I remarked that what's so refreshing about seeing you compared to others on the tube is that you come out with the truth very casually.

VIDAL: I'm not running for office. I don't have to worry about the unpleasant mail. I made the decision in '64 that I was not going to go to Congress. It was very plain that I would have been elected if I had run. And, I turned down, in the beginning of '68, the nomination and support for the Senate.

FAGRAG: You were thinking of running in '68?

VIDAL: As late as '68. This was before MYRA BRECKINRIDGE came out. I finally told them. I said: "Look kids, I think without this book we might do it, but with this book, we won't be able to get through."

FAGRAG: We were discussing the article "The Ways of Gore Vidal" /ATLANTIC, March 1972/. You said you could have been President if it had not been for the fag thing. What is your attraction to power? It comes through in your writing.

VIDAL: Yes. That was a very good analysis of MYRA BRECKINRIDGE /in FAGRAG SIX/. Who did that?

FAGRAG: We did.

VIDAL: Awfully good. In fact I'm giving it to Jason Epstein /of the NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS/. I've written a sequel called MYRON BRECKINRIDGE.

FAGRAG: Yes.

VIDAL: Myra lives! Jason is a brilliant man. But just a real tight-sphinctered Jewish patriarch at heart. It's just blown his mind. "I don't get it, Gore," he said. "I just want to lie down and not think about it."

FAGRAG: Don't Jewish editors laugh at all?

VIDAL: Not much at all. No. He said: "Do you know what it's like? When I was about eleven, I was taken to a Chinese opera downtown in the Village. Between this crazy opera going on on the stage, this music I'd never heard before and people selling oranges, it blew my mind for about six months. That's what I'm having with MYRON."



FAGRAG: Are you going to have trouble with the Supreme Court ruling? Will you have to cut parts?

VIDAL: I have a way around it.

FAGRAG: About the Bi-Centennial and the country remembering its beginning--I know your essays in HOMAGE TO DANIEL SHAYS--have you thought much about this?

VIDAL: Bi-Centennial? I wrote BURR as my meditation on the political process.

FAGRAG: Politically, do you see any opportunity for using the whole remembrance of the origins of the country in a political way?

VIDAL: One tactic which is useful: you can always promote radical causes under the guise of Going Back to the Constitution. And sometimes quite legitimately. The Bill of Rights is still a radical document. I find sometimes when I'm trying to be an advocate, trying to convince a really difficult audience, you can always refer back to the origins and tell them that this is the way it was meant to be.

FAGRAG: When you've got Daniel Shays, Tom Paine and all the rest of them, you've got some rich potential.

VIDAL: Yes.

FAGRAG: You seem to indicate that you feel Nixon is really through. How significant is that? Do you really think that impeachment is an important thing to happen now?

VIDAL: Yeah. I think impeachment or resignation or indictment for a crime through the normal courts. The President could be indicted and put in jail without being impeached. That's the law, contrary to his /Nixon's/ position.

FAGRAG: Do you think that would have any effect on the system?

VIDAL: No. Nixon's not important in himself. The system will continue. The 4.4% who own the United States will continue to own it, and they'll be less inept the next time they pick a President.

FAGRAG: How can that situation be changed? It's got to change, if it's going to deal with world politics.

VIDAL: I don't know whether anything is bound to happen. I suspect there is going to be a great economic collapse in the country. Out of that, who knows who will pick up the pieces. Probably the military. I think we are more apt to have a military dictatorship.

FAGRAG: Do you think it will be a "liberal" military dictatorship?

VIDAL: Not if there are any West Pointers in it. West Pointers really are the fascists in the country.

FAGRAG: What role do you see Ted Kennedy playing in all of this?

VIDAL: He's irrelevant.

FAGRAG: Who will be the next emperor of the West?

VIDAL: Someone like General Haig. Some unexpected person. With John Connally acting as a front. It's more likely to be an oligarchy.

FAGRAG: You mean rejecting Nixon too, by saying we think it's time to...

VIDAL: I do not think they will prop him up. A few weeks ago I thought it was quite possible for Nixon to send Congress home. General Haig and the Pentagon would be happy.

FAGRAG: We hear Buckley and Goldwater criticizing Nixon.

VIDAL: When you have that, they realize they've got to get another front man. Ford will be all right for their purposes, I suppose. Anybody is.

FAGRAG: Of the 4.4%, half of it must be Eastern wealth, still more staid. Would they go in for that kind of dictatorship? They are the ones who are kicking up the fuss, aren't they?

VIDAL: They are not really. They are

hypocrites. Their man, put in to guard their interests, to give 37% of the budget to the military, that man has been stupid. So they are obviously incensed. He is ruining their game.

FAGRAG: In terms of the Constitution, don't you think it is important not to get rid of the sore, but to let the sore fester for three more years under lengthy investigations, more committees, more scandal coming out, so that the American public will finally become so repelled...

VIDAL: That is an optimistic view of it. Yet you could argue that it would make a perfect field for a coup. The longer it lasted--I mean it is Weimar Republic Time. It would be inevitable.

FAGRAG: Is the Constitution pretty much a dead letter except for two or three Amendments in the Bill of Rights?

VIDAL: I would just throw the whole goddamn thing out except for the Bill of Rights, and start all over again. The system does not work.

FAGRAG: But, of course, that is going to be the obvious thing, whether General Haig would want to...

VIDAL: A new Constitution which somehow--mysteriously--"We forgot to put the Bill of Rights in. Oh, we don't need that."

FAGRAG: Why can't we impeach Renhquist off the Supreme Court? He was in the Justice Department under Mitchell and that other cluck. He had a hand--a pretty bloody hand--in the ITT affair that no one has brought out yet. It seems that someone in Washington, perhaps Cox, was working on a Renhquist file.

VIDAL: Be nice to get him out. You might even argue that the appointment of a corrupt President, who had stolen an election, might be invalid. Why not get rid of them all? I was in Chicago yesterday, interviewed by Kupson /on TV...He loves Spiro Agnew. He loves any well known person. He was saying Agnew and Sinatra were there, blood in their eye. Sinatra was going to rehabilitate him. I said: "But what can he do? He's too incompetent to work." They're going to buy a baseball club for him. Run a crooked baseball team of some sort.

FAGRAG: What do you think of the talk-show circuit?

VIDAL: There's a whole technique to it. You just have to study how to do it. Use it to your own purposes.

FAGRAG: How do you get through mass media with what is essentially an anti-mass message?

VIDAL: You have to become an explainer. You have to make up your mind before you go on that you are going to make the following points. Don't make too many points because they cannot remember /them/. You are going to say: If I want to get the sex laws changed, I will then have thought out in my head how I'll lead the conversation. It does not make any difference what they ask; you just go right on. "Yes, that's interesting," and go right on to the point you were going to make. It's like any other kind of skill. You have to learn how to do it. It's very useful.

FAGRAG: But the media itself. It is sort of a reverse from McLuhan. The medium itself has such a powerful...

VIDAL: It is better than nothing. People do not listen. All day yesterday and the day before in Chicago, little old ladies, cabdrivers who I know hate my guts, all came up and wanted to talk about the exchange with the priest /on Cavett's show/. They were all very pleased by it.

FAGRAG: Did you talk with the Jesuit /Mr. John McLaughlin, a speech writer and Deputy Special Assistant to the President/ after the show?

VIDAL: He told me that Walter Cronkite was a notorious left-winger.

FAGRAG: The nature of the bourgeois press--the very fact that they teamed you with someone like that--does this make you feel compromised having to deal



with slime? That you're on a par with slime?

VIDAL: No. I'm the detergent.

FAGRAG: I think you did an "Inouye." You said: "Lies. Lies. Priest." You were not on camera then.

VIDAL: No, No. I said: "You are lying, priest. Think to your immortal soul." The Brother gulped on that.

FAGRAG: And, of course, that little cap at the end. A quick quote. I think he said something about UFO's.

VIDAL: And, as usual, I got the quote wrong. Everytime I quote I always get part of it wrong.

FAGRAG: Who is going to know? We are either stoned or drunk at 1 AM. The thing that bothers me is that every other elite--you come out of the liberal elite--in Germany, France, etc. produces leaders, phenomenal people.

VIDAL: No revolution ever came from the bottom.

FAGRAG: Exactly, but the United States, just in the last ten years, has had an attempt on the part of many people who come out of the elite...

VIDAL: An attempt to do what? Change things?

FAGRAG: Yes. From the Left. We have no leadership. The media has taken every figure in the "movement" just to take one example...

VIDAL: And used them up. I watched Abbie Hoffman from the beginning. I predicted the first time he appeared on the scene--at a debate between Tom Hayden and me. Abbie was in the audience. He got up and harangued. I could see they loved him on Television. "Freako." "Wild man." I said to myself: If that man is around in three years I'll be surprised. They will use him up. And then there will be another wild man, and he will be on a different kick.

FAGRAG: David Bowie now.

VIDAL: Yeah. Survival in the United States is not easy whether it is for a writer or a singer or anyone else. Certainly /it/ is a critical society. It's not easy at all.

FAGRAG: You did not make the Enemies List.

VIDAL: That's not true. I was Number 212. I can't remember. I wasn't in the top 20, which was one of their ways of destroying me.

FAGRAG: Have you ever had IRS, passport, or FBI trouble?

VIDAL: I've been broken into twice by the FBI when I was with the People's Party. As was Spock. You can always tell because they never take anything. They should at least take the TV set, but they are so damn lazy and it is heavy.

FAGRAG: These are agents?

VIDAL: Yeah. Then they would go through papers, papers, papers.

FAGRAG: Was this under Johnson or Nixon?

VIDAL: Nixon.

FAGRAG: Have they ever tried to talk with you?

VIDAL: No. I am on the FBI list of people never to talk to about anything. Because I went after Hoover about twelve years ago.

FAGRAG: Before it was fashionable.

VIDAL: Yeah. And really let him have it.

FAGRAG: Did you ever meet the man?

VIDAL: Yes.

FAGRAG: Did he look you in the eye? My brother always told me you can tell a queer because he will never look you in the eye.

VIDAL: Somebody was asking me /about Nixon/. Said he thought Richard Nixon was obviously homosexual. I said: "why do you think that?" He said: "You know, that funny, uncoordinated way he moves." I said: "Yeah, like Nureyev."

FAGRAG: What was your motivation behind the People's Party with Spock?

VIDAL: I didn't have any. I was just sort of riding along with it. We started the New Party in '68. The idea was simply to try and make a representative party. It was not worth doing. It was nothing but a group of young group therapists who didn't believe in 'elitism' or 'structure.' It was pointless.

FAGRAG: Do you have any fascination with China?

VIDAL: Yes, I do. Our present ambassador is a friend of mine, and I think I can get in through him. Yes, I do want to go. I am very curious.

FAGRAG: FAGRAG tries to see homosexuality in America at this point as being a vehicle for radical expression.

VIDAL: Yet when you get with any radical blacks or any radical anything, forget it.

FAGRAG: Remember the quote: "The place for a woman in the movement is on her back"? One wonders if there is not room now for what Hofstadter did with paranoia in American politics, something to do with sexual repression. I think MYRA B is the tip of the iceberg.

VIDAL: There is considerable work to be done. Every intelligent person in the country knows the thing is a joke.

FAGRAG: I do not know. I am very skeptical. Though I identify with your literary works, I sometimes wonder why you still have this tropism towards belief in the faith. Perhaps they could be manipulated in the right direction. When it comes to personality and style and reason and argument against the 4.4% and their money, you are going to lose.

VIDAL: Well, I do not know. I have seen attitudes change a good deal since I began. This magazine of yours would not have existed twenty-five years ago. I think the 4.4% changes in its own inscrutable way, but I do not think I believe it will be done by intelligent advocacy. I have said, if it is going to change, it is going to be collapse. The system will collapse. It does not work now. The government does not work. And the economic system is not working. Something will crash. Who picks up the pieces? I would want a social democracy as my replacement. I just want to get the god-damn population down by about two-thirds. Then there is plenty of room for everybody and plenty of wealth for everybody.

FAGRAG: You have been a big advocate for a long time of population control. You have been years ahead of Planned Parenthood, even, much less Norman Mailer...

VIDAL: He does not believe in contraception or masturbation. An incredible man.

FAGRAG: I think ecology, women's liberation and gay liberation have

little future except to the extent that they can all control population.

VIDAL: The 4.4% will agree with you, by the way. They are also the ones who passed the abortion laws.

FAGRAG: On the other hand, there is Margaret Mead's position: You cannot talk population control to the Third World.

VIDAL: I do not think you bother. They are going to die. They will die. There is nothing to be done about it.

FAGRAG: China is not dying.

VIDAL: No. But Latin America, most of Asia, Africa.

FAGRAG: The point that continues to plague me is the lack of leadership. I do not see any positive political strategy.

VIDAL: You need a new party. You come back to it again. I made my effort along with these others in '68 and again in '72.

FAGRAG: But what is the base?

VIDAL: If you saw the manifesto I did, "A Dialogue With Myself" /ESQUIRE, October 1968, Reprinted in HOMAGE TO DANIEL SHAYS/, you have got to have a party of human survival. When they get through freezing this winter, and the factories shut down, and the stock market collapses, and the currency goes down, and you cannot buy food, they are going to be ready next spring to look for...

FAGRAG: That is not a crisis of Nixon; that is a crisis of capitalism.

VIDAL: Thank god. That is what we have been waiting for. I think it is upon us.

FAGRAG: Do you see Nixon in prison in 1977?

VIDAL: It is my theory that he has committed every crime except sodomy which he will then do at Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary.

FAGRAG: Regarding the issue of censorship, we are doing an article on John Horne Burns. Particularly the job the critics did on him. Did you know him?

VIDAL: Yes.



FAGRAG: We find in researching him that there are only three pieces still extant since his death: your piece in the New York TIMES Book Review, Brigid Brophy's piece in the Sunday LONDON TIMES Magazine, and a piece in ONE magazine, a Los Angeles based homophile publication.

VIDAL: He was obliterated by the press.

FAGRAG: In rereading him, there is a certain circumspection that comes through. I can feel...

VIDAL: He is being careful.

FAGRAG: Very careful. The homosexual passion is there, breaking through...

VIDAL: He was careful in the first one, THE GALLERY. LUCIFER WITH A BOOK, however, /is/ when they /the critics/ let him have it. I think THE GALLERY is certainly the best of the "war books." It was much applauded, much admired. You see, he did six or seven books before THE GALLERY. He was an awful man. Monster. Envious, bitchy, drunk.

FAGRAG: Another Irishman.

VIDAL: Yeah. Bitter. Which was why THE GALLERY was so marvelous. It was his explosion into humanity at a fairly late date. I think he was in his early thirties, after a half-assed career as an English teacher and writing unprintable novels.

FAGRAG: Have you ever seen any of the manuscripts?

VIDAL: No. But I have been told about them by Freddie Warburg who published him in England who said they were all pretty bad. They must be around somewhere. /Warburg denies having seen them./

FAGRAG: How did he actually die? We cannot find out. Was he killed?

VIDAL: No, no, no. He was drinking himself to death in Florence. Every day he would go to the Grand Hotel and stand in the bar and drink Italian brandy, which is just about the worst thing in the world. And chew on fruit drops candy. He always said that it would counteract the drunkenness. He was living with a doctor, an Italian veterinarian. They had a rather stormy relationship, but nothing sinister about it. One day he was drunk at a bar, wandered out in the hot mid-day sun and had a stroke. Cerebral hemorrhage.

FAGRAG: At thirty-seven?

VIDAL: I think he wanted to die. They /the critics/ really wiped him out on LUCIFER WITH A BOOK. Same thing happened ... it is very funny that we were both, in 1947, the two leading writers in the country. The ineffable John W. Aldridge began his career with a piece in HARPERS Magazine, out of which came his book AFTER THE LOST GENERATION. He reversed all his judgements /later/. He began his career as our great admirer. He discovered we were dealing with the horrors of homosexuality. He then exactly reversed himself and began to applaud the Jewish giants who are still with us today. Aldridge is nothing if not a rider of bandwagons. So Burns was absolutely at the top then. We were both admired as War Writers. To be a War Writer was pretty gutsy. You cannot knock a War Writer. Then THE CITY AND THE PILLAR. Then LUCIFER WITH A BOOK. They /the critics/ said: "Oh my god. What is this we have been admiring?"

FAGRAG: Did the straight critics pick up on the homosexual themes in LUCIFER WITH A BOOK and THE GALLERY?

VIDAL: They got it in LUCIFER WITH A BOOK. He hit you on the head with it.

FAGRAG: One never knows the mentality of reviewers.

VIDAL: We wrote differently in those days, but it was perfectly plain what was going on in that school.

FAGRAG: And was that reason to condemn the book?

VIDAL: Entirely. Any writer suspected of being homosexual. When Norman Mailer met me in 1950, he said: "You know, Gore, I thought you were the Devil." Just terrible but true. The only thing that they respect, that they put up with, is

a freak like Capote, who has the mind of a Kansas housewife, likes gossip, and gets all shuddery when she thinks about boys murdering people.

FAGRAG: Capote is down in Houston, supposedly researching a book /about the mass murder./

VIDAL: What was he doing with a shovel by Sam Houston lake? /Laughter/

FAGRAG: What is it about that man that interests him in murder?

VIDAL: Peculiar.

FAGRAG: So Mailer went after you?

VIDAL: They all did. However, Capote never really touched on the subject. He is a Republican housewife from Kansas with all the prejudices. Just as Norman Mailer is a VFW Commander in Schenectady.

FAGRAG: It is rather amazing that just as you were accepted, really, for something like THE CITY AND THE PILLAR, just as it was becoming acceptable to deal with homosexuality as such, you came out with MYRA BRECKINRIDGE, which even among homosexuals is controversial.

VIDAL: I always remember a remark Faulkner made about Hemingway. Faulkner was very guarded in talking about his contemporaries. He once said to me: "You know, Hemingway's problem is that he never takes chances." You have got to keep going as far out as you can, as far as your imagination will take you.

FAGRAG: That is the chasm I see in your life and work. While on the one hand you have a fascination with power, you know more accurately than almost any other writer or politician in America the kind of mediocrities the American electorate coughs up, quashing out any kind of leadership. On the other, you are such an avant-garde writer, capturing the sensibility so exquisitely at any given time. You should understand that in America there is no true way of giving them. You cannot publish MYRA B without getting the housewife at the supermarket to go: No. Uh-uh. No way. Look at the job done on Rocky when he married Happy.

VIDAL: Never underestimate their corruption. If you can amuse them, they will forgive you just about anything. And if you are a success, they will crown you.

FAGRAG: What kind of success?

VIDAL: Money.

FAGRAG: Is that why the historical novels?

VIDAL: I am fascinated with the origins of the United States and Christianity, which were the two subjects I took on.

FAGRAG: Do historical novels make more money than the earliest novels like WILLIOW and IN A YELLOW WOOD?

VIDAL: Oh, yes.

FAGRAG: Book clubs and things.

VIDAL: Yeah.

FAGRAG: Why did you publish three mysteries in the fifties under the pseudonym "Edgar Box"?

VIDAL: I was broke. I needed money. I wrote each of them in a week. Except one of them. I wrote half of it in three days, and the house burned down. I had to go back to it, and I had forgotten who was the murderer. So I had to think of a whole new plot halfway through it. Try to figure out which one I had in mind. Ten thousand words a day, seven days.

FAGRAG: Did you have little charts on the wall? Esther here and Warren in the window?

VIDAL: No. When you are young, it is the most amazing thing. You can do formidable things.

FAGRAG: Formula or formidable?

VIDAL: Formidable. Formula takes maturity.

FAGRAG: It seems like the other way

around. It seems that someone who is such a craftsman as you would avoid formula.

VIDAL: I think you will find it takes a long time to find your tone of voice. I did not until JUDGMENT OF PARIS. I published five or six books before I really got it. I would not say got it right, but got it accurate. I was now coming through. For us, it was very difficult to overcome Hemingway and the NEW YORKER. That style was just so oppressive. One hardly knew of anything else. Anything else sounded affected in your voice.

FAGRAG: Did you know Paul Goodman in the fifties?

VIDAL: Yes. I had seen him around. I never knew him well.

FAGRAG: How do you measure his impact in terms of the sexual thing?

VIDAL: Well, I have not read that diary or journals he kept or anything, but /he was/ obviously very daring considering that he made himself the guru of the middlebrow educationalists.

FAGRAG: True. It was not until Sputnik that he almost nurtured his own following.

VIDAL: Yes. I was rather startled that in a way he had that much integrity. I always thought he was a bitter man. Playing up to a constituency. There is nothing worse than playing up to the young, a game I will never get into.

FAGRAG: Of course he was fascinated by the young. Perhaps that explains a part of his sexual fascination.

VIDAL: Yes. You can be sexually fascinated by them and still not flatter them. I think flattery had a lot to do with his sexual techniques. It has nothing to do with mine.

FAGRAG: One point we were quibbling about when we were doing the MYRA B piece /in FAGRAG SIX/ was a Senator Breckinridge -- in fact, you mention him in BURR--who was Buchanan's Vice-President. We had also heard that in the 1940's there was a famous transsexual...

VIDAL: In San Francisco?

FAGRAG: From a very rich family. She was supposedly known as the biggest queen in the world. And her name was Breckinridge. Is that true?

VIDAL: Well. It is true. Bunny Breckinridge. /Laughter/

FAGRAG: I'm writing a novel now called QUEENS in which I call myself "Bunny"...

VIDAL: Bunny. That is a great name.

FAGRAG: Typical queen's name.

VIDAL: Now this is the most extraordinary thing. I was reminded--years later--that I had never met Bunny Breckinridge, but that everybody that I knew had known him and talked to me about him. This was in the '40's. Then it just went right out of my head, and Breckinridge came into my head. I just wanted a very solid sounding name with lots of syllables. Myra would not be content with just being Smith.

FAGRAG: But the rumor was that she was related to the famous former Vice-President, V.P. Breckinridge.

VIDAL: Oh, well.

FAGRAG: We figured: Vidal is into politics. He will know that.

VIDAL: No. I did not know that.

FAGRAG: It is documented, I am told, in a book called QUEER STREET U.S.A.

VIDAL: About Bunny Breckinridge?

FAGRAG: Yes. Was she a transsexual or just a big queen?

VIDAL: Just a big queen. Very rich.

FAGRAG: It is funny, you know, that even twenty years later, the gay grapevine, which usually considers a day a

historical period, is still alive with Bunny Breckinridge. How are you going to get around the censorship /in your upcoming novel/ MYRON BRECKINRIDGE?

VIDAL: It is a secret. It has got to be a surprise. It is an ingenious way.

FAGRAG: What do you anticipate in censorship? Do you think it will get worse?

VIDAL: I just talked with Marc Jaffe--the head of Bantam Books. He said do not worry. Another year and it will be solved. The whole publishing industry and the movie industry have, for the first time in history, banned together. They are going to land on the Supreme Court. That ruling was written when the Court thought that Nixon had indeed become Caesar. It was written with the overconfidence of some sumptuary laws. Decadent Roman Empire. They are going to get a surprise. Also, they are monitoring every state capital. A man watches all state legislation that is apt to come up to deal with pornography. It is expensive. It costs them--publishers and movies--about \$5000 a year per state. They are all putting it up, so that any legislation that starts, they are there to somehow queer it. So he /Jaffe/ is rather optimistic.



FAGRAG: Why did you choose not to go to college?

VIDAL: I was supposed to go to Harvard. It occurred to me. I went into the army at seventeen, got out at twenty. What was the point of going into another institution when I had already written my first novel?

FAGRAG: But did you know that "education" was a fraud then, too? Or just a drag on your career?

VIDAL: No. In those days we thought you could actually go to a place like Harvard and it would be worth doing. But only if you wanted to lead a conventional life and rise in a law firm or something. I had the great pleasure of lecturing at Harvard while all my classmates from Exeter were undergraduates. Greatest moment of my life, I mean I really rubbed it in. It has all been downhill since.

FAGRAG: What about the poetry you wrote while at Exeter? Has it ever been published?

VIDAL: I hope not. There is a book coming out about me that I just read. A professor has gone and read it all.

FAGRAG: I hope it is going to be better than the Ray Lewis White study /GORE VIDAL, 1963/ on Twayne.

VIDAL: It is much better than that. Yes. As a matter of fact it is rather good because he has really got a line on MYRA and all that.

FAGRAG: What is his name?

VIDAL: Ah...Bernard Dick.

FAGRAG: With a "D".

VIDAL: And I just noticed that somebody has just written a book about Truman /Capote/. A Professor Nance. So I said: Between Professor Dick and Professor Nance...

FAGRAG: ...The truth will surely come out.

VIDAL: Random House is doing it.

FAGRAG: Your writings or a biography?

VIDAL: It is a critical biography. All the work. /Bernard Dick. THE APOSTATE ANGEL: A CRITICAL STUDY OF GORE VIDAL, May 1974./

FAGRAG: I suppose literary criticism is one of the penalties for being prolific when you are young. By middle age, you have to start dealing with critical biographies.

VIDAL: Writers younger than I am, like Updike and Harold Pinter. There are more books about Harold Pinter than there are about Chekhov. Most extraordinary thing.

FAGRAG: It is Sputnik again. It is all the college-educated TIME subscribers who buy books now and belong to book clubs.

VIDAL: Nobody really reads these books. It is make-work so you can get tenure in universities. Who has not been done from the forties? Ah, there is Vidal, Willingham... Let us do Willingham.

FAGRAG: We saw a Susskind show recently where they had all the old stable of Philco Playhouse writers.

VIDAL: Oh, really?

FAGRAG: Chayefsky. And who is the Englishman /Australian/ who writes novels now?

VIDAL: Sumner Locke Eliot. A great wit. Very charming.

FAGRAG: Were you part of that stable?

VIDAL: Sure. I did VISIT TO A SMALL PLANET.

FAGRAG: Chayefsky said he did MARTY for \$900. He was not bitter about this now because he is making lots of money, but the other guests did a little complaining. Now David Susskind and all the critics...

VIDAL: David was their agent.

FAGRAG: My impression is that you did well. VISIT went on to become a movie and a Broadway play.

VIDAL: Yeah. Chayefsky went on. He made several movies.

FAGRAG: Did you make money out of your television plays?

VIDAL: For me it was a hell of a ...As a writer, I never seemed to be able to make more than \$7000 a year, year in and year out.

FAGRAG: But you were published before you went and they were not.

VIDAL: Oh, yes.

FAGRAG: They were just sort of Kitchen Writers from Brooklyn.

VIDAL: Radio men. Radio joke writers.

FAGRAG: You do a lot of projects. It was mentioned in ATLANTIC that you were doing a screenplay entitled PLAZA. I looked for this and never saw it.

VIDAL: That was Robert Aldrich. Rather

not a bad idea. He blew the financing. It never got made.

FAGRAG: Also, I read in LIFE that you were doing an experimental novel called DREAMS. Then I never read anything else about this.

VIDAL: I wrote part of it. I never finished it. I think it is mostly going into MYRON.

FAGRAG: You will be pleased to know that when I was at the Boston Public Library doing xerox work of reviews of Horne Burns's stuff from the forties, LIFE magazine--in 1947--had a big interview with Gore Vidal: Young Author. Someone had taken a razor blade and cut it out.

VIDAL: My picture.

FAGRAG: The whole article. The picture and the text. Whether they were censoring or keeping it, I do not know. If they use a razor blade, they keep it, I suppose. Though with the agents of the Pope in Boston, you never know...

VIDAL: That is right.

FAGRAG: Concerning your relationship with Howard Austin. What is the financial arrangement and/or how will you leave your money?

VIDAL: I have lived twenty-three years with the same person. Presumably because I am older I will die first and just leave it to him. That is all.

FAGRAG: Do you know anything about other "gay" authors who died and left money?

VIDAL: Somerset Maugham left Alan Searle very well provided for.

FAGRAG: Was there a big scandal with the Maugham estate?

VIDAL: Maugham was just so ga-ga. He was making trouble all over the place. /He/ tried to cut his grandson out by saying that his daughter was not really his daughter, and she was--curiously enough.

FAGRAG: Gide was married. Did he have a family?

VIDAL: He had no children. I do not know where Gide's money went. Probably to Marc Allegret, the director.

FAGRAG: Will Capote be very rich when he dies?

VIDAL: Capote has no money.

FAGRAG: Really? Living at the U. N. Plaza?

VIDAL: This is one of the reasons why he has no money. He thinks he is Bunny Mellon...to get back to another Bunny. He thinks he is a very rich society Lady, and spends a great deal of money.

FAGRAG: Where does Auden's money go?

VIDAL: He had no money.

FAGRAG: He leaves an estate, though.

VIDAL: If he left \$10000, I would be very surprised.

FAGRAG: What will Isherwood do?

VIDAL: He would leave it to Don /Bacardy/, and to anyone he wants to.

FAGRAG: Are you satisfied with Random House?

VIDAL: They have done a good job on this book.

FAGRAG: They have done a fantastic job. They have gotten all the reviews out in a couple of weeks.

VIDAL: She /Selma Shapiro, a Random House person/ just told me: It has only been out two weeks and it is number one in New York and number one in Philadelphia.

FAGRAG: Do you enjoy the historical novel, or is it a drudge so that you can do something mad in between?

VIDAL: No. I really like them very much.

FAGRAG: One of the delightful things about rereading your work is the interweaving. For example, the boy Peter, in WASHINGTON, D.C., mentions

that there was a statue of Burr either in his house or in Senator Day's office. Do you remember that?

VIDAL: It was Cicero and they thought it was William Jennings Bryan. /WASHINGTON, D.C., page 149/

FAGRAG: No. What Peter wanted to do. It had been suggested to Peter that he do graduate work while continuing to study the life of Aaron Burr.

VIDAL: Did I tell that?

FAGRAG: Yes. /WASHINGTON D.C., page 128/

VIDAL: I was thinking about it then. That was written in '66. I did not realize I was thinking about it that long ago.

FAGRAG: Among American Fiction writers, who do you read for enjoyment?

VIDAL: Calder Willingham. Southern writer. Very funny.

FAGRAG: I could not get through PROVIDENCE ISLAND.

VIDAL: No. That's bad. But RAMBLING ROSE is new and rather good. I love GERALDINE BRADSHAW. They're pussy novels, you're right. Just this terrible, relentless quest for pussy. Just full of failure which is like life, which is what I like about it.

FAGRAG: Did you get through GRAVITY'S RAINBOW?

VIDAL: I do not think that I am going to get to that. I have tried the academic writers. There is a sort of division of literature which I cast a benign eye upon. I am sure there is a place for it. Novels which are written to be used in classrooms. Since I think that is where the novel is going to end up, I think of myself as an anachronism, and that is the future. Someone like John Barth to me is just cement. Pynchon. I read V. Some of it is fun, but so heavy-handed. The jokes are so heavy, such awful names. Nabokov remembers him. He was in one of Nabokov's classes. Nabokov thinks rather highly of him. Nabokov I usually enjoy, though not as much as he enjoys himself. I like old Saul Bellow. I find him cranky but true.

FAGRAG: Do you mind being exploited? For example, I just read Dotson Rader's new book, BLOOD DUES.

VIDAL: A little cunt. A real cunt.

FAGRAG: In BLOOD DUES, if it were not for you and Tennessee Williams, there would be no book, except for his bloody nose at the end.

VIDAL: I have no intention of reading that book. I read something he wrote in ESQUIRE about me and Tennessee: That I had not gone to the church because I was afraid Tennessee would upstage me. Imagine a mind that would conceive that. Tennessee is one of my oldest friends. Vain as I am, that is not the sort of thing that would ever cross my mind.

FAGRAG: The whole Southern mentality is so foreign to me in a way. You had one foot into it. Is it easy to patronize Southern writers?

VIDAL: When I began to write, they were the center of American literature. Much overpraised. Now they are rather under-praised. And the Jewish writers came along, bringing with them their stern patriarchal attitudes.

FAGRAG: What is the prospect of women's liberation, gay liberation and sensuality in America?

VIDAL: I keep coming back to economics. I keep thinking about the collapse of the currency, the shortages in the world.

FAGRAG: It occurred to me a while ago that your whole prophecy of what is going to happen in this country would indicate that American literature as well as politics is gone, going. It has got to be replaced with something.

VIDAL: I do not think it has to be replaced with anything. American literature has always been second rate. The schools in America, which are also second rate, could never discuss this because their mandate rests upon

pretending that since we were briefly a great world empire, therefore we were a great civilization. When you compare Mark Twain to George Eliot, or compare Dostoevski to Stephen Crane, or poor Hemingway to Proust, my god. Henry James, a great novelist, became English.

FAGRAG: Did you see the sidebar with the MYRA B article /in FAGRAG SIX/ about Judy in the WIZARD OF OZ?

VIDAL: There is a scene where Myra meets Judy finally on the back lot at Metro /Laughter/. Myra reappears in the new book /MYRON BRECKINRIDGE/. It is about Myron, but Myra starts to break through and take over the controls. Myron gets caught in this 1948 movie /SIREN OF ATLANTIS/ and cannot get out. A lot of other people are caught in it too.

FAGRAG: Yes. Like the American Public. The whole country is caught in it.

VIDAL: /MYRON/ has a lot of plot--a great deal of plot--for a very short book. Not only is Myra breaking through, but through an engineering part of the plot, one of the ways he gets out /of SIREN OF ATLANTIS/ is by becoming Maria Montez in the middle of the picture.

FAGRAG: Myron/Myra becomes...?

VIDAL: Myra becomes. Suddenly, there she is, inside, living with Jean-Pierre Aumont. And she cannot understand a word he is saying because he only speaks French to her. And she--Myra--does not know any French, even though Maria Montez does. There is a great scene in which Maria Montez goes to Sam Zimbalist at Metro. She wants to re-make BEN HUR with herself in the lead. Always in Good Taste. "Good Taste," she says, "is my hallmark."

FAGRAG: Is that going to be on the flyleaf or blurb?

VIDAL: Oh, yes.

FAGRAG: When do you expect this to come out?

VIDAL: I want to bring it out right away and just push it out in paperback. Let it float around the country. I do not want any reviews. I just cannot sit through another press like that. /MYRA B./

FAGRAG: I was amazed when Bantam published MYRA B in paperback while the hardcover was still on the top of the best-seller lists.

VIDAL: They have sold about seven million copies of it.

FAGRAG: I think all of your work is in print except A SEASON OF COMFORT. This is remarkable. And a test that you are saying something. My final question: Are Queens different today in the seventies than they were in the forties?

VIDAL: Ahhhhh, I do not know. That is an interesting thought. It seems to me everything is the same, always. Certain things are more open now than they were then. But they were pretty damn open in the sort of ghetto life of the forties. And New York, Lexington Avenue, was very royal.

FAGRAG: Do you keep a diary?

VIDAL: I kept one in '48. I sealed it and gave it to the University of Wisconsin with my papers.

FAGRAG: To be opened after your death?

VIDAL: After my death or the Second Coming, whichever comes first.

In FAG RAG #4 we published a series of interviews with faggots in prison, hustling and on welfare. An effort to bring either ignored, condemned or romanticized experiences into real consciousness--these interviews were real breakthroughs in gay journalism. Yet I don't recall much controversy, interest or response from "the gay community." Only one prim remark, I remember, that we shouldn't mention such people because they tended to disgrace the movement.

Now we are publishing an interview with Gore Vidal. Interest has never been so intense. The Boston PHOENIX (which usually ignores or insults us) ran a whole page article on the making of the interview; and George Frazier, after seeing an advance copy of the text, personally sends his congratulations from the Boston GLOBE. And within the FAG RAG, people who had never said anything or took much interest in our grass roots interviews, now rush forward to attack Vidal.

They participate in the media-image mogrification no less than those who admire Vidal because he's currently on top. In the gay world, there is an unhappy phenomenon where anyone who does anything or accomplishes anything at all is immediately pilloried and condemned. This phenomenon exists among any repressed people; we are taught to hate each other. And the ruling white males never have to worry about attacking our ideas: among us there is always someone to do their work.

interview commentary

Charely Shively

The interview as a form has built-in limitations; people are almost automatically placed in adversary positions. And Vidal has learned well how to use such occasions for his own purposes. We inevitably become part of that vulgar picking on persons for their delicacies, oddities and entertainment. FAG RAG reporters can not easily break out of that system and convey to Vidal something different than what he's used to--some idea of gay liberation, that we are trying not to be vultures, that we are trying to create a cycle and circle of love and communication.

I wish something more could have been said about male love. Not that we are to be defined only by our sexual desires, but we do need to be more honest about what we do, what we want and what we are sexually. What about asking Vidal whether he believed in love. Did he ever fall in love with anyone? We only know that he has contempt for Capote for loving an airconditioning man. Has Vidal ever felt vulnerable, weak, unwanted? And if he has lots of sex as he hints, just how?



when? where? with whom? under what circumstances? Does he treat all his sexual objects the same ("a gentleman never asks the sex of the person that he's going to bed with"). Aging and death? Does he have more to say on that than a few remarks about how much money Auden left his lover?

Since Vidal is gay and also successful, I am cautious about debunking him. But we do need to recognize clearly that he's popular not in spite of but because he does express sexist, racist and elitist sentiments that FAG RAG has been struggling to overcome. His charm comes from his boorish snobbery as well as his gay sensibility. Some admire him because he's related to the Gores, Auchinloss, Jonathan Edwards, Aaron Burr, West Point, and so forth. Because he thinks he may have been President were he a wee bit straighter. And because he's rich.

I don't think it's right to hate Vidal just because he's successful. He can't help being born to pretensions of aristocracy. But we mustn't love him for these things either. We need to be ashamed of his sexism; he shouldn't be thought cute when he calls women "girls," "cunts" or "pussy." And it should not be a putdown of another man to call him a "Kansas city housewife" or a "rich society Lady." And I thought anti-Semitism went out of style during World War II. Why shouldn't Jews become successful writers. And finally, I don't believe or share his fantasies about the Third World. Forget population control for them; "They're going to die. They'll die," he says. "There's nothing to be done about it." And with that fantasy goes the related apocalyptic one about the collapse of the American system. Indeed there's more than a joke in his remark that his diary can be opened either after his death or the apocalypse--whichever is sooner. Most white people would rather conceive the world ending than it being inherited by the Third World.

The difference some of us have felt with Vidal goes beyond a few details about the interview. Some people working on the paper hate Vidal's style and attitude. Nothing he could say would ever please them because Gore Vidal has no vision of change. "It seems to me," he says, "Everything is the same, always." Vidal cannot (or at least has not to date) thrown himself wholeheartedly and without reserve into any cause; there is always withdrawal, hesitation and commentary from the sidelines. He refuses to see himself as really oppressed--suffering. To admit that would be to feel weak, to need help, to need others--to possibly lose control. Cry, scream. To keep from seeing his own weakness, humanity and suffering, he must resort to irony--a personal vehicle of survival for him. (In fairness, I must note that many gay liberationists fall back on revolutionary rhetoric in the same way.)

Irony is only useful for those who are in power (or slipping from power) and feel the incongruity of the suffering they have and are causing. Rather than rectify injustice, they can laugh at the impossibility of any change. Save their sanity, and perhaps their power. Such a viewpoint works for those who conceive themselves as still ruling--although theirs is largely a fantasy; even Nixon doesn't control his body or his life. Exxon, GE, ITT, Prudential & Co. could wipe him out at will.

Our vision must be for more than power. We don't want to be powerless; but for myself I don't want to be anyone's master--certainly not against their own will. Mike Silverstein once wrote Tennessee Williams explaining it: "We have learned so much of their mistrust, their will for power, their aloneness. But we are struggling to trust one another, to open ourselves up to one another, to love one another. And before our love, the world will look and wonder. Our love will be a new humanity, new under the sun, and a new world will be born from it."

Sort of Greek canapes color my memories. Am I dead or alive? A feeling of embalming fluid, unfair from this governmental restrictive use of private human beings threatens my future, including grand larcening my mother's past. Untitled experimentation with children as myself on Park Avenue, being shot down after a stabbing the evening before, Albert M. Cook, in Fairy Temple company, Mr. Rufus Stephen Jones shot James Schuyler, forgetting my prepositions from class as witchcraft, in the building! here on Joy Street; Louis Bromfield's Joy Street. Just think of it, behind the State House, Sargeant's privy, said at the Neapolitan, without the ball and chain, come over and call on me anytime, I brought my bedroom down, if you can make the bail.

This is a cheated poet. A chastized citizen of The United States, a person illegally imprisoned over two years in the state of Massachusetts by Federal inmates from Hospitals for The Criminally Insane throughout The Commonwealth. I hardly expect less than Municipal Imprisonment with testimony collected as Superior Rack. Could Gee-Whiz Janet McGrath Hill down Newark Airfare come up to snuff Tufts Medford Aerolite. It's a small world, and we had a good time. Although Publication burns the polity, as acceptance probity. A work of Art suffices to quell shattering McClelland stasis. The poor old girl salvages broken charades out of Cary Grant's illegal LSD trips, as Anne Russell, stone idles over Piedmont promonotories. It's strange my best enemies have the same bogus appellation. Janet Flanner, Janet Cooper, and the above-named Janet Thalters, nee Thomas before Mabel sucked the Acquinas out of her Milton Savings Bank. Could Helen Finneran have been born Hendry Janet, or Mary Finneran's son Sanders Hendry. Wonder how come ice-cream settles with The Family? Signed New Hampshire's Governor Kasabian Meldrim Thompson, nee Ruth Paine Whitney, nee L.H. Ozbald. Read Robin Meadow Mtn. UBC.

Stanley Perksy? That reads me of another Janet, as Chas. Olson called Fruits. Of the Loom? J.S. Persky? Kresge? Frankfurter Leitrim. Rocks and Stones, as my Grant "Aunt" Ms. James Doherty, formerly of Neponset Avenue, now Manhattan House of Detention for Men, where she practices along with Attorney Donald Paul Wieners of Burke, Wieners Moran and Hurley, of 15 Broad Street, in Boston, illegal sentences of 90 days in The State Hospital of New York, after 14 days of observation in Bellevue General Hospital of New York City. Was I cut up, by Richard Cummings, nigger in The Celebrity room, behind the Hotel Avery, downtown. See Charles I.

a? A Portrait in Courage by Hal Dareef. PARENTS' MAGAZINE PRESS, A Division of Parents' Magazine Enterprises, Inc. New York, copyright 1965, a great year for The New York Central, along the Hudson, those great homes out of Wackend. Falaise? Toujours Longue Isle.

My darling Charles, call me again. I'll never forget that soiree downtown, after Max's 300 Hundred. When you took the bath and shit, but couldn't. I I wasn't able to, gotten hepatitis from Herbert Huncke's polluted spike and had a pimple on my arse, you felt, I was so embarrassed. Had dirty feet. Gawd, Charles, I love you so much, for sleeping with me, and making love with me, feeling my left foot afterwards, getting out of bed without any clothes, you went out in a trenchcoat, I saw you from the window, coming back up the street, so handsome, than Honore Balzac like Bugsy Siegal, my beautiful Benny, Bug. G G Man. Could I have been Joan Crawford then? Tartling.

Simmons Art Professor Probes No. Ireland Saboteur!

It was horrible for me to get laid, you know. Ben said, "Ms. Kennedy...is busy organizing herself. It takes a little longer, but then she looks so much better than we do." 163 Pitts 813

"Two years ago," he began, "I introduced myself in Paris by saying that I was the man who had accompanied Mrs. K..... I am getting somewhat the same sensation

QUART

JOHN WIENERS



as I travel around Texas. Nobody wonders what Lyndon and I wear."

I was working at the newsstand the day of the assassination. A kid came up to me and said, "Kennedy just got shot." I didn't know what to say. I felt nothing. I was feeling pretty blue from still coming off No. Beach, 5 yrs. before. Not able to get up in the morning without massive doses of vitamins, Ben-nys, sometimes, good food and plenty of rest every night, blowing guys all night, ski creams. I remember this voice in the bathroom the night before, Lois Ramsay's, as the poet, mon amour, la reve you know, rising out of massacre.

Could it have been Duncan? Yes, earlier, events, occurrences, at Black Mtn. when King Carol's, the 2nd's son, had that auto crash. We slept outside, it was so strange, so exciting, Dana, my first lover, the only one that ever mattered to me, the old way. God, what does all this lead up to, Aly Khan, my husband, the prince, Eartha Kitt? b? Watson Carroll?

They burned the Yugoslav embassy, when we saw one another over the Kitchen table, and killed 4 Kent University, Ohio students, when we slept together at Bill Rocket's. Who Is Dis Mun? My mother? Mr. Munn. Randy Randolph get his rocks off yet, as David Rattray, Jollies w/ diaper Hse. I have ten grand of eternal flashes into the past. Jane Greer, you name it? Empress Carlotta. The Vene Stoppato.

There in Ohio at a similar Trade Mart, that I understand Clay Shaw operated, good friends, 1972, of my neighbors I believe in 44A, Canadaienne Touster, as Hal says took place in Dallas that day, ten years ago?

Coming home on the train, the newsboys were shouting, Kennedy Shot! "Kennedy Shot!" People were weeping in the subway. The city was deserted and mournful. The next morning, Jordan's was closed, because of the assassination, sitting at the kitchen-table, I was blue, and felt nothing. Hardly any cars were moving on River Str. over the Neponset River. And this girl, Marion was sitting in the living room, saying, Oh, here comes Oswald, and Mother said, look, somebody's going to shoot him...I was irritated. "Somebody shot Oswald." How horrible, as if it was a mache re-enactment of The Lincoln affair. Officer Tippet had been shot the day before, as he'd shot tonight. By Myself! From a distance, out of the meanness in my heart, to these terrible things people do to us, as we're young, and not able to know anything about what they do, or why or what it means to us. Who dun it? Joe, or Beth Or Rose? No, not the Aragon, not the Bologna, not the Paragon of Virtue, the Belforti Venerly.

The Publisher of the First Installment of this called me this Evening, this Am, earlier, and I thought, I'll write all day, how swiftly the moments.

They say I was only 8 or 9, when this occurred. The first MURDERS! c? And had a dress on, they covered with blood stains, down Eliot Street in Gabrielle wool, crying with black hair on, a wig-mess it was tangled and all matted, I scream to think of it, on television, as the rest of this I'm afraid of, Gregg Sherwood Dodge, losing my inheritance, losing my vertu, losing my innocence, the Cardinalpate, my mother dead, shot in my own arms, The Baroness Maria von Trapp, named after The Virgin Mary, and we didn't even know why. And I've had a vision of the Birgin Mary myself, as Saint Bernadette, by a lousy cashier in Schrafft's, with the faottina Fernand Janine Pommey-Vega, out of New Jersey. The lousy A-head, the lousy German Nazi A-Heads, Law Use, without the Right. Use of FireArms, without lawful authority. Shields without badges. Badgers. Lice from the lower end of the cow-pastures of Canton Avenue. Here tonight. Bed linen pigs. Prigs from the protocols of Dope-dens on Adams Hill. Slobs picking their Noses, as Presidents, and Kings and Musicians. Pricks, eating their way into the homes and hearts of Every American person, when they wouldn't be caught dead anywhere, inside this country, except in the swill-buckets where they belong.

Garbage-bucket she used to call herself. And I loved her for it. Swill-buckets. And that's where they ended up, and where they're staying, for that's they come out of.

Joe DiMaggio's Last Wife.

JESSE

MASTURBATION

In 1971 I experienced a process called by some "Coming Out." How I have come to love and hate the word "Faggot." By 1973 I had fallen into love, first a sweet young boy, then months later an older strong woman. For years, then, it was that my most pleasurable sexual moments happened through masturbation, that activity shared between my body and my mind, entirely within the realm of soul.

I have seen you before
only glimpses--dark, secret
you are a neighbor
we share the universe
we share a body*

(*Me, San Francisco 1973)

My first memories of masturbation alternate between the crisp clear air of discovery and the twilight atmosphere of fear. Shortly after my discovery there came a day when I carelessly left the bathroom door unlocked. A neighborhood boy-friend came to visit and hearing noises walked into the bathroom finding me in a sexual fervor. He sat on the edge of the tub and started to giggle. For a long time he could not talk, but only let out a frozen strange giggle. From then on and for a very long time I went to furtive lengths to assure and reassure myself of privacy. I was 14 then and a sophomore in high school.

Through my last three years of high school I had a class called Physical Education. It was a droll meaningless way of passing time; such things as throwing hard balls at people, and knocking people down, and tests to find out the fastest runner. There was, though, a very interesting aspect of this class. The first and last five minutes of the period were spent in the boy's locker room, where many boys in the space of two small rooms would dress, undress, shower, and dry themselves. (With very small towels.) At this time some boys would become silly and loud, others would become more serious.

On Tuesday and Friday afternoons I would rush home to play on the projector of my mind the boys I had seen in the locker room and the fantasies I'd dreamt of through the remainder of the day.

By 1971 I had "been" graduated from high school and had spent a year in a small resort town on Long Island. During that year I had been working with a beautiful high school townie. Only a short time after we met I was passionately and hopelessly infatuated with him. Many nites, after the theatre we worked at had closed, we would drive to the

ocean in his '55 candy apple red Chevy coupe; each of us looking to the ocean silently.

He was adamantly heterosexual and when the situation called, went so far as to be aggressively so. At the end of a year I left New York brokenhearted and in silence. It had been a hard year for masturbation because of my efforts to be sincere. If only I had known then what I know now.

Until the Fall of 1971 the only people I had heard to speak the word masturbation were figures of male authority: my father, ministers, shrinks, a teacher. The tone of it all was prohibitive. But then I met a wonderful person, a free faggot. Teddy was the first person I had talked to of masturbation; shared fantasies, the feelings of orgasm, the fears and the joys. Suddenly my isolation was lifted and my perspective now included other people. In talking of masturbation I realized for the first time how the relationship works in person to person sex where one gives and the other takes; that sexual rhythms differ from one person to another; how subtly the feeling of rape may be imposed on one. It was Teddy who first introduced me to the concept of two lovers lying side by side masturbating lovingly. This concept became a fantasy for me and remained so until the beginning of 1973.

Having accommodated my fill of momentary surges of urgent excitement such as one may find shopping at the meatmarket, and having been filled with many dark menacing fantasies of "the block," the Other Side (a bar), the combat zone, Hustling, the Greyhound, not to mention the Boston Police Dept. I packed up, said good-bye and made the long pilgrimage to that fabled fairyland of San Francisco.

I first lived in a haight-ashbury faggot house (i.e. one apt. was occupied by two acid space cadets, another by a screamie leather-queen and his bearded lady, and the apt. where Bobbo and I lived--two reserved

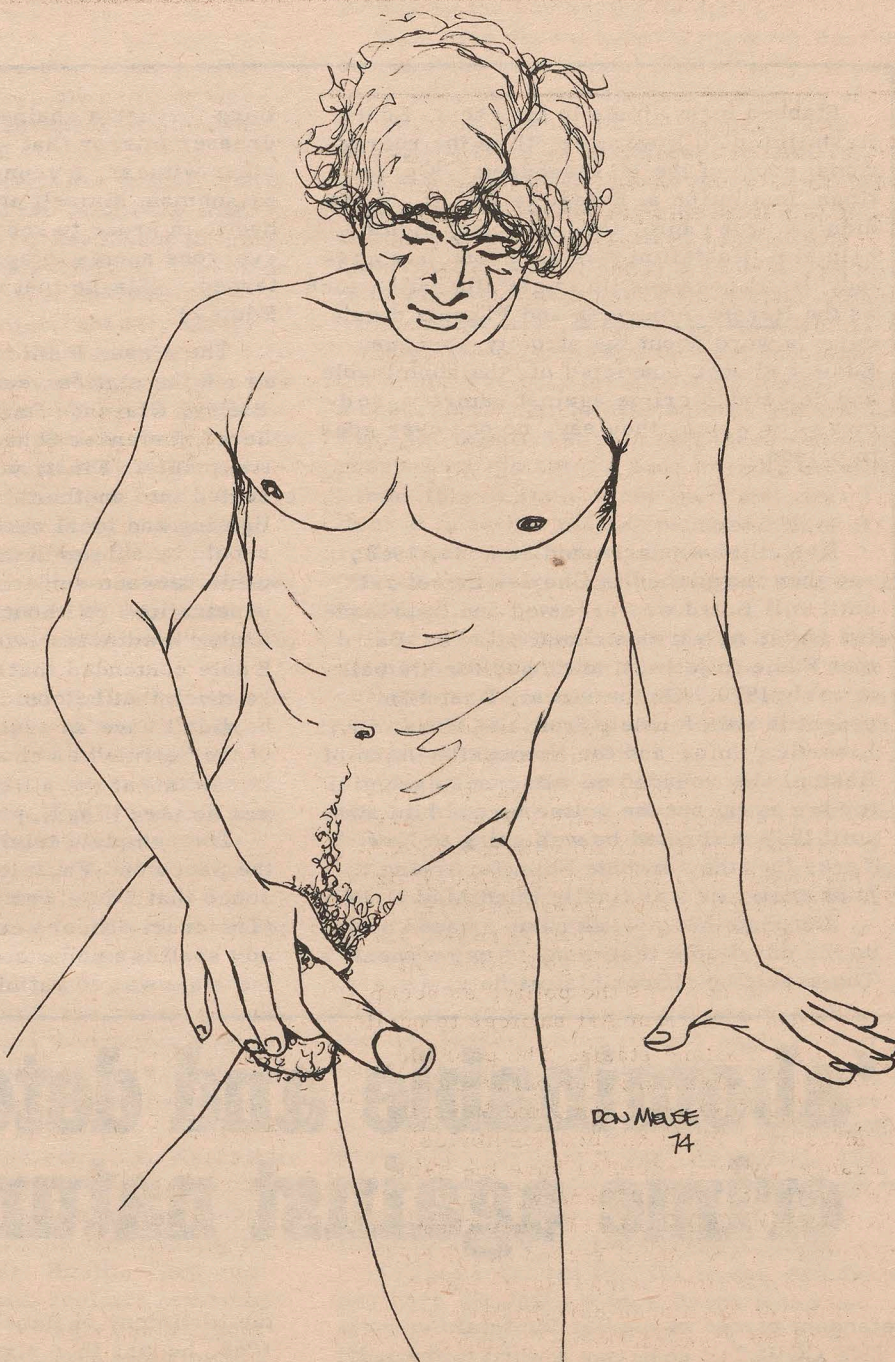
New England queens.) where masturbation was a household word. It was a sanctuary. No longer did I have to depend on the streets, but could be at home, close to people, and not have to be assured and reassured of privacy--I had now become looser. A short time later Bobbo and I moved into the gay community of Castro and lived there with two other transvestites, all four of us being fluent in masturbation.

An integral part of masturbation is apparatus. Music: whether it be the Beatles or Brahms, let it be what turns you on. Soft lighting is exciting for me, such as candle light. Stories, drawings, photography are good stimulation, but mostly what I'm saying is to stop and think about your mood and how you can help the atmosphere. At times masturbation comes to me quickly; at others, with breaks, I am able to prolong it for hours.

Masturbation is liberation. It is the most basic level of sexuality. The closer I have come to masturbation the closer I have come to people. Talking of masturbation with a lover is the assurance that feelings are true; that she/he is a real friend. Being able to masturbate with a lover is being able to be independent and equal; of and with your lover.

Aside from these feelings is the process happening by which you can learn who will want to be equal in love; or who will want to be your father, your minister, your shrink. To become involved with such people is to become a butt for aggression, Masturbation is yours, not to be given or taken away. It is sweet and defiant. I can understand well the fervent frustration of the authoritarian puritans, of the "elite" liberal, of Sigmund Freud!

If you're just discovering the freedom of masturbation, you may then also be feeling anger, feeling that for so long the closets have been tied so tight and locked from the outside. But you will also feel joy.



Stabbed many times in his chest, Eddie Rastellini died November 6th in the recreational room of the Massachusetts "Correctional" Institution at Bridgewater. If guards didn't murder him, they certainly didn't help him (Rastellini was in "protective custody"). Papers hostile to gay liberation such as the *Herald-American* and *Phoenix* didn't carry a word about the atrocity--because Eddie had been convicted of "the abominable and detestable crime against nature"--sodomy--for which, they say, no one ever goes to prison.

Rastellini was arrested June 23, 1968, and then languished in Charles Street Jail until Bill Baird was arrested and imprisoned for violating various chastity laws. Baird met Eddie in jail and arranged for his bail in early 1970. On the street, Rastellini sought in vain for help from the Mass. Civil Liberties Union and the Homophile Union of Boston. He rounded up witnesses essential for his case, but the police turned him away until they suspected he was going to New York; then they arrested him for trying to jump bail. He was finally tried May 21, 1970.

The state had a weak case, based only on the unreliable testimony of two witnesses. The arresting officer claims he saw every-

thing through a chained door by way of a dresser mirror that wasn't very clean. The other witness, a young hustler, feared imprisonment himself and said just what he had to in order to keep out of reform school; everyone seems to agree that he was "retarded." (Maybe that was just an act to help Eddie?)

The Mass. Public Defender did little to crack the state's weak case. No F. Lee Bailey, Clarence Darrow or Perry Mason here! Defender Schaefer misses two essential points. First, you can't see a penis inserted into another rectum without special lighting and ideal observation. A witness should be able to distinguish putting the penis between someone's legs and actual penetration. Without penetration no sodomy! (Only "lewd & lascivious" conduct.) Second, Eddie contended that he had been speeding so much that he couldn't get an erection. If he didn't have an erection, he was incapable of the "crime" as charged. (Curiously little is said about the alleged oral sex, which was no less illegal.)

The complete trial transcript reads like the Sacco and Vanzetti case; it is no coincidence that Eddie was also poor and Italian. (The court officers could neither pronounce nor spell his name correctly.) The plot of the state was to put him away and throw away

the key. The D.A. asks the jury in his summation, "Can we allow a man such as this to run around the streets of Boston?" Having obtained a conviction, they tried to have Eddie's already long sentence (five to fifteen years) extended to life imprisonment by cataloguing Eddie as a "sexually dangerous person," who would be committed for one day to life--depending on when he was "cured." From the bench the judge said that "from his record and from my experience in life I don't think any psychiatric treatment is going to do much for the fellow." Thus he would never be released. The state was foiled in this attempt when the psychiatrists failed by one vote to commit Eddie.

In 1972, Eddie Rastellini became eligible for parole. He contacted people in gay liberation and we got him in touch with Richard Rubino, who spent over two hundred hours working on the case (without fee). A letter of Rastellini's was printed in FAG RAG 4. Eddie's hope for parole was quashed shortly before his murder.

We reprint parts of the trial transcript--documents of our oppression--proof that there is need for gay liberation--and in hope of firing people to prevent this happening again.

“abominable and detestable crime against nature”

The Commonwealth v. Rastellini

/Defendant placed at the bar for trial./

THE COURT: I shall say a word to the lady jurors: These indictments charge an offense which allegedly involves the Defendant and a minor male in unnatural acts. If under these circumstances any lady feels that she would be embarrassed by listening to the evidence or would be embarrassed in deliberations in discussing these matters fully and frankly, you ladies have a right to decline to serve on this jury.

As each lady is called, I will make an inquiry.

/Jury impanellment begun./

THE CLERK: I address my remarks not only to the 12 jurors who are sitting on this particular panel, but also to all other jurors who are present in this courtroom.

This is a criminal action of the Commonwealth v. Edward Rastellini, and the complaining witness is one Russell A. Smith.

Now, if there's any juror on this particular panel or in the court who knows the parties, has any interest in the case, is sensible or conscious of any bias or prejudice in this case, will they please at this time make that fact known to the Court?

/No response from the jurors./

THE COURT: Thank you. May the record indicate that statement was made to the Court after counsel consulted with his client.

/Jury impanelled and sworn./

THE COURT: We will suspend now until 1:15. Counsel has another short matter before another session in this court.

AFTERNOON SESSION

/Indictments read./

OPENING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE COMMONWEALTH:

MR. CHAPMAN: May it please the Court, Mr. Foreman, madam, and gentlemen of the jury, my name is Chapman, and I represent the Commonwealth, and I am going to present evidence to you for your consideration with reference to the three indictments that were just read to you by the Clerk.

Mr. Schaefer, who sits at counsel table, represents the Defendant Rastellini.

The Commonwealth will introduce testimonial evidence from two witnesses, one of whom is now eighteen years old. His name is Russell Smith. You heard his name mentioned in these indictments.

The Commonwealth expects to prove through

the testimony of Russell Smith that on June 22, 1968, he was then sixteen years of age, living in Wakefield with his mother and two brothers, I believe, and a sister.

That on that date he came to Boston sometime in the afternoon hours. That while in the vicinity of Washington Street in Boston down near the area of Essex Street, he was approached by this Defendant Rastellini. Rastellini introduced himself and asked his name, and they had a conversation that will best be introduced by this witness.

Now, for your consideration--the witness is not in the courtroom at this time. I would ask your indulgence. I have had an opportunity to speak with the witness. He is slow, and it is sometimes difficult for him to respond immediately to questions, so for that reason I would ask your patience and indulgence.

This witness will further testify that after a preliminary conversation on Washington Street, that he joined this Defendant and they walked about Boston, around Washington Street and that they spent the entire Saturday evening together in the vicinity of the bus terminal.

Russell Smith will tell you that on that evening he was introduced by this Defendant to another individual whose identity is unknown to the Commonwealth and unknown to Mr. Smith--or Russell Smith, I should say, and he will describe for you what transpired out of that introduction.

Russell Smith will further testify that after this meeting and the activities that he participated in with this individual, he then again met Mr. Rastellini by prearrangement, and the Defendant Rastellini bought him a meal and they ate in a restaurant somewhere in the Park Square area.

He will then tell you that along their journey in Boston that Rastellini went to an apartment and had Russell wait outside, that when Rastellini reappeared he gave Russell a pill, which he took. This was Saturday evening.

He will tell you that he voluntarily went with Rastellini. There's no allegation in this case that whatever happened to Russell Smith was without his voluntary physical being.

The law, of course, provides that certain individuals are incapable of rendering their consent due to their tender years. There's no allegation that there was any force applied to Russell Smith, other than the dominance of the more mature adult, bearing in mind that Russell Smith at that time was only sixteen

years of age.

Russell Smith will further tell you that throughout the hours of Saturday evening and Sunday morning they were in the Boston Common area walking around the various streets, that at some time on the early morning of Sunday, which would be June 23, he was given another pill by the Defendant Rastellini. That thereafter they went to Huntington Avenue, 116 Huntington Avenue, to an apartment that was occupied by a fellow by the name of Rogers. That Rastellini knew Rogers and persuaded the youngster to go along with him.

Russell will tell you that he waited outside in the rear portion of 116 Huntington Avenue while Rastellini went in, and he places the time somewhere around 3:00 o'clock Sunday afternoon, June 23, 1968.

He will tell you that after an appreciable period of time, Rastellini appeared and summoned him into the apartment. He went in. That he met Rogers, and I had best leave the conversation that was had to Russell.

He will tell you that he removed his clothing at the suggestion of Rastellini and that Rastellini, too, removed his clothing, and that Rogers left the apartment with the clothing and there was some discussion about taking it down to have it washed.

The testimony certainly will not be pleasant. He will reveal to you and relate to you what happened to him in that apartment in the absence of Rogers.

He will tell you that the Defendant Rastellini took his penis and placed it in his mouth, performed an act of oral copulation. He will further tell you that he himself performed the same act on Rastellini.

He will tell you that after this was accomplished that Rogers reappeared at the apartment. He will tell you and describe for you the reaction of this Defendant Rastellini when Rogers reappeared. He will tell you that Rastellini picked up a sissors and threatened Rogers, told him to leave the apartment--

MR. SCHAEFFER: Objection, please.

THE COURT: The opening is not evidence. I will instruct the jury as to what is material. You may continue.

MR. CHAPMAN: And I believe he will further tell you that Rogers then did leave the apartment. And he will further tell you that he and Rastellini went back to the bed.

This was a one-room apartment in the basement at 116 Huntington Avenue. That

shortly after Rogers left the apartment, a stone came through the window. He did not know who threw it.

He will then tell you that while he and Rastellini were back in bed that he was lying on his side and that Russell inserted his penis in his rectum, or anus, and that while this act was being performed, there was an opening of the door to the apartment, and at that time the door contained a chain, and he will describe the space of the opening. He will tell you that while in the position that he was in, he was facing a bureau to the immediate right of the room, and that this bureau had a mirror and from the mirror he could see the door open, and he will tell you that he saw an uniformed police officer at the door.

Now, he will then tell you that the door was pushed open and that at that point Rastellini jumped from the bed.

You will hear evidence from officer John Fallon, who was summoned to the apartment, and he will describe to you that which he observed, and the general locus. He will tell you that he entered the basement apartment in the company of Rogers, that Rogers opened the door with a key, and as he opened the door, the chain that was on the inside had been bolted, preventing it to open its full distance.

The officer will tell you that he, too, as he opened the door, had a view of the bed through that same mirror, and that he saw, as he opened that door, Rastellini and Russell Smith in the bed and that at that point Rastellini had his penis inserted in Russell's rectum.

He will then tell you--and I am now speaking of Officer Fallon--that he placed Rastellini under arrest.

Now, unfortunately, the Commonwealth does not have in its possession the testimony of Mr. Rogers. You will hear from Officer Fallon as to what efforts were made by the Boston Police Department, himself, and brother officers in an attempt to locate Rogers.

You will not have the benefit of his testimony. Officer Fallon will tell you that the apartment in question, 116 Huntington Avenue, has been destroyed, or it has been demolished and that he has made a continual search of the area at the behest of the prosecuting attorney and his superior officers, and he and his brother officers have combed the neighborhood and the bars and the general area and have been unable to locate Mr. Rogers.

In brief and in conclusion, the Commonwealth expects to prove by means of testimony of these two witnesses, that Rastellini, on June 23, did commit those three acts that were outlined to you by the Clerk in the reading of those indictments.

With that, if your Honor please, I would like to call my first witness.

THE COURT: Very well.

FINAL ARGUMENT IN BEHALF OF THE DEFENDANT:

MR. SCHAEFER: Mr. Foreman, madam and gentleman of the jury, my name is Gerald Schaefer, and I represent the Defendant here, Edward Rastellini.

In the course of my remarks to you, I will be referring at times to the testimony that you heard. I have to do it, but I want to make it clear--you probably know this by now--that it is totally your memory of the testimony that controls. It's not mine, not Mr. Chapman's, and, in fact, not his Honor's.

But the testimony was rather brief and was not enjoyable for any of us. There's no question about that. It's not a pleasant tale that Mr. Smith told. It would be very easy to get a feeling of disgust, repulsion, prejudice in this case for the person he named as committing the acts he said were committed.

If I may suggest to you those emotions have no place in your deliberation on this matter because the question here is twofold, perhaps, basically: Did it happen?

You heard two versions. It is a question of credibility. It is as simple as that. Let me say to you now that if you believe beyond a reasonable doubt the evidence presented by the Commonwealth of Mr. Smith and Officer Fallon, if you believe beyond a reasonable doubt, then you should, in fact, convict the Defendant and go no further.

However, if you have a doubt with a reason to believe that evidence or if you believe the evidence of the Defendant, then equally, although the story you heard was one that could incite your prejudice, and though you may or may not like Mr. Rastellini and his habits, if there were any that you find, then he is entitled to your verdict of not guilty.

The incidents were not complex. Essentially, they revolve around that Sunday afternoon. I believe the only direct testimony you heard about Saturday had to do with the meeting of Mr. Rastellini and of Mr. Smith. They met quite casually. Mr. Smith couldn't remember how it came about, but it was a casual meeting, as a result of which Mr. Rastellini and Mr. Smith spent time together during a Saturday. That's all we have. Off and on.

Mr. Smith goes on to say that at some time Sunday with, as I remember, no preliminaries, conversation, no seduction if you recall, that he and Mr. Rastellini committed certain acts, one with the other. This is the accusation made.

Let me suggest to you that if it were simply a matter of an accusation made, therefore believed, that there would never be a trial. No Defendant would come to court before a jury, because that would be a conclusive evidence of his guilt.

This is not how it's done. It is not done simply by the boy saying he did it.

What else did we have? I think for corroboration, the government offered only, if you believe it, the very effective testimony of Officer Fallon who, let me suggest, was telling the truth as he believes it. But ask yourself this: Did he, could he see what he says he saw? He did see, according to Mr. Smith, and Mr. Rastellini and the officer himself, two nude men lying in bed. There is no conflict about that. The conflict comes with what he saw, if anything, them doing.

Now, the officer testified that he opened the door. The only thing obstructing him was a chain lock. Mr. Smith, another government witness, testified that in fact there was a chair propped up against the door barring the way. I think this is not a minor inconsistency. I think it is rather major, because I think it reflects the excitement and tension that Officer Fallon was under as he pushed open that door.

There is no question in my mind but what he did not see a chair or know there was a chair there. But if you believe both Mr. Rastellini and Mr. Smith, you should find that in fact there was one there.

The officer saw two nude males in bed, after having had some conversation with this fellow Rogers. He saw them in the mirror, which was angled from the wall so that he says he could look down to the bed some three feet away, by his estimate, I believe. But it is your memory.

I ask you this, ladies and gentlemen: Could he, with the door open six to eight inches, looking in the mirror angle up there, see the act he said he saw? Russell himself states that he and the Defendant, Mr. Rastellini, were close together with Mr. Smith's back to the stomach of Mr. Rastellini. Yet the officer testified that through this angle he was actually able to see the penis of Mr. Rastellini enter the body of Mr. Smith.

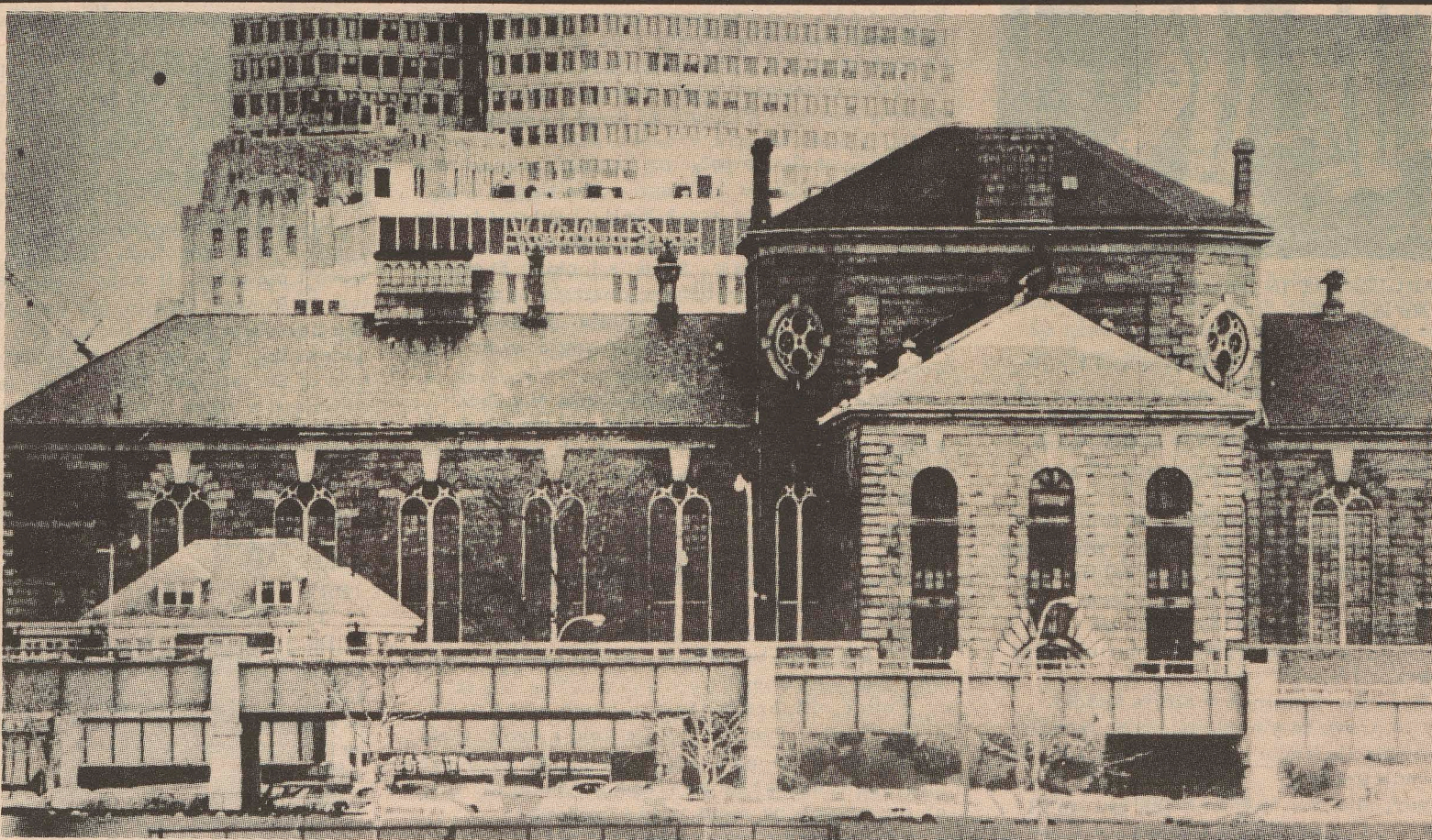
Let me interject that the words we have to use here and that all have to use when you discuss it, are not pleasant, as the case and the charge are not pleasant; but let me also suggest that you have a duty to the Defendant, as well as the Commonwealth, to use those terms in discussing the case.

Is it not likely that the officer jumped to a conclusion? Wouldn't we all? The conversation with Rogers, pushing open a door, the seeing of the two nude men in bed, and then breaking into the door.

Was he coolly a dispassionate observer at this time? I would submit to you no. Did he jump to a conclusion which he now firmly believes?

But I think you owe it to the Defendant to discuss amongst yourselves whether or not he

Continued on page 14



Eddie Rastellini waited here in Charles Street Jail (a familiar sight for those on the way to Sporter's or the Esplanade) for almost two years before he even came to trial. In visiting the jail over fifty years ago, James Agee wrote: "I got to see the Morgue and the Jail, neither of which were what I'd expected, but rather worse, in a clammy, metallic way. I had a taste in my mouth as if I'd been licking an old sardine can."

could possibly have seen that. And if you come to the conclusion that there is a substantial doubt as to whether or not he saw that, then I submit to you that the government is left without corroboration of the story of Mr. Smith, for we have here no medical testimony. Mr. Smith was not taken to be examined. Although our experience does not cover this particular type of crime, perhaps we can draw a reasonable conclusion.

Would a medical examination have not shown whether or not the act happened? I submit it would have.

We are left with the story of the young man you saw on the stand. It is for you to weigh the credibility of all the witnesses that take the stand. But did not Mr. Smith have something to lose in this situation as well? Ask yourselves. He was found in this situation, arrested for at least something. He believed it was vagrancy. The officer believed it was a runaway.

Is he a young man that you can believe beyond a reasonable doubt as to his story as to what occurred? A chance meeting, going around all hours and taking pills, the act without preparation of any sort. It just happened, according to him. I submit there is a serious question. I submit the mere accusation should not be enough to convict the Defendant. If you have a doubt as to the opportunity of Mr. Fallon to observe what he said he observed, and if you further have a doubt, a doubt which is reasonable, that Mr. Smith is telling the truth, then you owe it to the Defendant and to yourselves and to the Commonwealth to acquit.

Only if you have no doubt for which you can assign a good reason can you convict the Defendant. I merely ask you to discuss it, to weigh the evidence and weigh the credibility of the people involved and to give it some discussion and return the verdict that you think is fair.



FINAL ARGUMENT IN BEHALF OF THE COMMONWEALTH:

MR. CHAPMAN: May it please the Court, Mr. Foreman, and madam and gentleman of the jury, at the outset of the trial, when I addressed you, I indicated to you that what you are about to hear is unpleasant. It certainly wasn't pleasant.

The Defendant is charged in the three indictments, one of which is sodomy, which his Honor will describe for you the legal definition of sodomy; the second is unnatural acts, and his Honor will define the term for you; and the third, contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Now, it is the Commonwealth's burden certainly to prove to you beyond a reasonable doubt that this Defendant is guilty as charged in those indictments.

However, the law has been and is--and I hope it will be in the future--that this does not place upon the Commonwealth the impossible burden of removing from your minds all doubt, for if that were the test by which the Commonwealth had to present evidence to

convict felons, thieves and perverts, the prisons of our state would be virtually empty, the streets would be a proverbial jungle.

That is not the standard by which the Commonwealth must present evidence. The Commonwealth must present evidence to convince you to a moral certainty that the Defendant is guilty. Not to a mathematical or scientific certainty.

Now, in support of that proposition, the Commonwealth introduced for your consideration the testimony of Russell Smith, eighteen years old. As I indicated to you in my opening remarks, Russell Smith is slow. He may be somewhat retarded. You had an excellent opportunity to observe his behavior, to observe his mentality and the manner in which he responded to questions. Most certainly I don't think that any one of us in this courtroom can conclude that he was of normal intelligence.

Going back to 1968, he was then sixteen years old, a youngster in the streets of Boston. His mental condition then was probably somewhat worse than it is today. He has had the benefit of two years more experience. I would say that in arriving at a conclusion in evaluating the truth in this, use the standards of everyday life. If you hear a story told to you on the streets, you analyze it and weigh it with a view toward the object or motive of the person telling you the story. Essentially, you have the story of Russell Smith and Officer Fallon that runs head into the story of Rastellini.

This is not a case in which there is a grey area. It's either black or white. It's either the truth or it's not the truth. Somebody is obviously lying from that witness stand.

In arriving at that conclusion, I would suggest to you that you analyze the motives of young Russell Smith, the poor, unfortunate, and ask yourselves why in heaven's name that youngster would come into this courtroom under oath and reveal the horrendous details of what had occurred to him on that night of June 23, 1968.

If the boy was not telling you the truth--you heard the officer testify--it's in evidence--that he was arrested and that he was committed as a delinquent, so his punishment for whatever participation he had in this matter is gone, absolutely gone. He has paid whatever debt society feels was required.

It is an unfortunate thing that we have to bring this youngster into this courtroom and have him air his dirty laundry under those circumstances, but it is fortunate that he is available so that we can take a person such as Rastellini and put him on trial in the hopes of segregating him from society, prevent him from imposing himself on other youngsters in the same manner in which he imposed himself on this poor, unfortunate Russell Smith.

...You recall that Officer Fannon said that as he opened the door, the door opened to its right, and everyone seems to be in agreement that the bureau was to his left as he looked into the room and that the bed was directly in front of him, and that the two men, the boy and this Rastellini, were lying on the bed facing the wall.

Well, at that point, my brother argues to you, could Officer Fallon see the things that he testified that he saw? Well, I submit to you that he could and did see those things. His view was at an angle. He was looking at the mirror which reflected the position of the two bodies ahead of him in the room, so he looked here, his reflection was at an angle so he could see from their feet up.

Now, in that position, he could see the things that he testified he saw. Again we don't know. We weren't there. We don't know the exact positions of their bodies.

Officer Fallon again has no motive, no reason in this world to come into this courtroom, a police officer of many years, and tell you an untruth and lie. He's been a police officer for many years and he's experienced here. Do you think for one moment that if he didn't see what he saw, he would have broken into that apartment?

Police officers today are much more sophisticated than they were years back. He's not sticking his neck out running into anybody's apartment unless he saw this incident and this crime happening right in his presence.

I could go on and belabor the evidence but I have a great deal of confidence in your collective judgements.

This fellow Rastellini gets on the stand and he insults us by telling us that he consumed--

I forgot what it was--45 different types of drugs and that he functioned for two days under those circumstances, and then he tells you each and every detail of his activities that afternoon. And he wants us to swallow this kind of a story, that here he is in this room with this sixteen-year-old child completely naked and made no sexual overtures to the child.

And bear in mind, as I said to you at the outset, this is not a case in which the Commonwealth attempts to defend young Russell's participation in this matter, and there is no allegation that he was raped or that he was subjected to these matters as a result of physical force.

It is, however, the Commonwealth's position that due to his weakness of mind and tender years that he was easily led into this type of a situation.

This man from his own mouth told you that when he met Russell Smith that he was informed that Russell was a hustler, a sixteen-year-old retarded hustler.

What did the Defendant do after he became aware of those facts, if you believe that aspect of his testimony? He stayed with him, he introduced him to many people. Russell told you that he met one man and he went to this man's apartment, and I didn't explore what happened there, but you can draw an inference from what you now know.

Rastellini was setting him up. He took this sixteen-year-old child throughout Boston and introduced him to every pervert on Washington Street that he knew. Can we allow a man such as this to run around the streets of Boston?

Everyone of us have children that we know or that are related to us who are susceptible to many things in this day and age. He fed him pills.

I submit to you in all decency that justice requires that on this evidence, this horrendous evidence, that you have heard, that the conclusion is irresistible, that this Defendant is guilty as charged. I am placing the burden that the Commonwealth has in your hands, in your hands, and I am sure that you will do what is just and what is right.

The Commonwealth doesn't ask you to return a verdict based on sympathy, compassion, or otherwise for this Defendant, but it asks you to return a verdict which speaks the truth, the cold, calculating truth as it is in this case, and that is that this Defendant is guilty.

I submit to you that this Defendant's story is incredible. He stands here before you and he tells you and he speaks on and on, and he is somewhat clever in that he will admit to everything, because what else could he do? He's caught right there in the apartment with no clothes on with this sixteen-year-old boy, so he will adopt all the testimony that the Commonwealth has to offer and then provide you with the one absent fact, that this did not happen.

Just ask yourselves why would Russell Smith have come into this courtroom and tell you what he did, what he participated in, forgetting about what the Defendant did? Why would this youngster at this time come into this courtroom and tell you these things?

I'm not going to belabor it. I want to thank you for your attention. Again, I know it wasn't pleasant. It wasn't pleasant for me to talk to Russell Smith, put him on the stand and have him testify before you, but it's necessary. It's necessary for the preservation of Society and for the people in Society who have a right to roam the streets of this city without being molested by the likes of him.

I submit to you, Mr. Foreman and madam and gentlemen of the jury, that your verdict should be guilty as charged in all three indictments.

JURY CHARGE:

THE COURT: Mr. Foreman and members of the jury, the Defendant in a criminal case is presumed to be innocent. Because of this, the fact that a complaint or indictment is brought against a Defendant or that he was arrested or that he may have been in custody or that there were lower court proceedings on probable cause, none of those matters are to be concerned in the issue of innocence or guilt.

They are not to be weighed in respect of the issue that is before you. They are not evidence of guilt and cannot be considered by you in any way whatsoever.

The burden of the Commonwealth is this: It has the obligation to satisfy you by evidence which you accept to be credible of each and every essential ingredient of a crime beyond a reasonable doubt. The evidence of the Commonwealth must be beyond a reasonable doubt.

Reasonable doubt in the law means exactly what it means in common everyday usage: A doubt based upon a reason, a doubt which resides in the mind of a reasonable person who is earnestly seeking the truth. It is not a foolish doubt. It is not the doubt in the mind of a juror who is just seeking an excuse to acquit a Defendant. It must be a reasonable doubt. If that reasonable doubt exists, then the Defendant is entitled to that reasonable doubt, and he is entitled to a verdict of acquittal. If there is no reasonable doubt in your minds, then, of course, it is your sworn duty to return verdicts of guilty.

Now, juries are the sole judges of the fact and jurors are not required to accept the whole of any witness's story or to reject the whole. Jurors have a right to believe one witness and disbelieve another, or they have a right to accept part of a witness's story and reject the other part. That's your job and you determine what the facts are in this case. That's your big job and that's your exclusive job.

In connection with that, you have a right to scrutinize the witness in an effort to determine how reliable they are and what you are going to believe in respect of what they have said on the witness stand.

You have heard two witnesses for the Commonwealth, this young man Smith and the police officer. Rastellini has taken the stand. You subject the testimony of all three of these witnesses to equal and intensive scrutiny, and then you decide what you are going to believe, and after you have decided what you feel are the facts of the situation, then you apply the law as I give it to you.

Now, in connection with the matter of credibility and the weight that you are to give the testimony of witnesses, after Rastellini took the stand there was introduced in evidence --and they are exhibits--at least photocopies of complaints are exhibits-- of his prior convictions of three crimes having to do with contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Now, you are not to consider those convictions as evidence that he is guilty, but you are entitled to consider, knowing that, how much weight you are going to give to the evidence which you heard from him.

Does it affect your opinion as to the truthfulness as a witness? That is for you to say. You may say that it doesn't affect his truthfulness, or you may say that it does. It's all for you to say.

Now, there are three indictments here against Rastellini charging three separate offenses. The first one is sodomy, and it is described in the words of common law that Rastellini committed the abominable and detestable crime against nature with one Russell Smith. I say to you, without getting into any definition of the matter, that it is sufficient for you to know in the framework of this case that a connection of two persons, whereby the male organ of one is inserted into the anus of another, that constitutes the crime of sodomy.

It is not necessary that there be any orgasm or sexual ejaculation, but there must be a penetration by the male organ in order that the offense of sodomy be completed.

Now, it doesn't make any difference in respect of this indictment charging sodomy and

the unnatural act indictment, which I will speak to you about a little bit later, and third one of contributing to the delinquency of a child--it is no defense and it makes no difference whether the other person, Smith, consented or not. He may have been a hustler, he may have brought this whole thing on, he may have induced the whole situation and been an eager, consenting partner. That is no justification and that is no excuse and that is no legal defense. If the offense was committed even with the consent of Smith, it is still an offense against our law.

Now, with respect to the matter of the indictment charging unnatural acts, the allegation that Rastellini did commit an unnatural and lascivious act with one Russell Smith. Our law reads, "Whoever commits any unnatural and lascivious act with another person shall be punished," and without going into detail as to what every possible unnatural act is, it is sufficient in this case to tell you that a connection between two persons involving the mouth and the insertion of the male organ into the mouth concededly and admittedly under the law is an unnatural act. It is for you to say whether or not the unnatural act was, in fact, committed by this Defendant.

Once again I say to you, even though you find that act to have been committed with the consent of Smith, that is still no defense.

Now, in respect of the third indictment, the statute reads in this fashion: Any person who shall be found to have caused, induced, abetted, encouraged or contributed to the waywardness or delinquency of a child shall be punished.

Now, for the purposes of this statute, a child is anyone under the age of 16. Have in mind the date of birth of Smith, being October 30, 1951, and this was alleged to have occurred on June 23, 1968. At that time, Smith had not attained his seventeenth birthday.

Now, what is contributing toward the waywardness or delinquency of Smith? Without going into that particularly, it is for you to say as a matter of fact whether or not, even with the willingness and consent of Smith, whether or not committing sodomy or an unnatural act, or handing him about from one to another, as you may infer was done on the day before the alleged sodomy was committed, that would have a tendency to contribute to waywardness or delinquency in Smith.

You saw him on the stand. Would that sort of action tend to lead him away from the path of good morals and lawful, legal conduct? That is the situation for you to consider.

You will have in mind that each of these indictments charges separate offenses, and you must make a separate determination on each one of them. You will have in mind, of course, that your verdict must be unanimous.

Now I shall speak about the matter of drugs as a defense, and after I have told you that, I will have no more to say to you, unless counsel has suggestions.

Now, a man may commit a crime while he is under the influence or intoxicated by drugs or by alcoholic liquor, and that intoxication is no defense, except in one circumstance, which I will talk to you about in a moment.

One may take bourbon or benzedrine or any other drug or any other liquor, and become intoxicated by it so that he may lose the natural and normal restraints which he might have. He might inflame his libido or his sexual instincts. That may well be so. The use of the drug or the use of the liquor may explain why a particular offense may have been committed, but it is no defense or no justification.

A man cannot come into this court under our law and say, "Yes, I have committed the offense, but it was the booze in me and not myself who was really acting."

That is not a defense, members of the jury, except in this type of instance: If the drug use or the alcohol use created such a degree of intoxication that a man was incapable of forming a specific intention and a specific intention was one of the essential ingredients of the crime, then, of course, it would be a defense.

But it is for you to say on all the evidence here whether or not the crime of sodomy and the crime of unnatural acts and contributing to the delinquency of a minor really calls for that type of specific intent and whether or not the drugs as you found them to have been used have robbed Rastellini, if he committed the offenses, of the degree of acted control of his intentions as I have outlined it to you.



Prints by Samuel Reese, who has spent 21 of his 40 years in Missouri State's Death Row. Copies available from GAY SUNSHINE.

FUGUE

We shared a nuptial bed
for time so brief, so brief.

After seven years of prison
I was famished for affection;
you with artistry so whorish
furnished me illusion perfect.

You protest?

Yet you must admit
you the wiser were.

Were you charmed by my naivete?

I was intrepid,
enraptured totally,
though in my heart
lay infidelity.

Remember the blond
whom I eyed
so salaciously?

We must have been a sight
though people were polite.

Remember near the Astor Bar
the man and wife with whom we dined?
So queer their friendship towards two youth
so unmistakably in love.

The gun went to my temple
when I found you gone.

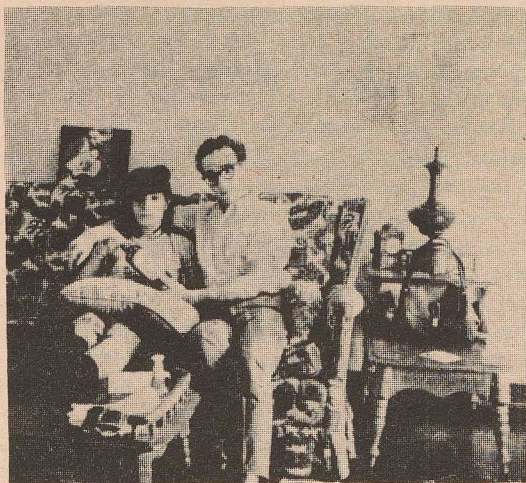
Then I recalled a news account
of some executive who caught
in scandal fired a bullet right
into his brain but didn't die.

I saw myself
there lying
painfully alive
and lowered the gun.

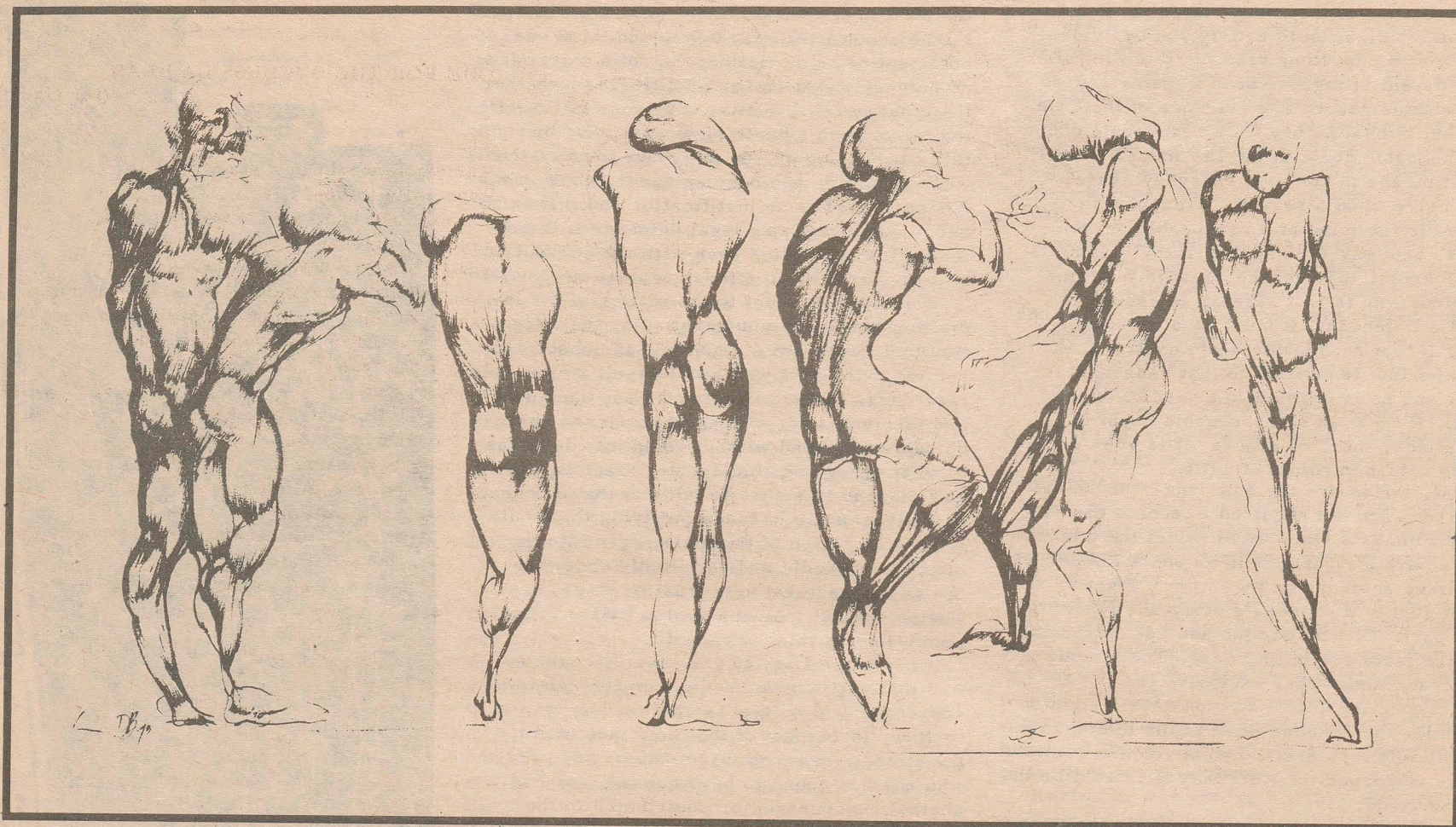
Can you imagine I
whose appetite for sex
was so insatiable
and indiscriminate
was celibate a year?

The guard gave me your recent letter.

--Jerry Heft



Eddie Rastellini with his sister.



Fag Rag Blues again

How much interest and/or attention should be given the changes in and around FAG RAG?

FAG RAG started during the Stonewall era of soaring Gay Growth! Positive or negative, that's how FAG RAG started!

It has been pointed out in past issues that there existed a union between FAG RAG and GML (Gay Male Liberation). From GML came the energy, the policies, as they were, the experiences that were FAG RAG! Positive or negative, that's how FAG RAG existed!

GML is gone--I don't know where, I wasn't here when it went. There is a single person, Charley Shively, linking this issue of FAG RAG with the others, all the way back to the first. Charley has held the key to FAG RAG, the account of FAG RAG, the knowledge of FAG RAG, the power and desire to keep FAG RAG alive and in print while GML was waning, while the soaring gay consciousness was leveling. It's Charley one has wooed, showed interest to, made aware of one's:

energy
writing ability
contacts within and awareness of the "gay community" in order to effect, work with and/or be a part of FAG RAG. Positive or negative, that's how FAG RAG has survived!

So here we have the surviving FAG RAG; a power struggle centered around Charley, a power struggle in which seemingly no one wants all the power (because all the power means all the responsibility?). There are two areas of struggle which though not totally separate cannot be dealt with singularly.

One area of struggle is the definition of FAG RAG. Is FAG RAG a homosexual literary magazine which will publish anything of quality--quality referring to writing style, regardless of content--written by homosexuals? Should it be? Is FAG RAG an anti-racist, anti-masculinist publication from some gay community of thought saying there's exploitation, needless and meaningless insults and belittling rampant in this world and it's reflected everywhere else; we don't

need it here; LET'S TRY SOMETHING ELSE!? MOVE ON! Should it be?

The second area is responsibility for FAG RAG. Can you believe the loud, over-whelming, and self-assuming are still intimidating and de-powering the meek? Charley, who is neither loud nor over-whelming, is aware of his position and eager to not be the power behind FAG RAG. However, he does not trust the quieter, less involved members of the surviving FAG RAG to accept responsibility or commit themselves to the publication. That lack of trust is at least equalled by the lack of trust he has in the motives of the louder element of FAG RAG.

One area of struggle is content and this needs to be decided by the people who put time, energy and life into FAG RAG. The other is distributing responsibility to keep FAG RAG alive. That decision seems to rest with Charley. Hopefully, somehow we will find strength to deal with this struggle and move on. (I DON'T KNOW HOW TO END THIS THING.)

Larry Anderson

editorial tirade

the fag rag collective
resembles nothing so much
as a bunch of hens
haggling to hatch
a doorknob

at last
this goddamn issue
is coming out

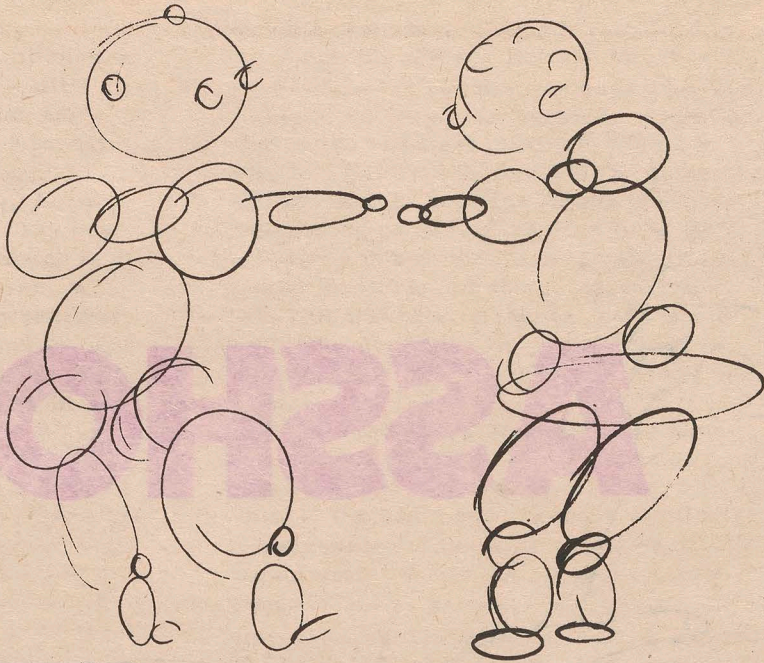
--J. Kyper

In putting together FAG RAG #2 we had some screaming arguments and disagreements. Reflecting on his discouragement, Steve Barru wrote that, "Much of the depression and frustration I feel comes from the fact that I can't just leave or quit 'Gay Liberation.' I came to Gay Liberation in the first place because I was lonely and unhappy and discouraged with my life. I was scared of a dismal future. If I still feel, the need to change all of that. All of us do. Gay Liberation is not a set of meetings or an organization of a newspaper--it is my life, our lives." Now somewhat stunned by the divisions and arguments in putting together FAG RAG #7/8, I feel exactly as Steve did then.

FAG RAG has a schizoid division between wanting to make a gay revolution and putting out a newspaper. We have tried to create a circle of sisterhood, I love and support and to change the way we are miserable in bars, with lovers, on "jobs," on "welfare," unemployed or in the bushes, reststops, men's rooms and bus stations. When FAG RAG started, it was one among many devices intended to realize some unity, community organization, mutual self-support and revolution. Now we stand more and more alone in our struggle--the only remnant of radical gay consciousness in Boston and one of the few in the country.

Too many people (including myself) are working on FAG RAG with unreal fantasies about what can be done with a newspaper. Without a strong movement, collectives, commitments and love, we cannot have the kind of newspaper we would like. In fact, we are grinding ourselves to pieces psychically trying to do the impossible. One person before he "retired" from the paper, spoke about the faggots destroying themselves with drugs or alcohol and those killing themselves more quickly by suicide. He said FAG RAG must answer the needs of these people, give them some hope, come up with some answer. No newspaper can do this.

The decline of the Gay Liberation Fronts has intensified the split between



FAG RAG as a vehicle of liberation and FAG RAG as a periodical. As gay publications have narrowed down to fewer and fewer, FAG RAG (along with GAY SUNSHINE, BODY POLITIC, Detroit GAY LIBERATOR, LESBIAN TIDE and Boston FOCUS) has just by enduring fallen heir to a national even international readership. I personally think those who want to publish a newspaper should retire to that task, take on an editor, office and perhaps even seek to support someone full-time in the "business."

Not being able to do all we would want to or even as much as we have done in the past, there is a great deal of guilt floating around. People continue coming to the paper out of loyalty, attachment and hope. But they don't have the energy or commitment to do more than criticize others. Attacking those who do manage to do something becomes a substitute for accomplishment. One might not have energy to help distribute the paper (selling it in the street, for instance) or to write an article or to spend long hours proof-reading, but one can make up for that by attacking those who are working. The less you do the more you need to attack someone for not being strong enough in combatting racism, imperialism and sexism. Criticism and talk thus become a substitute for action and change.

One of the movement's greatest burdens has been Chairman Mao's essay, "Combat Liberalism." Unfortunately, for FAG RAG, the essay ranks it tenth place among errors: "to disdain minor assignments while being quite unequal to major tasks, to be slipshod in work and slack in study." In first place is "To let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship." On the latter, few have hesitated; it has been the excuse for nasty and and vociferous attack. The error in the essay for FAG RAG is that we are not the group of men who led the revolution in China; we are a separated, disparate group of faggots, who are "slipshod in work and slack in study" and slow toward "peace and friendship" among each other.

I personally hope FAG RAG can be organized as a top notch gay periodical, perhaps serve a role as MS or SECOND WAVE has for women. But for myself, I am not ready to undertake that task. I would be willing to contribute and help but not to lead in that direction. For the present I have taken very much to heart what Mary Daly said recently in an interview:

And there is this phenomenon among women, it just scares me everytime. A woman in the audience will say, 'I admire your courage.' I don't want her to admire my courage: I want her to help me, and not make me carry the ball.... I don't have a wife to do my shit work, or a full-time secretary or any of the social support that a married man has.... Add to that, I've got a full-time job and, like some of us, carry the movement on our backs. So one of the messages to get through... is to start thinking for yourselves but don't ask me to go on doing your thinking for you because I won't last.

Charley Shively

ODE FOR THE DUCHESS LA BLAH

(for Gary F.)

-1-

The whole world is a stage,
especially Dupont Circle,
a swan lake of second class gunmen,
junkies & glassy-eyed housewives,
artistes & us. We stroll through
pigeons strutting about like groups of nuns
afraid to light for long on public benches.
Tricks roost on the fountain's edge,
finger the water. You shine
100% swank
in your Italian straw hat,
cranberry scarf &
Good Will sweater
(you swore Sonja Henie wore it in ICELAND).
Even the nuns might cheer you,
pigeons leap up like arsenals of ICBM feathers.
You are the only person I know
who claims to have made it with all four
of the Marx brothers. Only you
get a hard-on watching
DUCK SOUP.

You are the only drag queen ever
to willfully imitate Kitty Carlisle.
Cocking a gander you said:
"I sing America swishing," in your best
imitation of Walt Whitman. No man
is ugly, all are your "little Colonne,
little cabbage." A motorcycle
rumbles round & round playing our song.

-2-

In the park alone, reading MY LIFE.
I wait for archangel Ysenin,
Andy Warhol, Duke Mantee, the Flying Leathernecks,
you. I feel like June Allyson
in the "optimistic cinema."

On page 225 I read:

"Yes," I continually cried, "let me
be Pagan, be Pagan!" but I was probably
never much more advanced than to be
a Pagan Puritan, or a Puritanical Pagan.

Winter makes puritans of us all.
We scrape by on the remains of
past revolutions, warm our hands

with the names of old flames.
The fountain is closed.
Leaves swarm down like left over
paratroopers from a JohnWayne flick.
Round the circle they are blown
with a kind of grace,
a leaf scarf flying in the wind.
You pulled your cock from my mouth
like the pin to a handgrenade.
What exploded was me, pigeon feathers,
sequins, these hundred odd poems.
I feel like Charlie Chaplin
tightening his belt in the soup line.
I would trip on my face to get a laugh.
Without you I am such a puritan,
always "just before the revolution."
But you are a kite after the string
has broken, swept away in new grace.
I cannot be angry.

-3-

The emptier a belly becomes
the wider it swells until
it looks like a beer belly,
you are pregnant with death.
It is the same with love.
After a while you have to laugh,
an hysterical pregnancy of sorts
as you grow ugly, bloat with need.
This ruins the dance for a while.
Every time I see Kitty Carlisle
I think of you. The circle
is playing another tune.
I wish it was a waltz.
You can pretend to be lost in a waltz
but the music always circles home.

--Jim Everhard





Rimming As An Act Of Revolution

Basically we are sacks of saltwater of an antique formula--protected, isolated, sheathed against the world. In each of us there are two important holes--mouth and anus--through which we are physically linked with the rest of the world. Everything that keeps us going comes in through the mouth; what can't be digested leaves through the anus (except for liquids).

Oral/Anal sex may be even more basic and more closely related to life forces/the universe than sex for reproduction. We make a fetish of replication (and supposed immortality)--ultimately a death worship--leading us away from the struggle of life itself (an impenetrable mystery) and away from each other (who are penetrable in so few and in so limited a way).

All the holes that are open share mucous membranes which link the outside world with the inside. The mouth, anus, vulva/penis are all gooey interlockers. Skin, skull, hair, knees, nails and such shield us more than they connect us. Eyes with their mucous membranes and tears can't be any more penetrated by another than the ears with their drums or the skin with its feeling of division. There is a mucous magic in linked lips, touching tongues--something beyond the meeting of eyes or of hands.

RIMMING

One of the most beautiful and expressive forms of loving begins as the lips and tongue slip gently into another's anus. Kissing asses and brown-nosing are acts of love--a sharing of the mucous membranes in my mouth with those in another anus: a mixing of life juices, a marriage of love and loveliness. A rimming where two mucous membranes meet and mesh.

In praising rimming as an act of revolution I'm not saying everyone has to rim or that this is the only way to love. We've already had too many manuals and prescriptions about just how and how many times we may communicate. What I am saying is that this form of love is valid. The boy

I know who only wants to rim is not off base; only those who would call him sick. Any opening for communication or connection becomes a road to revolution.

I remember the first time I was rimmed. Although surprised at what was happening, I loved it. My asshole is a super-erogenous zone for me. I'd met someone on the Fenway and we'd gone to his place. I haven't seen him for ten years, but to this day I can see his apartment and feel the stubble of several days beard on his cheeks.

The way I like rimming best is when I am 69-ing with someone and am very excited. Having your partner bend over or squat on your face is also fun. Sexually, rimming may be the easiest thing of all to learn; it's even simpler than kissing. Some people are, of course, squeamish about it. I remember vividly the first time I had sex with a fellow just coming out, who didn't at first know what I was doing. When he noticed, he giggled nervously and said, "Don't do that."

Everywhere in our society we are taught to fear and hide our "backsides." This shows up particularly in the language. An "asshole" is someone "mean, malicious, stubborn, impolite, debased"; a "piece of shit" is anything "inferior, ugly, cheap or disgusting." And phrases like "brown nose," "ass lick" or "ass kiss" mean an act of ultimate humiliation.

In rimming we fly in the face of the existing sexual mores. Rimming becomes an act of revolution--an unexpected strategy against the ruling classes, hierarchies, straightnesses, tyrannies. In realizing our love as we want it, we free ourselves in an exciting and unexpected way.

ANAL EROTICISM

Having penetrated the asshole, we can go on to fucking--penis to rectum sexuality among males. Throughout history and around the world, anal sex seems to be more common than oral sex. It also seems

to be more prevalent among the lower classes and in the Third World; oral sex being more common among the privileged. One fairly thorough researcher points out that people active in gay liberation tend more toward oral than anal sex unlike those not involved in movements. Certainly my experience would bear this out. I remember the fierce battles we had over whether we should print a poem that celebrated fucking in FAG RAG #1; much to my grief it was finally rejected (you can read "Steven" in SEBASTIAN QUILL).

People called the poem sexist and confused anal sex with sexism. Anal sex is probably open to sexist abuse. In fucking one partner is more often active; another, passive; one on top, another on the bottom; one giving, another receiving; etc. But sexism is not in the act itself; it is in the actors. Anal sexuality itself reaches deep into our roots--our very being--and provides a deepness of contact than can be totally beautiful.

Knowing what we are doing and what's being done to us is a first essential before we can define "sexism." In particular we need to know more both about how to fuck another man and how to be fucked. You aren't born knowing how to do it; it's all learned. There are some writings on the subject. Two in early GAY SUNSHINE #3 and #5. The latter ended by saying, "Ass fucking is a major sexual activity of man and there has been no study of it at all. Let's keep up a running symposium on it, both from view of fucker and fuckee." Such a dialogue has not continued within or without gay liberation. In 1972 the Columbus GAY ACTIVIST ran a series of excellent articles, but they had a limited circulation. "Some people," according to the ACTIVIST, "thought the article was offensive because of the use of the words 'fuck' and 'ass-hole.'" GAY recently ran some articles on the subject, but they tend to be more sensational than helpful. QUEENS QUARTERLY has an overpriced GAY SEX TECHNIQUES, whose chief feature is the stud pictures. Perhaps not very liberated--but useful and well written--Ange-

to D'Arcangelo's HOMOSEXUAL HANDBOOK has a chapter on technique.

I don't mean to tell people how to fuck or get fucked. For that a lover and a little self-experiment are far better than any book or newspaper. Everyone can invent their own technique.

Remembering my first fucking, I can give a little personal testimony. The boy next door did it; he was a drum major in highschool and had, it seemed to me, a huge penis. We were lying on a wonderful featherbed. Although I loved it and thought about it for days, it was a little more than I was ready for. I was about twelve at the time. I got myself ready for later times by practicing with my finger and later with an aluminum tool from a milking machine. Later when I was in college and had access to a bathtub, I could relax and run my hand into the rectum to loosen it up. I came to love being fucked--maybe I like it best of all, but it does take a little time and experience to get used to having something besides shit in your rectum.

I think we all need to become more aware of our bodies, aware of what feels "good"--aware of our own erogenous zones and how they can grow or spread. In particular, we need to familiarize ourselves more with the actual anatomy of the sphincter, rectum, anus and general "backside" area. Doctors and scientists have done pitifully little in this area. But even if they had done more research, we would still need to know our own particular body.

We must start examining our own and each other's asses much in the way women are examining their vaginas. Rectal politics (like vaginal politics) includes much more than simple physical examinations. It means more body self-understanding, more body self-love and finally taking control over our bodies, our selves. If every man understood his asshole, I wonder how many would continue fucking in ways that could be harmful? The assumption now is that everything connected with the asshole is ugly, dirty and bad so that there is no way of distinguishing between what is just exquisite pain/sensation/love and what is self-destructive. (A similar situation exists with drugs.)

If we were less afraid of our assholes, I think another thing would follow, we would be less paranoid about dirt in the area. The QQ GAY TECHNIQUES like much of the literature recommends a complete enema and douche before and after sex. This is hardly necessary and may be harmful. The rectum is used to dirt; the mucous membranes are made to fight infections. They should be respected and allowed to do their job. The harsh and destructive ingredients in soap with such chemical poisons as lye hardly help things. Likewise with oils and vaseline--fine for the outer skin, they tend to interfere with the action of the mucus. For a lubricant, spit is fine; if you must use something artificial, try K Y. It is water soluble and tastes better than vaseline, cold cream, soap or some other such lubricant.

SPHINCTER SPECTER

The anus is the soul of the ass--a rose muscle that's generally tied up tight like a string in a purse or bag. It relaxes only to let shit out or to let penises in. It is one of several similar muscles in the body called sphincters--rings of muscle fiber surrounding a hollow organ or opening. For instance, in the iris of the eye; at the union of the urethra (the piss and come tube) with the urinary bladder (piss bag); and at the junction of the stomach with the intestines (called the pylorus).

The sphincters are knit to the psyche and are the site of many psychosomatic disorders. Ulcers commonly grow around the pylorus, the stomach sphincter. Disorders in the gall bladder disrupts the flow of bile, which is essential in digesting fat. Inadequate bile leads to excessive cholesterol levels which leads to high blood pressure. (Remember LBJ--he had a record of heart trouble and had his gall bladder removed while in office.)

The anus is likewise subject to psychosomatic disorder. Kenneth Pitchford in his poem "I've Never Been to Majorca" relates how his rectum was unusable, and he bewailed "this thin-skinned rectum that bled at the slightest strain." (COLOR PHOTOS OF THE ATROCITIES, p. 51) Constipation is common among nervous, high strung people. The anus (like the pylorus) can become ulcerous and is subject to mysterious itching. Associated with hemorrhoids, fissures, colitis and such disorders, the itching has been clearly linked to psychological stress and strain.

When functioning smoothly, the anus works closely in harmony with the penis. It is governed through nerve centers common to the penis and responds similarly to psychological (as well as physical) stimulation. While the anus has hardly been studied as an erogenous organ,

interesting parallels in its working might be drawn from some experiments on the dog's gall bladder. (Vicious and unnecessary destruction of life for which we will doubtless have to pay someday.) When the dog is shown a bone, the pressure to her or his gall bladder sphincter falls as low as sixty millimeters--allowing bile accumulated in the gall bladder to seep out easily. But twelve hours after eating, the dog's gall bladder requires a hundred millimeter pressure to be opened, and after a fast, three hundred millimeters.

Like the gall bladder sphincter, the anus works in concert with the psyche. Display a bone, the sphincter relaxes; starve the animal, the sphincter tightens into a knot. Wherever the heads of the sex partners might be, they need to understand--not in a book learning way but in a body way--the relaxation and yielding of the anus.

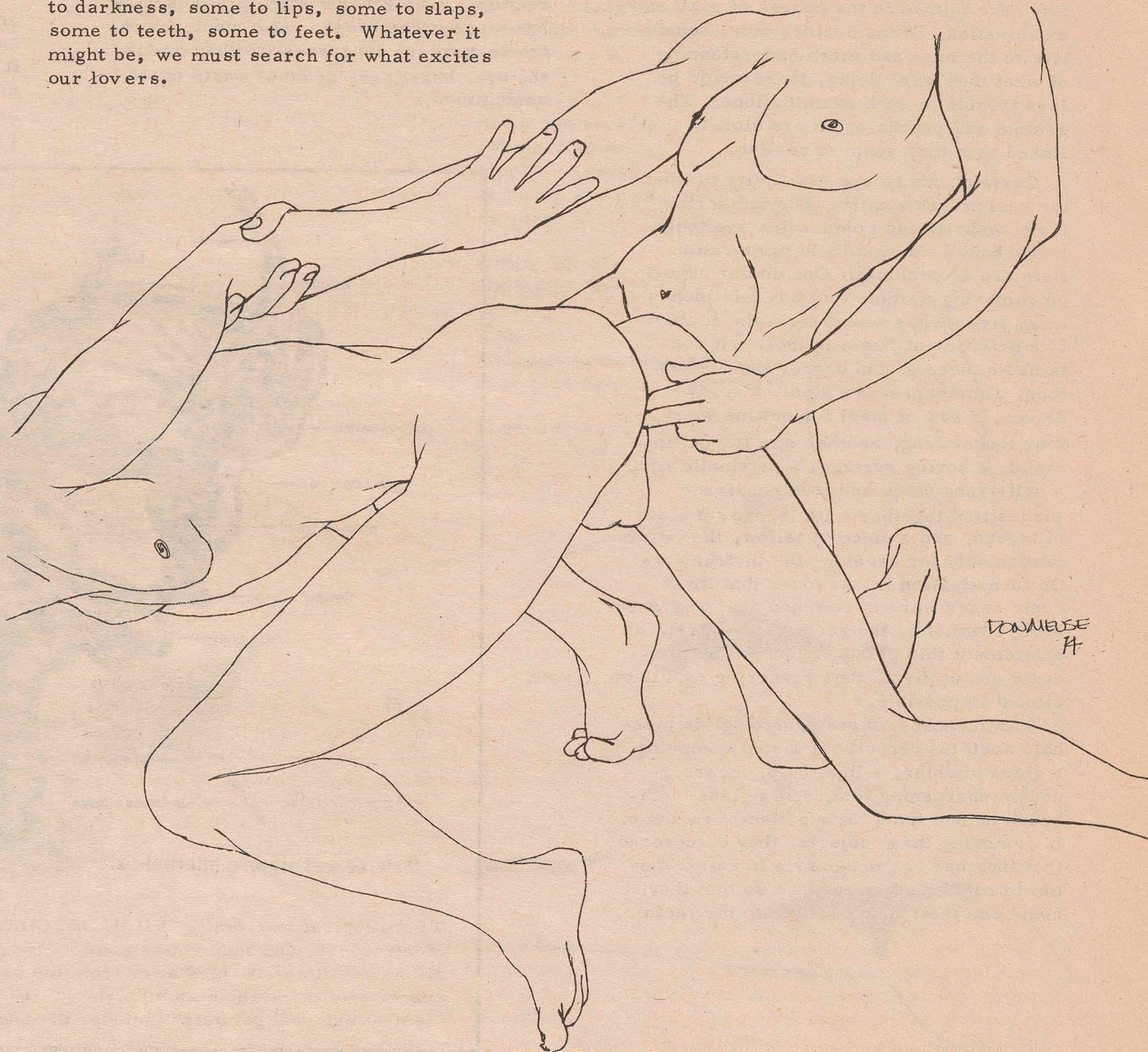
Sexual excitement is obviously the best way to relax the anal sphincter (and probably the others; I suspect high cholesterol and ulcers come from the tension of wanting to love men and especially wanting to be fucked--and yet fearing it). Every person is unique in the way they are turned on. One responds to pictures, another to having an ear bitten, another to being spanked, another to kissing, another to some special spot that has to be found on the body--a personalized erogenous zone. Some to words, some to skin, some to eyes, some to darkness, some to lips, some to slaps, some to teeth, some to feet. Whatever it might be, we must search for what excites our lovers.

As for the sphincter itself, a definite way to relax it and lubricate it at the same time is with the tongue. Rimming is a wonderful way to prepare an anus for a penis. Who is so tight he cannot accept a tongue, soft, slippery and easy as it is in its message of love into the rectum? Once softened, resistance melts like butter in the summer sun. Stiffness becomes softness becomes yielding ecstasy.

Alexander the Great and Gay untied the famous Gordian Knot by slitting it with his sword. King Gordius of Phrygia had tied it and the oracle predicted that whoever undid it would become master of Asia. Alexander became famous, conquered Asia, but he did not tie the knot. He slit it. What he slit was not a person or an asshole. But his method is too common in men fucking--in their eagerness to push ahead they destroy rather than untie the asshole before them. Alexander's method has probably done more to tie people up than to loosen their anus muscle fibers. The experience of a friend of mine is too typical. In his first sexual encounter in the YMCA, a man fucked him so hard and fiercely that he was afraid for a long time to try it again.

I suspect every tear, rent or injury involved in gay sex comes through an uptight asshole--a sphincter unwilling to yield, being forced and torn open by the raging sword. A tight sphincter won't unwind in five minutes with most people--especially after decades of holding out. So, why force it? First time, a tongue may be enough; add a finger perhaps, being very very careful with the nails.

Aim for the prostate gland. This wonderful gland is in the back of the rectum; its about the size of a silver dollar in most men and it's hard and excited during erection. The prostate gland produces the goo carrier for the sperm. Master's and Johnson's says it is not an erogenous zone for most men. I've been to bed with many men (probably more than they ever examined) and I have observed that the "straighter" the man, the more he loves having his prostate massaged. Inflammation and cancer in this area are common, although little is done to inform people about it. Physical examination of the prostate by





In this illustration, a priestess initiates a man to being fucked with a dildo. Philip Rawson seems somewhat confused about what is happening. "The most significant rituals of Tantrik sadhana are performed with women who have been specially initiated. What this initiation consists of has usually been kept secret and its reasoning hidden." *The Art of Tantra* (London, 1973), p. 79.

a doctor is quite common and great fun. The doctor puts on a glove, lubricates his hand with some KY and slips the whole hand into the rectum. If the prostate is inflamed or infected, the examination can be quite painful. I know two people who have fainted in the course of such an examination. Were doctors more sensitive to the area and more understanding of what they were doing, there would be less trouble in such examinations. The rectum and psyche are more closely linked than they seem to realize.

Certainly there are few limits to what the rectum can absorb. It's indiscriminate capacity and compassion are truly remarkable. With a little preparation fists are no problem. One doctor reported removing a whole tool box (six inches long, five inches wide) from the rectum of a prisoner at Brest in 1861. "It contained a piece of gun barrel four inches long, a mother-screw steel, a screwdriver, a saw of steel for cutting wood four inches long, another saw for cutting metal, a boring syringe, a prismatic file, a half-franc piece and four one-franc pieces tied together with thread, a piece of thread, and a piece of tallow, the latter presumably for greasing the instruments. On investigation it was found that these conic cases were of common use, and were always thrust up the rectum base first. In excitement this prisoner had pushed the conic end up first, thus rendering expulsion almost impossible."

In Milwaukee, three proctologists (asshole doctors) recently reported removing a glass tumbler, a light bulb, a carborundum sharpening tool, and a glass toothbrush holder from their patients' rectums. In removing these objects, they discovered that they had to get the anus to relax; they used drugs and reassurance so that they could run their arm easily into the rectum.

I once took a twelve ounce Schlitz bottle up my rectum--an act of love for someone who wanted to see if I could smuggle contraband across the Mexican border in my rectum. I don't know if I could do this now, but there is plenty of room in my rectum. As a general rule, glass is very bad since it can break. And punctures in the rectum are dangerous (as they are in the eye, heart, ear or other parts of the anatomy.)

There are alarm stories about dysfunctional sphincters and injuries to the rectum. If the muscles are forced and ripped open too many times against their will, they may tear, the muscle may become scared and inflexible. But if everyone would respond to the wishes of the anus (both fuckee and fucker) injury would be rare if not impossible. The fuckee needs to know relaxation, ease and joy in fucking; the fucker needs to respond to every part of the fuckee's body. Without this response and communication between partners, our sex would be without meaning or joy.

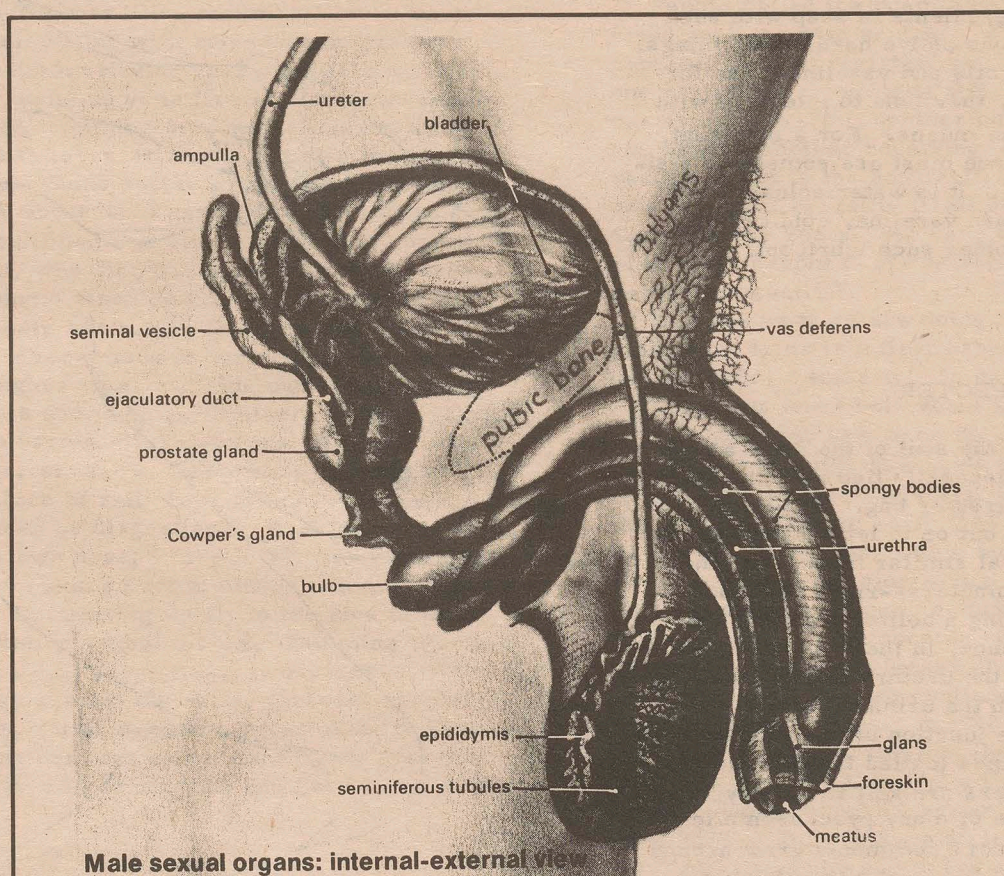
REVOLUTIONARY LOVE

Anal sex must be more than an act of hygiene, more than a simple acrobatic formula. In our culture we have unhappily separated medicine and religion, body and mind, sex and love. The revolutionary task of our time is to reintegrate what has been falsely torn asunder.

For me the rectum and anal sex are peculiarly sacred. Their beauty is not so much in what we have done with our assholes and shit--but in what we may yet do with them. "WITH THEM," I say because I think our assholes have an independence and beauty within themselves that needs to be recognized and loved.

In a couple of decades I have learned something about my asshole and developed feelings there that were either hidden or non-existent before. It is still not as alive nor so well exercised as I would like, but I have come to understand better the possibilities and potentialities in my "backside." A friend recently mentioned to me that my anus tended to be motionless when I was fucked. And so I experimented with my sphincter by moving it back and forth, loose and tight; by just doing this I was able to reach an orgasm. I felt my whole body electrified and involved; I came to parts of my body that I had not known existed.

I think we should all learn to have rectal orgasms in order to broaden and extend our sexuality beyond the genitals. William Burroughs can supposedly achieve orgasm all the time just from the joy of having someone in his rectum. I've had it happen a few times--coming in some magical way without the penis even being manipulated.



This illustration from the VD HANDBOOK, P.O. Box 1000, Station G, Montreal 130, Quebec, shows some of the male sexual organs. But like all such writings it shies away from the asshole. They obviously cannot conceive of the asshole as a "male sexual organ;" the illustration of "female external genitals" includes the anus labelled.

The rectal orgasm is certainly a reasonable possibility for all men. Masters & Johnson have already measured the spasms in all their men as they came. If it is true that the vaginal orgasm is a myth--that women only reach orgasm in the clitoris and that the vaginal orgasm is entirely psychological--then men could equally well achieve rectal orgasms. The nerve centers of the rectum and genitals are as close in the male as those of the vagina and clitoris in women. In fact, the tissues in the rectum can be transplanted in order to form an artificial vagina for either a woman born without a vagina or for a transsexual male. The parallel then is very close between the rectal and vaginal orgasm.

There is an example of one man who transformed his rectum into a functional vagina without surgery or other artifice. Flossie was a 49 year old prostitute found stabbed to death in Florida. The doctor reported at the autopsy: "Of considerable interest was squamous metaplasia of the rectal mucosa extending upward for a distance of approximately 6 centimeters." (AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PROCTOLOGY, June, 1969) Flossie may have been a greater saint of sexual liberation than some of our self-appointed leaders. Her rectum had become so transformed that customers couldn't tell Flossie's rectum from a vagina.

The potentialities we possess have barely been explored in the West. Indian yogini are capable of remarkable feats. They can virtually stop their hearts, voluntarily slow down metabolism and tolerate remarkable inflictions to their flesh. Yogini can use their tongues almost as additional arms. Children have been trained to flatten their thighs so that the thigh bones rest parallel with instead of perpendicular with the body. The masters have a cleansing exercise for the rectum in which the anus sucks up and expels water. They can emit semen in orgasm and then suck it back up into their urinary bladder. And they can use a straw to suck milk directly into their rectum where it can be digested.

The achievements of Burroughs, Flossie and of the Indian yogini show what can be done with our bodies; they show how narrow, straight and circumscribed we have allowed ourselves to become. But they also show much more, they open a road to new spiritual perfections and experiences. For instance, coming while being fucked is an avenue, a road to total ecstasy--unforgettable and rarely achieved now--a special grace that we may be able to extend both in our own bodies and throughout society. Spreading that vision, that eroticism both within myself and within this monster belly called Amerika I take to be an act of revolution--a strategy beyond the reach of all the police forces in the world.

Rimming as an act of revolution-- "Smash the State"--by developing, cherishing our eroticism, our bodies, which have been hidden from us, stolen by this distempered industrial capitalist wasteland--rimming can lead us to freedom.

INDEPENDENCE DAY, 1968

The dog's piss shone on the laurel
leaves that fourth of July
picnic when the Army sergeant in fatigues
with rolled-up sleeves
wrestled his nephew off the patchwork blanket.
Onto the grassy stubble,
pants inching beneath his knees,
he heaved a passage in no time
straight into the squirming behind
of an all-too-willing seventeen year old.
Bitten fingernails, sweaty chest,
stomach ballooning. Chapped lips
sucking the young neck dry.
Hoarse chuckles and sobs mixed,
biting into the humid air
as I leashed and walked Terry home.
With a crisp bill
tucked in my free hand:
a shared secret.

J.D. Butkie

ME

I have seen you before
only glimpses--dark, secret
you are a neighbor
we share the universe
we share a body

--Jesse

ANOTHER ONE

highway boy flowing the road
I'll Richard's thrust
lust thrust
Paul's tear
you try
so hard--rock hard
to not be
sensitive

--Jesse

NO RULES

*you've really got a hold on me
and all I want
you to do
is to hold tighter, hold tighter

swallow you
swallow me
I want to swallow
with soft kisses
wet caresses
warm

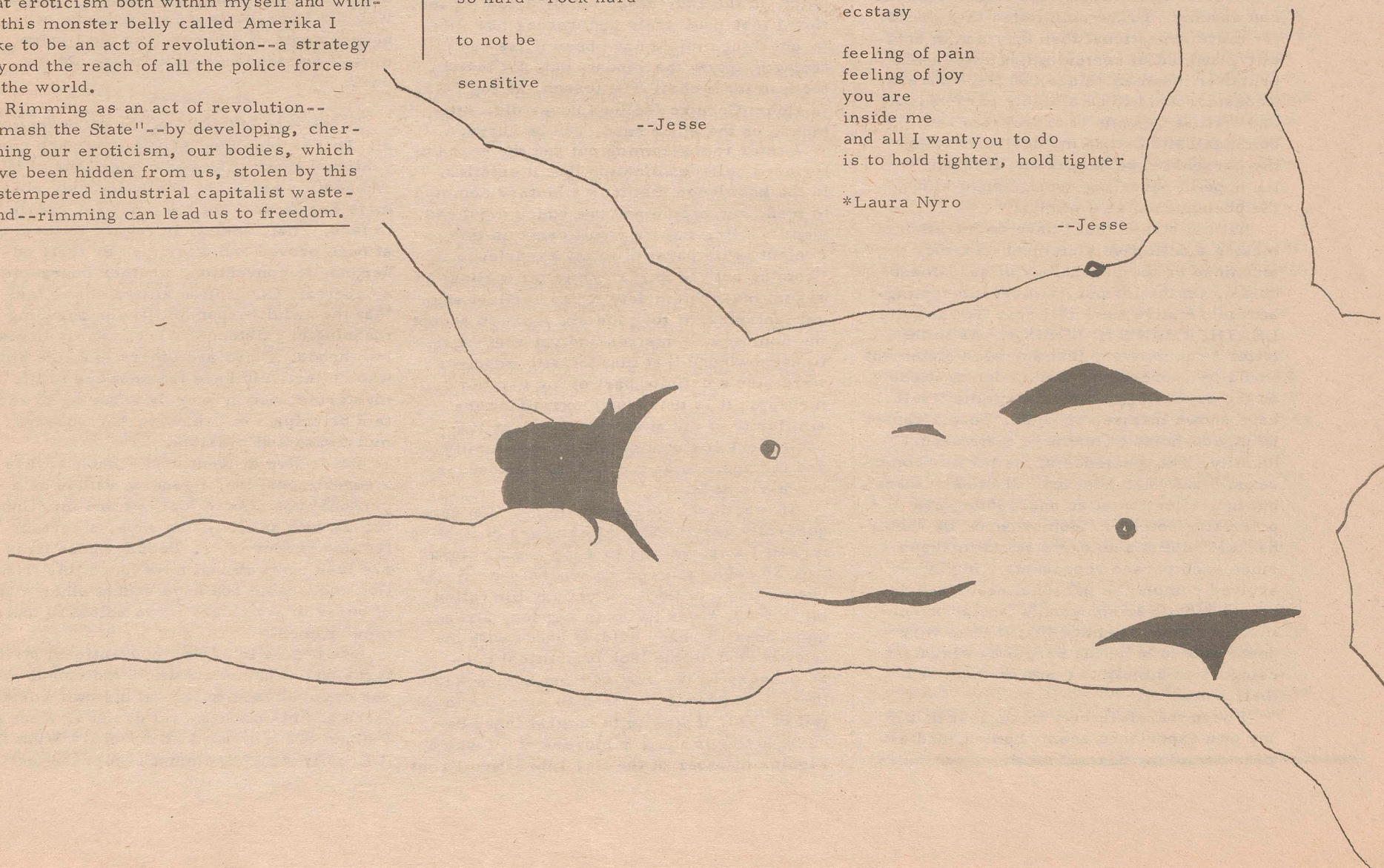
touching flesh
feeling words and
tasting smile-magic smile
tears and laughter
blend into movement
silently

round ass
projected shoulder
eyes and knowing
nipples, breast
abdomen and pubic hair
ecstasy

feeling of pain
feeling of joy
you are
inside me
and all I want you to do
is to hold tighter, hold tighter

*Laura Nyro

--Jesse





TOM HERMAN

Sado-masochism--Outrage to genteel spirit, Confounder of sexual democracy!

For too long this natural vehicle for men's deepest erotic needs and desires has been maligned and slandered. For too long opinion has been nothing but the articulation of closed minds. When a person behaves in an unconventional way, it would behoove the observer to inquire rather than judge, and to that end I offer this article.

While most people have only a vague idea of what S&M involves, it is not my intention to describe here the myriad forms which it can assume. To the uninitiated they appear far more sensational than they are in actuality, and out of context might even seem brutal or inhuman. Since, on the contrary, I consider S&M to be a highly personalized and civilized means of expression and communication, it is my desire to offer my personal experiences and feelings in the hope of revealing some insight into the phenomenon as a whole.

Let me stress that I have no intention of making a definitive statement on either the technique or the psychology of sado-masochism. On the former, a most interesting and informative work is Larry Townsend's *LEATHERMAN'S HANDBOOK*. As to the latter I can only say that any such statement would be oppressive, just as declarations on the psychology of homosexuality itself have shown themselves to be. People cannot be pigeon-holed in terms of their sexual identity. The existence of the terms "homosexual" and "heterosexual" themselves are but the reflection of an unaccepting and polarizing society. "Homosexual" or "heterosexual" defines no one's sexual makeup since each person represents a highly evolved complex of personal needs and desires. Whatever someone's sexual orientation, it can be assumed that it runs very deep, and so to define people by sexual category is simply to dismiss them and their humanity.

I wish therefore only to suggest that if my own experience seems human, and expressive of my deepest needs, it can be in-

sado-masochism, absurdism, and gay liberation

a personal reconciliation

ferred that sado-masochism can indeed be a vehicle of human sensitivity and communication. And it is this which I wish to prove in this essay.

At this point I must clarify my use of the term "sado-masochism." In its most literal sense the term refers to encounters centering around pain--not necessarily very much--where the desire of one to inflict pain and that of another to submit to it are the basis of mutual sexual gratification. Physical violence to an unwilling victim (such as rape) has nothing whatever to do with S&M since the latter involves an agreement of limitations rather than an act of exploitation.

If we define S&M only in terms of situations involving pain, we are eliminating certain phenomena which are often associated with it. A "master-slave" arrangement, for example, implies the potential of a complex psychological relationship not necessarily found in pure S&M. Moreover, this relationship may involve no pain whatever, but merely a playing out of roles where one person is sexually dominant, the other submissive.

For my purposes here, I should like to include all forms of mutually satisfying dominant-submissive role playing--psychological and/or physical--in my definition of S&M. The spectrum of particular sexual tastes is extremely wide, much more so than in more common forms of lovemaking, but exploration of their variety would be to confuse rather than edify.

I have always known--that is since my earliest sexual fantasies--that what I most desired sexually was affection from other males. At fourteen, when this became apparent to me, I had no rational basis for accepting it since everything I'd been taught strictly forbade it. The structures that had been set up for me were now besieged by alien forces which I could in no way accept. So for six years I fought them and refused to acknowledge the triumph that was gradually taking place in me--a triumph which ironically, in the end, saved me by defeating me. Now I look back sadly and wonder how different things might have been if instead of trying to throw the vandals out, I'd invited them in for a chat. The lesson, at any rate, is clear: Genuine feelings never die. Attitudes, on the other hand, can be changed.

I refer to my coming out and the years of tortured self-examination that it entailed, in the knowledge that it is a history common to many gay people and one which most can identify with. But its significance in this context is its parallel to my experience in "coming out" to S&M. While my feelings of sexual masochism date to my earliest sexual fantasies, it took me six years to accept my homosexual desires and yet another five to acknowledge that masochistic impulses were also a definite part of my psychic makeup. It is thus worth examining the similarity of my situation as a sensitive adolescent confronting my homosexuality and my position as a sensitive homosexual vis-a-vis S&M.

My earliest experiences in gay life were generally very good. After years of fighting myself I was exposed to a joy and a relaxation I'd never allowed myself before. I was twenty then, in 1967. When gay liberation hit in 1969, I was living in London, already quite open, already holding hands with my friends despite the lack of political consciousness on the part of most homosexuals there. So when I returned to America in the fall of 1970, it was quite natural that I became active in the gay movement. I was a regular member of the Gay Liberation Front

Study Group which met every Monday night to discuss questions relating to homosexuality. We discussed psychiatry, oppression, violence, women, bars, transvestites and transsexuals, camping, tricks, lovers, radical politics--we talked and talked till we ran out of things to say, till we knew what everyone in the group thought about everything. But what seems almost impossible now is that, to my memory, we never, ever, talked about sex. Imagine, a group of articulate, liberated homosexual men who get together every fucking week and never once talk about sex!

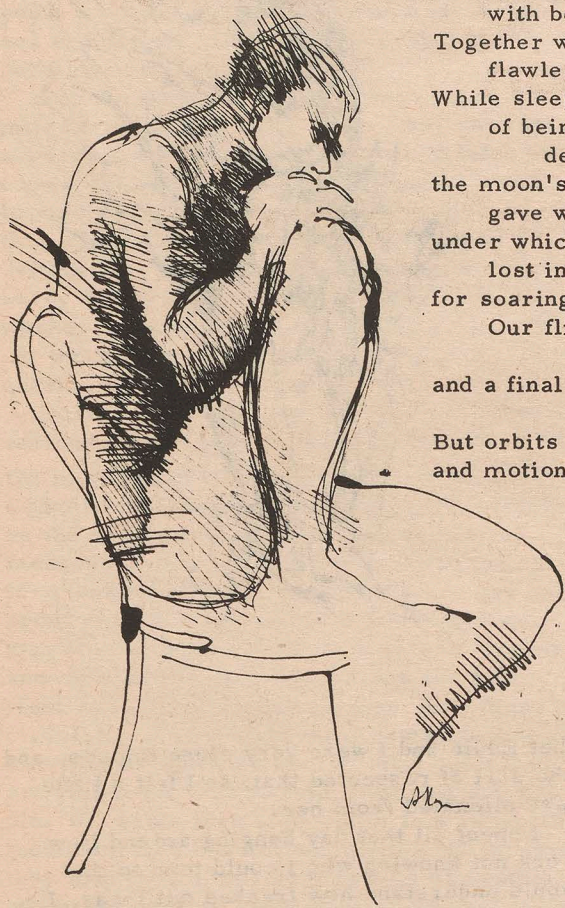
After about a year of this I became quite a spokesman for gay rights and lifestyles. I've spoken to college classes, women's groups, social workers, and medical students, and said all the right things, all the women's liberation-OKed rhetoric, all the radical-sociological truths I had acquired. And yet, and yet, there was a gnawing going on inside me. There were things which had never been answered or even asked, perhaps. Despite all my propagandistic know-how, and my revolutionary understanding, there still lurked a problem I could neither handle myself nor openly discuss with others: Leather turned me on. Butch guys turned me on. Cops turned me on. Marines turned me on. What a predicament! I felt like a prissy hypocrite, talking about essentially effeminate dogma when deep down I knew that construction workers held no little fascination for me.

Well, it wasn't as if I was dysfunctional. I admitted my predilection to myself, fantasized, and simply carried on as usual. But I never permitted myself to explore the nature of my unignorable interests in butch men and symbols of masculinity. And so, just as years before I had felt like a social outcast for my interest in other men, now I felt like a deviant from enlightened homosexual society for my interest in the wrong kind of men. Buffeted from one social unacceptability to another, I felt that I didn't quite fit in, there was something special about my case, I was a perennial misfit. Why did I persist in listening to the pronouncements of others? Why did I judge myself on standards which were not my own?

People are terrified of the unconventional. That is why most people lead such conventional lives. The basic questions of life and death--which are really the only ultimate questions--are too much for people to face. Their anxiety in regard to them is at once proved and alleviated by their adherence to convention, whether bourgeois or radical. Convention allows one to feel that the awful responsibility for pursuing a meaningful existence is not entirely in his own hands. There are others just like him who collectively have the answers to life's mysteries, and by merely adhering to certain principles of behavior, life appears more sane and sensible.

But to live conventionally must always be a superimposition of general values on a personal complex of feelings and intuitions. So, as with an ill-fitting shoe, a certain friction is inevitable. People whose lives are less conventional have found this friction unbearable and have sought other modes of behavior which are more suited to their temperaments.

One begins to escape conventional strictures and to become a whole individual when one can look face to face at his own worst fears and his most secret desires. What am I afraid of? Why am I afraid of it? What is it I really want? We must accept the fact



An encounter one night emblazoned him in mind
While countless others are forgotten as never known.

His strength and beauty are shared
with being gentle and shy.
Together we danced as only those who have
flawlessly worshipped Eros can.
While sleep bathed us with the sweetness
of being the fulfillment of each other's
desires and satisfactions,
the moon's finger strolling on the ocean
gave way to dawn's warming arm,
under which we stirred and again found ourselves
lost in wonder with our ecstasy giving wings
for soaring high as we remained caught in our subtle web.
Our flight slowed to a glide with our very souls
wearing smiles,
and a final kiss and touch were as electric as the first.

But orbits do not always intercept
and motion is never ending or predictable.

--Michael Shernoff

that nothing we honestly feel can be good or bad in itself, and that the only harm our minds are capable of is in terms of the repression of genuine emotion. Feeling, like energy, is never lost, and that which we repress because we see it as unacceptable, finds its expression in some other form. If an emotion is strong enough and we suppress it for a long enough time, the outcome will be violence, directed either toward others, or toward ourselves in the form of guilt or self-hatred.

We must understand that the human mind is quite capable of thinking one thing and feeling another, or of thinking or feeling more than one thing at a time. Ambiguity, equivocality, and contradiction--those menaces to Rational Security--are factors which we must come to terms with if we desire to extricate ourselves from strangling assumptions and expectations.

There are indefinable qualities of masculinity which I have not decreed but which have always been manifest to me. I do not say that masculinity is an absolute, but rather that I have little conscious control over what turns me on. As homosexuals we all do this to some extent. Unless we believe that there is such a thing as purely physical attraction--I've never been able to exclude from my physical pleasure an emotional excitement directed toward the source of that pleasure--there is something about our conception of what men are all about that is attractive to us. Were this not so we would not prefer men sexually to women. That most people are preferentially either heterosexual or homosexual indicates that we have a priori concepts of man and woman which we have little or nothing to say about.

My abstract image of masculinity is at once superficial and profound. It is based on the most sexist mythology of male supremacy and is rooted in the simple-minded defenses of the transparently insecure conventional masculine ego. I can see right through it, I can hardly remember a time when I couldn't see right through it, and yet it has always fascinated me, even in its stupidities.

There was a time when I hated myself and had what is commonly called an inferiority complex. It started very early; the gulf separating me from the other little boys was growing wider and wider. I wasn't like them. My interests were different, even my values were different. Still, I envied them because I felt left out. Something told me that despite the fact that my abilities were perhaps more unique than theirs, there was something superior about them. This belief became self-perpetuating after a while since on some level I began to see everything they did as

superior. If they did poorly in school, that was somehow desirable. If they said "ain't," or smoked cigarettes in the boys' room, that was just all the more status for them. My intellectual judgements kept telling me that I was a very good and bright little boy, but somehow that didn't amount to much next to the swaggering pride of these little men. And so I lost out.

My peer group placed more value on brawn and defiance than on brains and sensitivity, and I reacted by becoming as unlike them as possible, in order to justify myself within my own small world.

When I realized at 14 that I was homosexual, my self-image was already pretty weak and this new revelation came as a devastating blow. I was doomed to social exclusion; I was not only inadequate, I was a pervert, the ultimate degeneration. The next six years were pure torture. I had a very strong contempt for myself which was reinforced by a psychiatrist who would like to have "cured" me. I refused to even consider the possibility of having sex with another male. I was taken in by the whole thing, just as I had already been taken in by the masculine stereotypes I had grown up with. It seems almost miraculous that I ever got to the point of saying to myself: "OK, you've been fighting this thing for 5 years, and you want it just as badly now as you ever did. If the opportunity comes along, you're going to take it. It can't make that much difference." Yet, thus, at 19, I took my first peek out of the closet door.

The opportunity did present itself a few months later. I was in a college summer theatre company on Cape Cod where I was playing in the orchestra. We lived on a magnificent old estate with forests and a lake. Two large old houses served as dormitories for the hundred of us in the company, and we rehearsed and performed day after day in this idyllic setting, where at night you could see thousands of stars and in the morning the trees glistened in the mists.

Late one cool summer night, when you could look at the stars and feel giddy with infinity, I was walking with my roommate, Joe, feeling as close to him as ever I had to anyone. He told me then with some difficulty that he was homosexual--I'm not sure why--I think mostly he wanted to confide in me since he didn't yet know that I was too. I shook, literally shook with the realization that my most dreaded and longed-for encounter was about to take place.

Taking hold of his hand was perhaps the most joyous experience of my life. I could feel the years of painful repression melting away, leaving only the reality of the two of us, hand in hand. I could feel the beauty of my soul, the wonder of my uniqueness,

straining to give everything to him and wanting just to touch and touch.

This was the beginning of my life. From this point I became to perceive myself as an actual person, and to realize my needs were human and real. And gradually, very gradually, my life began to shape itself as a defiance. I had become weary of the expectations which I'd lived with and internalized and I was determined to do things my own way. I read Nietzsche and Camus and learned that Regret is the price we pay for not listening to our deepest longings. And for the first time I began to sense how lucky I was not to have been just like everyone else, that not to belong meant freedom, and adventure and discovery.

In short, my self-image was patching itself up; I was no longer sorry to be what I was. Yet my years of social conditioning could not be erased entirely, despite my new found independence. Certain things have remained to this day though their meaning for me has changed, and they've taken on a personal significance.

My philosophy of life is simple. We are all alone. There is only life and death. We create meaning through acts of our will.

I'm an isolated person with a capacity to love and be loved. Against the depths of cold eternity I wish to experience the fire of mutual passion. Sexually I wish to belong to another, to feel a man's strong hands control my body and being, though I know to my depths that I am only myself and that my will is indomitable. I wish to be convinced and reconvinced of my importance to him and of his masculine presence. I want to feel the anxieties of my existence transformed into a mutuality of satisfaction. To let go my ego, to entrust it for one small hour to the soul of another. To be bound, to be ordered, it is, to the free spirit, like the fire's reminder of how wonderfully warm we are as we watch the snow falling outside the window.

How can I explain my needs which are so strong? How can my passion for sexual domination be confused with a desire to be brutalized? The fantasy has been confused with something very different, very remote.

The fact is I've never had sex with a cop, or a marine, or a construction worker. Reality and fantasy are different worlds and the distinction between the two must be respected. To fantasize (or to act out a fantasy) is not necessarily to say that we desire things to be that way. What it does say is that different parts of our psyche respond to different stimuli, that all of our needs are not met in our daily consciousness. Our dreams do not necessarily depict what we would like to have happen, yet they reveal certain truths which we might be apt to ignore in our waking state. What we must realize is that these dreams and fantasies should not be feared but rather accepted for what they are, that is, the mind's way of dealing with the anxiety of unfulfilled needs. To reconcile our fantasy life to our accustomed reality is simply to accept ourselves in all our subtle complexity.

Sado-masochism is, for me, a means rather than an end. It is an instrument through which I can more deeply express my feelings to another man. It removes barriers and insecurities for me by symbolically defining myself and my partner, and thus allowing for a free flow of emotion.

I would only reemphasize the distinction between my usage of the words "sadist" and "masochist" from their common implication of "victor" and "victim." In S&M nobody wins or loses. S&M is a tool through which two people achieve mutual sexual gratification. And ironically, and quite remarkably, it can serve as a freeing or catharsis from those feelings of superiority-inferiority which many of its opponents see as its philosophical basis.

If Gay Liberation can learn anything from S&M, it is that the human psyche is too complex to be contained within the bounds of political doctrine. We reach ourselves and our humanity by different roads, and it is the deepest joy of a man's soul to find his own way.

LOVE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL

but is it worth the pain?

JEFF KEITH

Let's see how coherent I can be in writing a description of our love affair that has just ended. It's hard for me to write about it, because I feel disoriented emotionally as well as resentful towards Eddie. Maybe I can figure out some of the reasons things turned out as they did and make myself feel better if I write about it.

For various reasons which I won't go into here, I didn't admit I was gay until I was 26, in April 1971. I was unhappily married and living a sort of homesteading life in the woods of New Hampshire. Being gay and having to leave my wife and daughter was enough of an adjustment without moving out of New Hampshire, too. In order to have contacts with other gay freaks, I began hitching into Boston regularly to go to Gay Liberation meetings. There I met a lot of city gay people, but no one was that interested in homesteading or country life.

In November, someone at one of those meetings told me he knew of a guy interested in gay liberation in central New Hampshire and told me how I could locate the person. November 10 to 13 was the week I finally met Eddie and managed to go spend a day at his house.

He was living with a gay woman named Fay who was working that whole day; so we were alone together all day. I really liked his gentleness and the way he shared my feeling of wanting to get to know someone before being sexual. We sat around sewing and listening to music for hours, talking sometimes and being silent at others. We discovered that we had a whole lot in common--such as being in the peace movement, being interested in ecology and farming, and being gay as a result of identifying strongly with women and not wanting to be masculine oppressors of women. Finally it was time for bed, and we still hadn't made any strong sexual advances to each other. I decided I wanted to have some sort of physical contact with him, and so I asked him to massage my back. That got more and more erotic until finally we made love. It was very beautiful and made me very happy.

The next day I had to go away for two weeks, and so we had a chance to think over what had happened and how we wanted to relate in the future. I really wanted a long-term lover and I wondered if he did. I wrote him a long letter

while I was traveling, telling about some of what I was feeling. As soon as I got back, I went to visit him again.

We slowly got more and more deeply involved with each other, and I stayed in that house for a very long time. (I was unemployed and had no other place to live just then.) I was kind of alarmed when he told me he had not yet turned nineteen, since I was eight years older and was afraid such a young person wouldn't be ready to settle down to a long-term, exclusive relationship. He was a bit cautious at first but soon was assuring me that that was what he wanted with me. So after a couple of weeks we found ourselves deeply, dreamily in love.

During our first month together that December, we went through an amazing number of experiences together. Soon my daughter Vanessa, age 2 1/2, came for a week-long visit. She was surprised to see me openly in love with someone when she was used to having me all to herself. At first she was very jealous. When we'd be standing up hugging she'd grab our legs and say "Don't do that!" And when we'd be lying down embracing, she'd come climbing all over us and hindering us a lot. But after awhile she and we managed to adjust to each other. Eddie and Vanessa became very good friends.

The last week in December, we went to Queens, New York, to visit Eddie's family as our last fling together before I was to join an apple tree pruning crew. What a trip that was! You just wouldn't believe all the terrible things that happened to us in a few short days in New York.

The first morning there, Eddie was wakened by two rude FBI agents who had come to arrest him for not registering for the draft the year before. His whole family was screaming at him, mostly insults, trying to get him to cooperate with the government. His mother was the most hostile since she's the most conservative politically. His sister, who he's very close to, was crying and crying and being no help at all. At one point I couldn't control myself any longer, and I reached out and touched him briefly and gave him a nice look of support. His mother hollered at me for that. Then they took him away and I was left all alone in the house with those people.

The whole thing had been so incredibly heavy that I was numb from shock. My alienation from his family was both because of differing politics and because they didn't know I was not just "Eddie's friend" but his lover. I had no idea what to do, and guessed I should leave as soon as possible (even though I didn't know where I was!). But then, like survivors of a disaster, his sister, his mother, and I started talking and his mother said I could stay around awhile. She knew that my politics were similar to Eddie's, so we talked about how it had affected my parents to have a radical son. I admitted that I had caused my parents a lot of pain. It was clear to his mother

that Eddie and I were very close friends, and she sort of respected that; so I felt a little less alienated from her.

I spent all that day hanging around New York not knowing who I could turn to that would understand how freaked out I was. I didn't know any gay people there, so I went to see some radical pacifists. I assumed they were not gay, and anyway I was hesitant to take anyone's time with a description of my personal worries. Finally Eddie was released that evening on a technicality. But it was still

a few more hours before we could get together into each other's arms again.

That night we were staying with a peace-movement-heavy man who had been sort of a mentor to him when Eddie had been in high school a couple of years earlier. Before I came over, Eddie and this man had been "making out" some. So when I got there the older man was very horny. After the day's ordeal, I was anxious to be alone with Eddie and just hold him. Our host kept wanting to hold us both, but I didn't know him and really wasn't up to meeting someone new just then. He was drunk, too, and was also being kind of sexual. I got very uptight when he wouldn't leave us alone. At one point he even climbed into bed with us, but I got up and persuaded him to go back to his own bed.

The next morning I tried to tell our "friend" that I was put off by people who were too aggressive in seeking to have sex with me;

but he said I was hung up and Puritanical and had better deal with that problem of mine. This got me inwardly angry, although I didn't express it to him. After that we didn't feel good about staying at his house. We spent the last night in New York at Eddie's parents' house.

The last incident of that New York trip was when we went with a friend to a New Year's Eve party. We were kind of stoned and the party was pretty boring. After such a heavy three days, we felt a party might be a good place to relax together. In a way, it was a test of how straight freaks might react to two gay lovers; we really were fed up with being so closely with people. Those people had a large bed in the living room of their apartment, and soon we stretched out on it and were hugging and kissing. Well... The host seemed to be a nice, gentle freak when we came in, but when he saw us being openly gay he got very mad. He demanded we stop touching each other. That got me feeling paranoid and unable to relate to any of the straight people at the party. Eventually Eddie and I went off into a corner and were soon talking deeply and lovingly together. But even that was too much for the host, who said we were being antisocial and threw us out. We got home from that New Year's Eve party at 10:30!

The next day we left New York and drove back to New Hampshire where I joined the pruning crew. Such a heavy time in New



Eddie, Vanessa and Jeff

York had really cemented our relationship, and the prospect of a separation was very depressing. Besides, the crew were all homesteading types of people, freaky in some ways but generally Puritanical about sex and drugs. I didn't really belong there, but I loved the work.

For the first two months, we worked 65 miles from where Eddie lived. Any day that a blizzard was threatening, I would hitch up to see him. Some weekends he would come to visit me at the crew, but we'd have to find a place nearby to sleep so as not to "offend the morals" of the other crew members. That year I wasn't too dependable a worker because I took so many days off and my thoughts were elsewhere than in the orchards.

During the winter and spring, we made various efforts to turn New Hampshire on to the message of Gay Liberation. When the Concord newspaper published a good article on the gay movement at the University of Massachusetts, we wrote a letter to the editor thanking him and saying we were gay and proud in New Hampshire. A few times we kissed goodbye on the main streets of Concord, and once some cops asked Eddie for I.D. right after such a farewell kiss. The mass circulation, very right-wing newspaper from Manchester (another nearby city) published articles from time to time insulting gay people. We wrote then a couple of letters which they published but left our names off because they said they didn't want to help us contact other gay people. Soon afterwards they made a major change in their letters to the editor's page by deciding to no longer publish letters from "known subversives and homosexuals."

We were openly loving in front of some of our friends among Concord's freak population and encountered very little hostility. I had chosen my close New Hampshire friends carefully, and had always been fairly open about my sexual nonconformity so that my

closest friends generally remained close friends. But the difference between being in a heterosexual marriage and being in a gay couple was overwhelming. The subtle supports I had felt socially when I was in a straight marriage just weren't there now. Married couples didn't confide in me or bestow their blessings on my new relationship. Most of them seemed never to have met a gay couple until now. I felt alienated from them and as if I should be a little defensive. Wanting to be accepted as a total person and not just a freaky faggot, I couldn't feel comfortable emphasizing my gayness too much. Eddie and I kept a delicate balance between being gay and proud but still seeking acceptance from straight people. We didn't know a single other gay male in the whole state of New Hampshire. I got used to having really nobody I could express my deep feelings to, other than Eddie.

An early problem that we had in our relationship was the kind of sex we had. Ninety percent of the time it was lovely and wonderful. But one pattern kept recurring and getting us into heavy arguments over sexual politics. A way that I really loved to have sex was anal intercourse while facing the lover. Maybe our attraction to that was due to the heterosexual model. (We never were interested in anal intercourse if one person had to face the other's back.) But our bodies didn't fit together the way we would have liked. I have a rather fat behind and an average-sized cock but Eddie has slim hips and a fairly small cock. What this meant was that I could fuck him while we faced each other, but when he wanted to do it to me it was almost impossible physically.

I wanted so much for him to do that to me sometimes--nothing else can replace that feeling of having your lover's cock hard inside you and then feeling it reach orgasm. We both especially loved it when the person doing the fucking was not too aggressive but gentle and

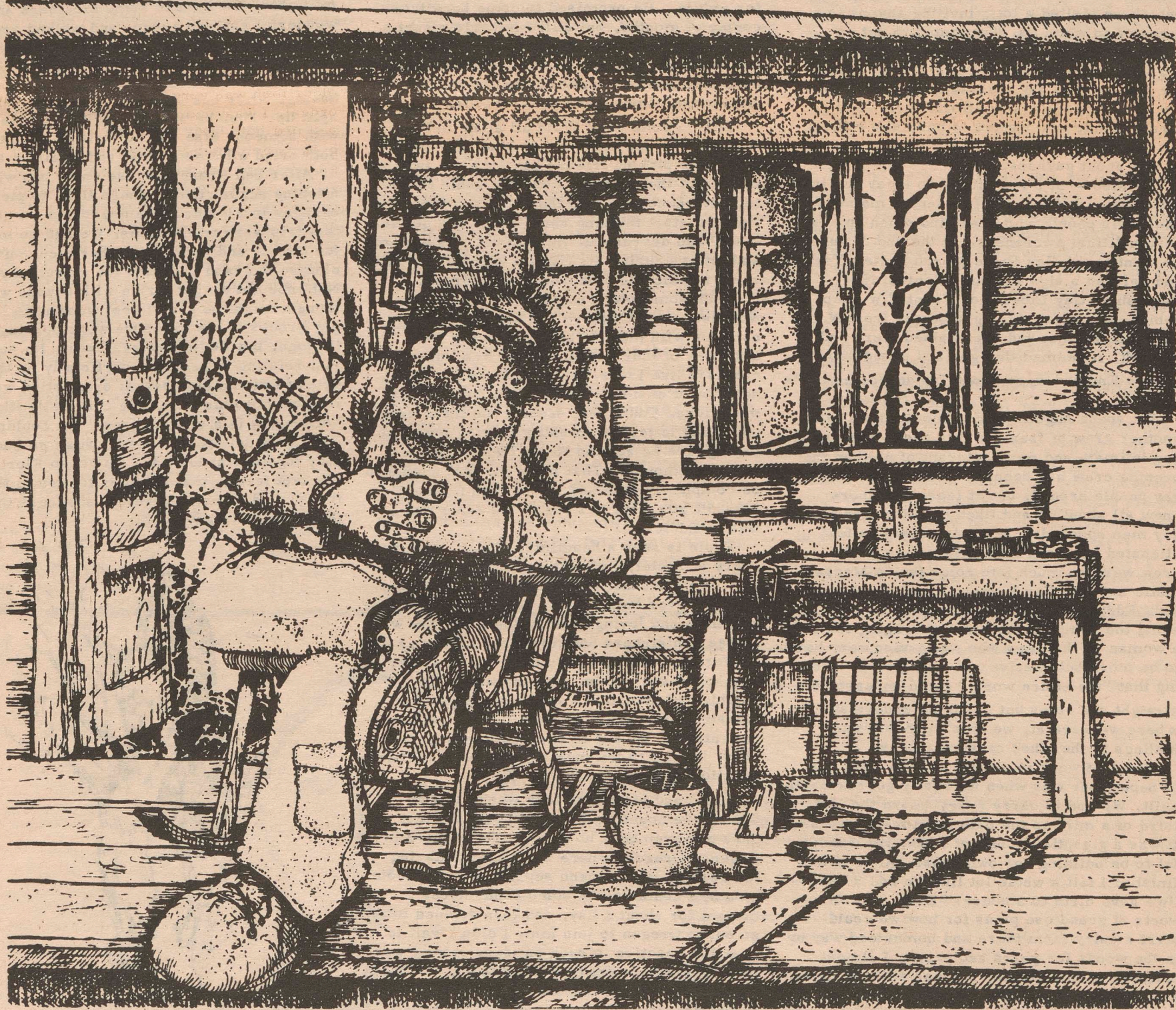
sensitive to be sure the other has his asshole relaxed and receptive. We knew we could trust each other to be thus caring and gentle. After all the contortions he had to go through in this way of making love, Eddie would not be able to hold his erection to fuck me. Sometimes he would complain that I wasn't trying hard enough to help him do it. But I wanted making love to be fun--not a lot of hard work and strange contortions.

He really wanted to fuck me in an enjoyable way and felt resentment at the continued impossibility of it. He worried that I was being too "straight identified" and wanted to "just take" my orgasms without giving him any--the way straight men too often want to do with women. Sometimes we tried to solve this problem of fucking by never doing it at all. We told ourselves that it's kind of ugly anyway since it's so close to heterosexual lovemaking which was so repulsive to us both. We would declare a moratorium on fucking, but then while making love, "in the heat of the moment," he'd decide he felt like having me do that to him, and the vicious cycle would start all over again. We generally contented ourselves with other ways of making love, and never solved this problem.

In April we both quit our jobs in New Hampshire and went to prune with a few friends in New York State. So the date we really started living together was April 13. After three weeks of pruning, we returned to N.H. in May to start living way up in the woods.

We bought a tent and started camping out on land owned by friends who said we could build a cabin there before fall. Unfortunately, the New Hampshire woods in May, June and July are incredibly full of bugs. Whenever we went out of our tent we had to keep our bodies well covered. We couldn't do much work outside at all. We read a lot, went visiting, and did errands to take us away from the woods.

That summer our closeness was at its peak. We made plans for building our cabin and



living together more or less permanently. Several times when we were apart, our getting back together was like restoring a mystical union.

Once Eddie was put in jail for hitching in a "legal" place and then arguing with the cop who offered him a ride, promising not to arrest him, but then turned around and was driving him towards the jail. (The charge was using abusive language to a police officer.) I didn't know where he was that night and why he hadn't come to meet me at the appointed time. I spent a restless night worrying about him. In the morning as soon as I got up, I felt a strong urge to hitch to Concord and ask our friends if they knew where Eddie was. When I got there, I heard the amazing news that he was in jail and would go to court at 9:00. I made it to court just in time. What a joyful surprise for him to see me there! The judge let him go even though he wasn't polite and submissive the way I would have been in court.

A few weeks later I had to go to a five-day conference thing in New York State while Eddie stayed home. I was very involved when I was there, but felt sort of odd and incomplete not having him nearby. One night I woke up at 4 a.m. and got this tremendous feeling that Eddie was in trouble and needed me right away. I told a few of my friends why I was leaving, and set off hitching for New Hampshire. The whole day of traveling calmed me down some but I still felt pulled home as if by a magnet. As I walked up the mile-long path to our tent, I wondered where Eddie was and if my premonition had been true. He was in the tent, surprised to see me back home so early. He said at the time I got that feeling, he had been trying to hitch and walk seven miles in the middle of the night and had been getting horribly attacked by mosquitoes. That was all the "trouble" was.

Hoping to meet other gay people in that part of New Hampshire, we put up a sign about Gay Liberation in the Concord Peace Center (which we visited a lot), inviting anyone interested to write us. We wanted to put up notices at the nearby colleges but were partly too lazy and partly afraid to go to an unfamiliar place with a gay message. We had a couple of responses to our efforts from very afraid people who wanted to have sex with us, but lost interest when we said we just wanted to talk about gayness.

We also went a few times to a gay bar in Manchester but found it frequented mainly by bourgeois people who drank too much and had zero political awareness. At the end of June we went to the Gay Pride March in New York and carried a sign saying, "Central New Hampshire Gay Liberation Front." We kept hoping we'd meet other gay people from N.H., but those we met had been raised there and had left. It seemed that gay and proud people in New England were about "as scarce as hen's teeth."

We spent August picking blueberries with another crew of freaks. This group was small and intimate and more tolerant of us than the pruning crew had been. We were still the only gay people around, but at least the others knew all about us and liked us. However, being gay men opposed to sex roles made us feel alienated when the straight couples on the crew were so much into roles (being Macro-biotic and into Far Eastern mysticism). One fight Eddie and I had over whether he was being too sympathetic and encouraging towards a woman on the crew who was trying very hard to be more submissive and "all-giving." Feeling that "the entire world" could understand straight sex roles but could not understand where we were at, we didn't express our feelings to the other crew members.

The last week in August and the first part of September was when we really got our cabin built. We had to carry every board the last third of a mile up the path from the jeep trail. It was a gigantic amount of work, but wonderful to be building our own house. After it was finished I felt a whole lot like we had a baby--"We gave birth to a house!" Eddie had all sorts of grandiose plans for how we could start a dairy farm there and homestead way up in the woods for years and years. I almost believed in that dream, but was still not quite sure the future would be a complete bed of roses.

Soon after the cabin was finished, we went off to pick apples with a group of radical Quaker freaks for six weeks. This was the nicest crew we had been on yet, since there were other gay people. I felt really good about it, but Eddie started to get very uncomfortable about the political perspective on the crew. A lot of the people were interested in voluntary poverty and were glad to work for low wages as long as the work was outdoors and healthy. The fact that I went along with that way of thinking made him sometimes get very mad at me. Also, since I was the most experienced picker on the crew, I got into giving people lots of advice. Such a leader role gets close to the masculine stereotype that Eddie and I both hate; so he felt more distant from me as a result of that. Sometimes I got mad at him for trying to undermine my morale and demanding that I not be satisfied with apple orchard work as a way of life.

Halfway through that apple season, Eddie got furious at me one day and ran off to visit a friend in Massachusetts. I had no idea where he had gone or when he would come back. When he did return, he told me he wanted to leave me for a few months to figure out what sort of future he wanted in our relationship. As usual, I tried to bury my feelings and not make a big scene in front of the others on the crew. We went in to our room to talk behind its paper-thin walls, and soon I couldn't contain myself any longer and started a sort of combination fight, wrestling match, and crying scene. After that we sort of forgave each other and were able to be more loving.

Later on Eddie saw an ad in a Boston underground newspaper about a gay man driving to the Pacific Northwest who wanted traveling companions. The departure date was November first. In the last half of October, Eddie felt a great need to get close to other people than me, and I felt very threatened. I was at times violent in my jealousy, which of course made him feel more than ever hemmed in emotionally and determined to put some space between us for awhile. He promised to come back in a couple of months, but still I felt this meant a major change in our relationship. I couldn't believe it was coming so soon after what should have been such a strong cementing factor--the completion of our cabin in the woods.

That left me once again all alone in New Hampshire, not knowing any other gay people. (My apple picking friends had all gone away at the end of the season.) I had the cabin to live in, but whenever I was there for any length of time I'd start thinking about Eddie and get very lonely and depressed. He sent me lots of cards and letters during his travels which I couldn't reply to since he didn't have an address.

Then somehow, I managed to meet Doug, who lived near Concord and had some things in common with me. He had just moved away from his lover of four years, and he was lonely and confused like I was. We consoled each other, spent a lot of time together, and sometimes made love. Eddie kept sending me these really charming letters professing undying love and saying he'd be so glad to get back to me in a couple of months. That made me feel unable to be completely free and loving with Doug. Also, I wasn't attracted to Doug in the same way I was to Eddie.

Eddie is such a beautiful radical, often very angry at society and getting in trouble as a result. He continually challenges and questions things, never being really satisfied. He can be so gentle and loving most of the time, but when he sees unfairness and injustice, he can really get furious. Doug, on the other hand, is very low-keyed and stable, working within the established structures and spreading gentle vibrations through a straight job with mental patients. He speaks to one side of my personality, but not to the most radical and creatively questioning side of me.

Eddie and his friend took weeks to get across the country. Finally during the last days of November, he sent me an address in Eugene, Oregon, where he would be staying for awhile. Having been separated for a whole month, I could barely stand it anymore. I thought for about a day, and then decided to go out to Oregon to join him. I didn't wait to hear his reaction to such an idea, since I was convinced it was the best thing to do.

I left December second and spent ten days traveling. After Denver, some of the time I

had to hitch in ten-below-zero weather. Finally I got to Eugene on a warm Monday night after going 600 miles in one day. Eddie was glad to see me, but also ambivalent about having his life interfered with so much once more.

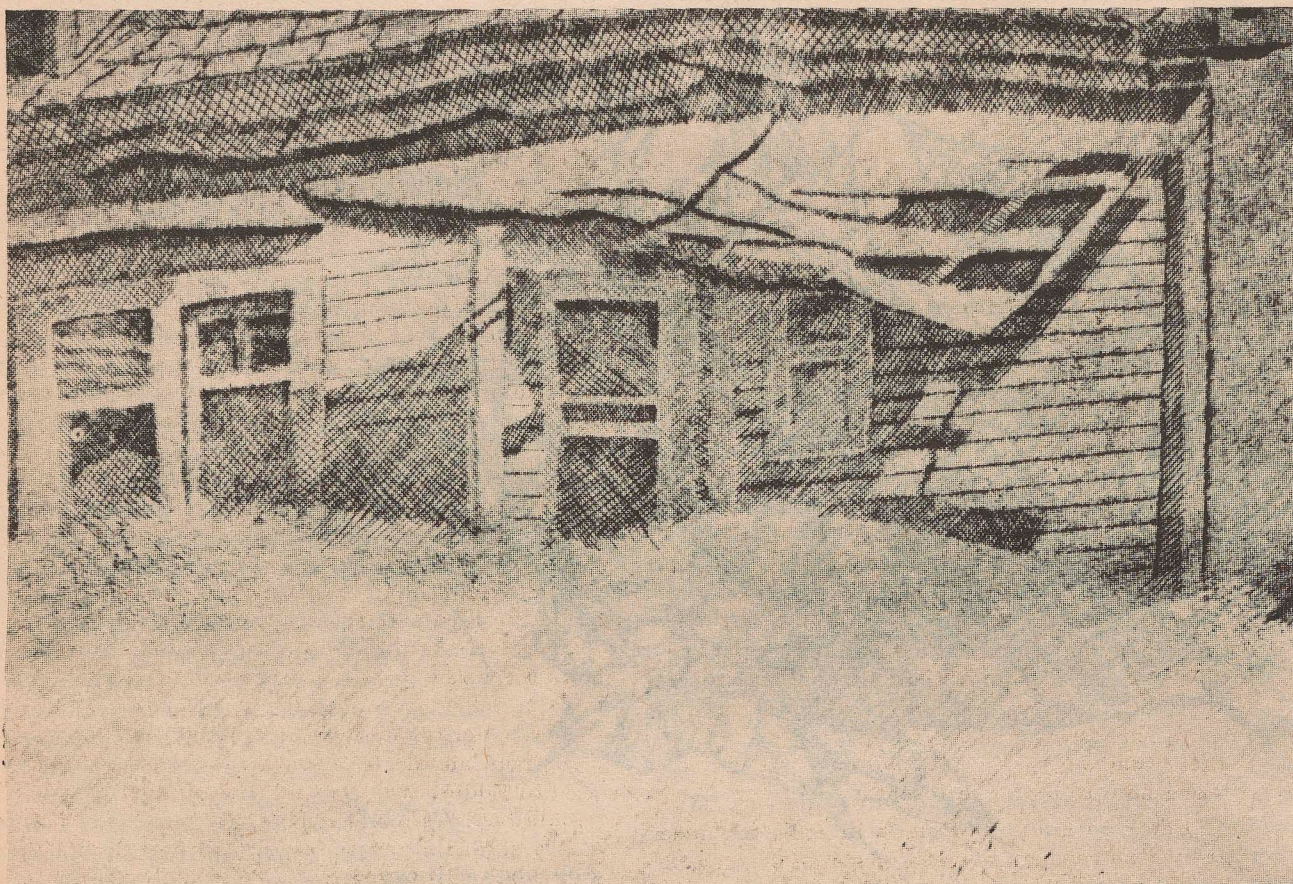
Of the four adults in our house, he was the only one working--at a terrible job washing dishes forty hours a week. In the evenings he always wanted to get stoned or go out to a bar and get drunk. Since I was reading, bike riding, or otherwise relaxing every day, I didn't feel the need to get high so much, and I complained that Eddie was being self-destructive with all the drugs he used. This was the cause of a few fights. He clearly felt the need to do some things independently of me, which also made me uptight. One night he was gone for hours as I was sitting home alone. When he came home he was tripping on acid, but that didn't stop me from throwing a few things at him and causing a scene. (I really wanted to trip with him and was jealous that he had done it with someone other than me.)

I shouldn't only emphasize the negative things and fights. As always, we had some very lovely times together, too. Like the trip we made to Seattle and the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State. Those very high times made me feel just as strongly attached to him as ever. He could sustain this intense closeness for a few days, but then would start needing some distance from me again. When I had a need for deep companionship and support from another person, I would invariably turn to Eddie, whereas he had several other people besides me that he could turn to. There was a sizeable gay scene in Eugene which Eddie was sort of involved in, but I wasn't as much because I felt I would be in that city just a short time and I tend to be shy--always "deep and intense" with other people.

In mid-January we finally left Eugene for San Francisco and then points east. Our two weeks in San Francisco were once again full of very high times and a couple of really awful fights. We went to some nice bars and a wonderful gay rap group, and walked around together a lot. Then, suddenly, Eddie would explode at me over some seemingly trivial incident or something about the way I was behaving. After one fight we were sure we'd split up. Then he said he had this image of me with someone else and himself as a junkie. We both cried a lot about that and finally made up.

After San Francisco, we spent two weeks hitching across the southern U.S. to pick oranges in Florida. The pressures on us during that trip were tremendous. We had no money for motels and so had to either sleep outside or else go to crash pads and the Salvation Army. Not once did we get a ride with anyone we thought might be gay. I kept wanting to look up gay groups in the cities we were passing through, but Eddie was against it. He said just relating to people superficially on the grounds of common sexual orientation was irrelevant to him. Feeling constantly like "strangers in a strange land," we couldn't let our fights get too serious because we had to stay together at least till we got to Florida. We kept feeling that in order to stay in the cars that picked us up, we should suppress the fact that we were a gay couple.





Getting to central Florida, we found it was another one of those disgustingly plastic touristy areas. We soon found work picking oranges with a mostly black crew of migrants. Since the attic of the bunkhouse was unsafe for walking, nobody wanted to sleep up there except us, and so we at least had privacy. There was a certain distance between us and the other crew members, partly because we were white freaks from the north and partly because we were openly gay. We made very little effort to talk over our problems with them.

One day in the orange groves, the tensions got too much and Eddie exploded at me again in a seemingly trivial discussion about the women's movement. That night in the bunkhouse the argument flared up again and we threw all sorts of sticky awful food at each other and made a complete mess. I went out to the pump to wash off the molasses that was dripping out of my hair, and the other crew members got worried that it was blood. We had made quite a commotion. He had said all these gross things about my physical body and made me feel so ashamed that I thought I would never want to make love with anyone ever again.

The next day, Friday, I left to go visit my sister in Miami, and doubted that I would ever want to live with Eddie again. I wrote him a note detailing my complaints about the way he had been treating me for months. I said I felt we were getting into straight men's and women's games at their worst, with me in the role of the unliberated female. He often got enraged and insulted me, making me feel really inferior

but then expecting forgiveness after remorsefully saying he had been "out of his head." I was tired of the same "game" happening over and over.

The second day I was in Miami, when I was out shopping, Eddie called my sister's house to say he was in town and really wanted to see me. When we finally made contact, he said he had been 36 hours without sleep, hadn't eaten all day and had no money, and was totally freaked out over the way he had been to me.

So, amazingly, we made up once again, though more tentatively than previous times. I told him I couldn't stand anymore of those rages. We decided it was really bad for us to be so isolated from others like ourselves. So after a few more days' work on the orange crew we left for the Northeast.

All the way up the East Coast we had really good luck hitching. In Washington we stopped and visited my family, and that was full of good vibrations, too. This was the first time they had met Eddie. My father had been the main one who had anti-gay feelings, and he had recently died. My mother didn't seem to feel any compulsion to be as intolerant as her late husband (just as I expected). She let us sleep on a day bed right in her living room. Eddie liked her a lot, in spite of her strong religion and bourgeois life style. It was also fascinating to have him meet my two sisters in Washington that I am very close with. He gave me some new perspectives into my sisters and helped me gain more respect for one in particular. Seeing such strong rapport be-

tween Eddie and my family made me feel very loving towards him once again. After that visit, my mother always wanted details about how our relationship was going. Meeting him helped her a whole lot more to accept the fact of my being gay.

Finally we made our way to Lowell, Mass., where a gay woman named Debbie lived who was just about Eddie's best friend. She wanted us to move in with her, and Eddie was very enthusiastic even though there seemed to be few if any gay men freaks in Lowell.

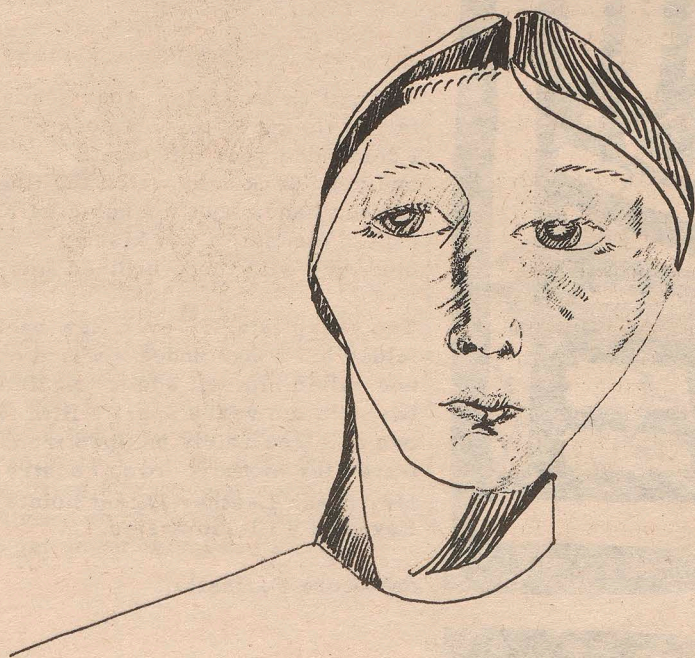
I had promised to prune some apple trees for a grower in New Hampshire. So while Eddie got settled in Lowell, I lived alone in our cabin and worked at the nearby orchard. One day in April, Eddie and Debbie and I all dropped acid together and felt very close. That and some of the letters he sent me from Lowell made me feel that maybe we could continue our strong relationship, though there would still be some struggles and hassles.

I moved to Lowell the first week in May, hoping to stay at least all summer before moving on to a more gay environment. Jobs are easy to find there, and we had a place to live with Debbie. But from the first there were problems. The two of them worked at the same job and were constantly together. They had established a lot of routines from three weeks of living together and were not very willing to adjust to me. For awhile we thrashed through some of these things, and I controlled my jealousy somewhat over having someone else foremost in Eddie's affections.

The two of them got deep into reading about China and studying some Marxist theoretical tracts together. I felt they were naive and too rigid, but they felt I was too bourgeois and timid. Besides, I had a lot of trouble understanding how they could call themselves gay but be so deep into each other, being opposite sexes. As time went on and they continued to stay close and to exclude me, I began objecting more and more: "What are you, lovers? Are you gay or straight? Why don't you admit what you want and start being lovers?"--etc. Finally we got fed up with each other, and Eddie and I stopped sleeping together. Then I moved out and went to live in the Amherst-Northampton area - western Massachusetts, where there was a sizeable gay scene that I could relate to.

So what have I learned from all this? One thing is, I must guard against my natural tendency to be so dependent, neurotic, and exclusive. Tight, super-insulated nuclear couple units are fucked up, whether they be gay or straight. This means that it's very wrong for me to try to carry on a gay relationship living very cut off from any larger gay community. That's why I finally decided to make the very difficult move back down from New Hampshire to Massachusetts.

Nevertheless, I still have some faith in the idea of having long-term, very involved love affairs. Not being in a couple for awhile has given me a chance to learn to express my feelings to people I'm not "married" to. I wish I had a lover again, but people who can understand me as thoroughly as Eddie could are few and far between. In spite of the over-emphasis in some gay circles (AND in the larger, straight society) on lots of sex, now that I have learned what gay love is like I will not be satisfied with anything less.

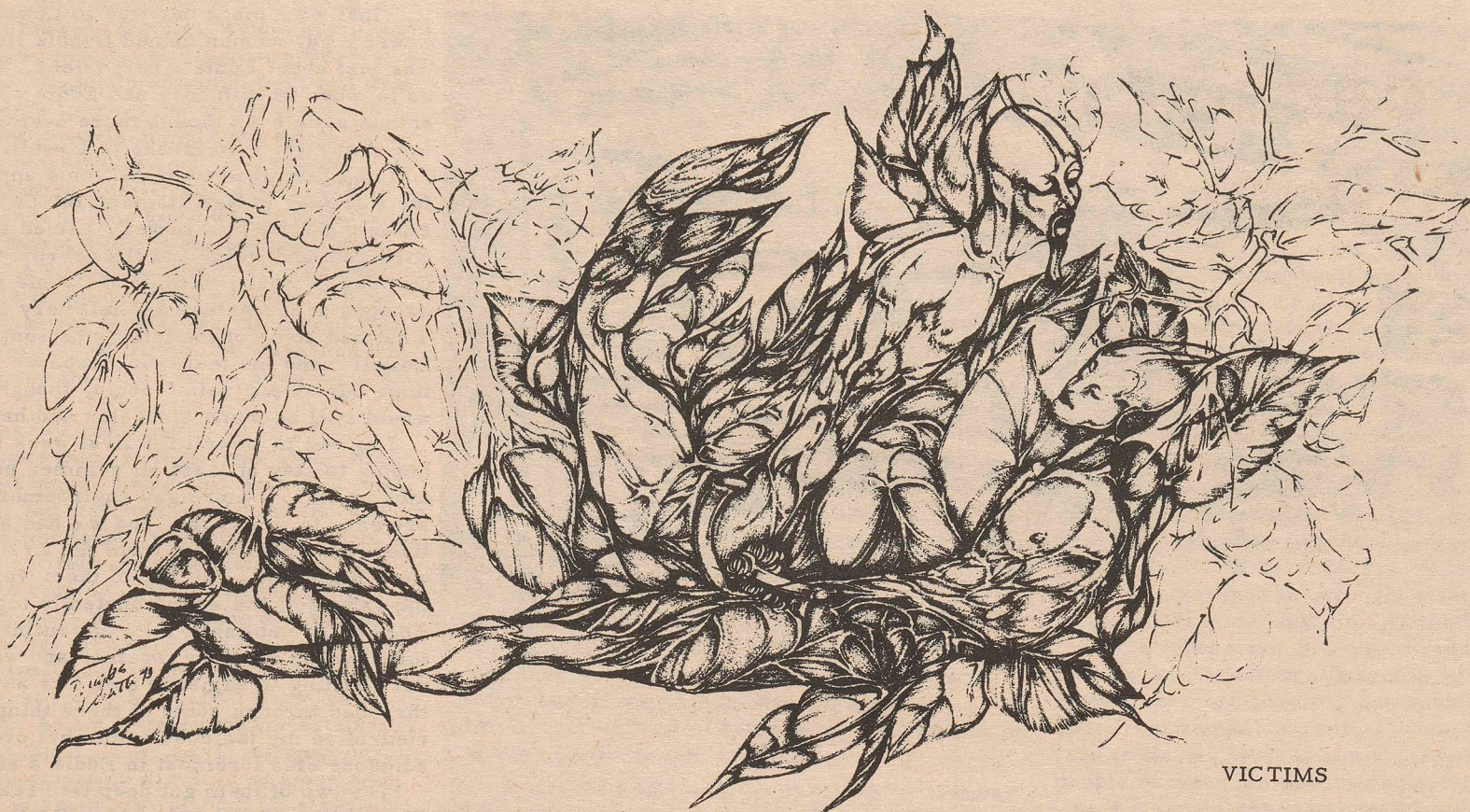


We stood in the windy city,
The gypsy boy and I . . .
--Donovan

to r. a.
for the night we made love
in the tunnel beneath the railroad station
as the headlights of passing cars
stabbed into the passageway
we stood together crouched caressed
our pants down to our knees
how awkward we might have looked
had someone bothered to peer
into a deserted tunnel

each time we meet
i embrace you
i can't help recalling
those few moments of ecstasy

J. Kyper



VICTIMS

Approach bellows
 your breath is lung's insistence
 to be bullied by the chest
 this night where darkness
 wears the heavy coat
 and drops his fingers through the dirt.
 I can hear the soft plow
 while memory yawning rakes his fingers
 through hair now thinning.
 Where is he now the divorced
 black leather jacketed
 motorcycle riding friend
 who slept head on my shoulder
 hand shielding my crotch.
 Days of your lost gaze at my home
 where all the well fed children lived
 brought you away
 from your mother's chained refrigerator.
 My black leather jacketed friend
 you ate my food and
 had me for desert.

And your girl friend:
 miss blue eyes banged on the bed room door
 and we our backs against the viened mahogany
 jerked each other off laughing
 as she pleaded to get in.
 Her revenge was you.
 Blue eyes led you by the balls
 into the tall yellow grass.
 I watched you both cut your incision
 into the field. You and she holding hands
 walked into the field. Blue eyes
 and you of the raven wing jacket.
 Four crows lifted off the barbed wire
 as your entered their magic circle.
 It was then you both sank into the grass.
 You bruised the field and it
 pointed you out as an arrow. That day I called
 myself the raven.

Straight as an arrow your sexuality
 fell to its knees to suck cock every afternoon.
 I demanded your full mouth
 and your dark eyes watch the fingers
 of your hands knot my pubic hair.
 I often thought of you kissing
 blue eyes with those bruised lips.

Ten years later Raven flew back
 folded his wings under a warm coat
 and called himself adult. Again we met
 two men ten years apart. Him twice married
 two children safely pumped from his groin
 tatoos for mother, love, country and
 Mr. Black Leather Jacket points out
 Raven is still unmarried.

Salvatore Farinella

ANNUALS

for allyn amundson

What's right my friend
 when old bastard age
 jingle jangles his chains
 lovelessly mother haunted
 his feet so high bent kneed
 joylessly dancing his bells
 a dangling from his toes ding-a-ling.
 I remember the shop door
 opening, rooms filling for love of candy
 with children we will never have
 children we have placed on tongues
 of thousands. At our feet they roll out prepacked
 on bio-degradable tape: zinnias, petunias
 wrap it round your fist your wrist
 ornament the Christmas tree in the old candy store.
 My friend take my hand take
 the poinsettia from my hand
 no let me behind your ear place it
 my friend in your blond hair: the wheat
 field I am passing through;
 only my head and bare shoulders seen.
 Bodiless I see you burning your shadow
 far away eclipsing the sun my friend
 coming toward me the field between us
 my friend I'm waving excited as you are waving.

Salvatore Farinella



KONSTANTIN BERLANDT & ANNETTE ROSENBERG

Cabaret

a decadent anthem

Though Hollywood masterminded (reflected and/or promulgated) sexual and social roles of the '30's, '40's, and '50's, they fell behind in the '60's. "Cabaret" is a new Hollywood's headstart on the '70's. It deals with such controversial subjects as homosexuality and the role of women, implicitly, not as matters under discussion. Is America going gay? Are fags taking over? Coming out and coming in? And are women, gay or straight, on their way up or down, in or out?

Why is "Cabaret" the most popular movie among so many gay people since Judy Garland's "The Wizard of Oz"? Is it from starvation for a positive film about homosexuality? Perhaps. Brian Roberts is definitely a positive image of a homosexual --normal, intelligent, handsome, young, white, blue-eyed and from a good school. Although he and the Baron didn't have such a great romance, there is still the possibility at the end of the movie that Brian will go on to have more rewarding affairs with other men.

And then there is the temporalness of Brian and Sally Bowles' affair, her life philosophy:

Bye, bye my lieberherr,
Farewell my lieberherr,
It was a fine affair
But now it's over.

Or, "We'll sing in the sunshine," which is the essence of so many gay affairs, since gays are not tied down to home, legal marriage, babies--the threats that arrived with Sally's pregnancy. At first, both Brian and Sally were willing to throw away their independent lives and comparative freedom for "the sake of the child." "Just think," Sally says, "both our lives solved, and all because of the baby. I guess it's just about the most significant baby the world has ever known, except for Jesus."

But then she considers the kind of life they will have if they set up housekeeping in Cambridge, and she has an abortion. In other words, she opts for freedom over stability, security, normality and straight values.

What about Joel Grey? A man who is not a man. At his first smile with painted red lips in the opening of the movie, it is hard to tell if he is a man or a woman. His hammy heterosexuality, as in "Two Ladies" or the many times he jokes with the audience about the attractiveness of the Cabaret girls ("Even the orchestra is beautiful"), seems more an act for the clientele than any personal commitment to heterosexuality. He is worldly, mysterious, versatile (as they used to say in the gay world to describe someone who could play both butch and femme--suck, fuck, or turn over and be fucked) and alone in this world, making it as he can, delivering the right routine at the right time while his life is private to all those who watch the stage and screen.

Sally is just the opposite: her real life comes through her songs, like "Maybe This Time" when she begins her affair with Brian. She is the innocent faggot or faghag who has no clear idea where she's going ("to Africa"?), who is pushed around in the wind, always open to any man who will have her, trying to get ahead, out of the rat race and the chorus line, even fantasizing on meeting the right man and settling down to a normal home life. However, she is never sophisticated enough to get anything out of the rich

men she tries to use; they always wind up using her, hurting her. She is too transparent and tried too hard. Result: "I need a drink," after she's boomsomed all day with an old man who then didn't give her the part, or, "Oh, shit!" after she's aborted her happy homelife dream.

Sally also dreams of becoming a star, as so many gay men do. And the last song, "Cabaret," she delivers like a star. There is a decadent success outside of marriage. We still aren't convinced she'll be happier with tinsel success in the cabaret than she would have been in the Cambridge apartment with Brian and the baby (or we would have been), and her happiness is especially doubtful what with our hindsight of the holocaust coming up.

Which brings up another strain of gay philosophy--no tomorrow, live for today:

Start by admitting from cradle to tomb
It isn't that long a stay...

We are not living for our children's children.
So don't waste a minute of it:

What good is sitting all alone in
your room?
Come hear the music play.

There is an identification with whores and other social outcasts like Sally's former roommate Elsie from Chelsea:

When she died the neighbors came
to snicker,
'Well, that's what comes from too
much pills and liquor.'
But when I saw her laid out like a
queen
She was the happiest corpse I'd
ever seen...
When I go, I'm going like Elsie!

Other support for gay lifestyle delivered in "Cabaret": the sleazy sexuality and self-parodying exaggerations of the cabaret girls, and the woman who stands exposed as a man by Brian at the urinal.

Innocents Fritz and Natalia, benevolent heterosexuals locked into their roles by lack of money, lack of experience or close family ties, they are burdened by problems of religion, marriage and chastity. It's easy for gay women and men, for whom chastity, family, marriage and straight religion are less central, to see through the problems of Fritz and Natalia. Thus, when Natalia, having been seduced by Fritz on her father's sofa, asks Sally what to do, the freer Sally answers, "Well, what does it matter, as long as you're having fun?" Perhaps too easy: Sally doesn't recognize that it does matter--for one thing, the possibility of an



Judys, Etc.

You made me love you;
I didn't want to do it.
Not the first time anyway.

A queen in a sequin skirt with a
slit halfway up her leg.

Mmmmmmmmmmm.

free concerts on the Common.

Swanee, how I love you,
how I love you.
spanish moss in his shorts,
Georgia mornings
A wild growth whisked
from under her arm
so she'd pass up North.

Suddenly you're older.
Leave out the cherry,
leave out the orange.

Ever see a queen eat a do-nut
with a knife and fork?
They're very high-church, my dear!

Or Mabel Mercer in a kimono and a fall?

Where troubles melt like lemon drops...
Just make it a straight rye.
12/1/73

--Bunny Van Mears



A. L. L. L.

abortion is not really open to Natalia or most women the way it is to Sally (more on the Woman Question, anon).

What's left unresolved are the problems in the lives of the rest of the cast and social problems like fascism. No one in the cabaret seems to have a happy life outside: who thinks Elke, the drag queen, is having healthy rewarding relationships; or the bartender who is combing his long hair in the back while he is balding on top; or the stone-faced cabaret dancers who put on a smile only as part of the act; or the heavy, ugly women in the band, who probably have the saddest lives of all or maybe beat their children, if they have any?

And over all Joel Grey ignores everything, playing every part in the book. His pleas for human understanding--"Oh, why can't they stand the objections? I grant you the problem's not small, but if they could see her through my eyes"--is only turned into a racial joke, a slur of the times: "she wouldn't look Jewish at all." He plays an old man, a young boy, a fantastic drag queen, a soldier, Hitler, a squirt man, a husband, a master of ceremonies, a worldly faggot, a heterosexual lech, a mysterious temper of the times. Does he ever cry? It's doubtful. But he sure can act, and he keeps the show rolling, keeps people off their troubles, and will be back the next night if the cabaret isn't bombed.

In fact, we'll all be back to drink, to entertain and be entertained, to forget our troubles until we figure out what to do about them, or until we can no longer afford the price of admission, to sing along with Sally Bowles the Decadent Anthem:

When I go I'm going like Elsie
(Hell, see?)...

The question is, when all around are pictures pandering to heterosexual-chauvinist mythology while exploiting gay sensibilities with occasional and usually sinister or humorous reference, why is "Cabaret" an exception? Or is it?

Why is the homosexual relationship even in the movie when it was not in Christopher Isherwood's original *BERLIN STORIES* or the stage version of the musical? Is the time finally right for such candor, such sensitivity, new images and ways of living, greater freedom and self-determination? The rejuvenation and self-affirmation we experience when we see "Cabaret" suggest this, but our initial suspicion stems from the ABC Motion Picture credit. Experience in the Gay Liberation movement has shown that ABC has never been primarily interested in promoting such values.

In fact, this season ABC television's Dr. Welby advised a "sick" homosexual to go straight in order to maintain the love and respect of his son. Until recently San Francisco's ABC-KGO TV had a stated policy against covering anything to do with homosexuals; their news coverage of the Vietnamese war often has seemed more blatantly fascist than the other channels, more pro-official U.S. policy. President Nixon seems to criticize CBS and NBC more than ABC.

Yet it was ABC that showed the schmaltzy "That Certain Summer," a made-for-TV movie about misunderstandings between a gay man and his son--hailed by TV GUIDE and TIME magazine as a great breakthrough in television broadcasting.

Are they then simply classical capitalists, who, Marx said, sell you the rope to hang them with? Opening up new advertising markets, connecting homosexual happiness with some new product is probably ABC's criterion for allowing greater candor and even a little positive gay image building. It appears that in the U.S. capitalist strategy, when a people begin to organize to redress grievances and demand their rights:

Step 1--Ignore, Deny, Resist, Black Out. But if the movement continues to grow:
Step 2--Co-opt, Mis-explain, Direct, Exploit.

Let's look at some of the negative aspects of "Cabaret."

It is at best ambiguous about the positive longterm aspects of homosexuality. The actual homosexual relationship between Brian and the Baron, while a long time coming, is not gone into at all. Brian gets out of the car with a quizzical and slightly distant expression (perhaps piecing back his male ego after having lost it in the momentary passion of getting screwed) while the Baron appears both hurt and angry, looks innocently over at Brian and then quickly looks away, ordering the driver to hurry on. Was he also embarrassed to be gay, feeling like a "queer," trying to repair his male ego? Was this his habitual reaction after having sex with another man, and did he now want to rush back to his wife or another woman to again affirm his heterosexuality, normalcy and respectability; or was he rushing off to a gay bar, tired of being battered by a straight boy's ego, feeling rejected by Brian's new distance? Why is he so unhappy after sex with Brian when he was so relaxed after sex with Sally? Nor is Brian all that happy; in the next scene he blows up at Sally and in the following he picks a fight with two Nazis. He is either finally coming to grips with the reality of himself and his social relations, or dismayed and wishing to forget. A good fight with a Nazi may be social consciousness, a desperate attempt to do something about something, or is Brian merely trying to reaffirm his now-questionable masculinity, like the Baron returning to his wife? Poetic license allows such ambiguity, but are these questions the positive by-products of poetry or the negative ends of the censor's knife?

This parting scene is slid over so easily, so unquestioningly, because heter ideology has a ready explanation that prevents confusion: Brian and the Baron are faggots. Faggots fight. Faggots are promiscuous; their affairs are short and shallow, often one-night stands simply for physical gratification with no deeper emotions (no redeeming social value) involved.

This is probably another reason why Brian's affair with the Baron, once consummated, receives only two lines: the Baron's instructions to the driver and Brian's surprising admission to Sally, "So do I." If homosexuality is seen as antisocial, any further attention to it might have upped the rating from GP to R. Producers admitted they cut several scenes out of the

original movie before releasing it in order to keep this GP rating, which is especially important to a musical, a family event. Were these the scenes?

Furthermore, Brian's masculine gesture against the Nazis after his affair with the Baron and his argument with Sally is his most politically redeeming action--his rejection of decadence and promiscuity. His homosexual affair, that he so smartly terminated, may still be linked with the rise of fascism, as every truly straight person may know, but Brian is a man after all, a good man who would marry a woman in trouble, who studies hard, who raises his fist against fascism. He is a good faggot who wears nice clothes, will settle down to something and lead a quiet, bourgeois life, unlike the opportunist decadents Sally Bowles, the Baron, and Joel Grey.

Another Puritanical implication is that nothing important can happen between people without children involved. This includes all non-reproductive sexual partners, be they of the same sex or slightly different sexes (off the concept of opposite sexes!). When Sally aborts the fetus, Brian leaves. The tone overflows into the blood-red filter and screaming can-can that symbolize the abortion.

Abortions are not very widely available even now; surely in the '30's they were even harder to get, and this is not brought out. Sally exercised a choice not open to the vast majority of her sisters. She was the exceptional woman, not representative of their social location. Even so, the possibility of keeping the baby and remaining single did not occur to her.

Her attempt at independence is not entirely discounted: she may really go on to become a star, albeit at the cost of love and marriage. This sounds suspiciously like the '50's movies where the (male-defined) choice for women was between a career and marriage-and-motherhood. At least, in this movie, she chooses her career (keep in mind, however, that entertainment, especially playing the vamp as she does, is not considered an aberrant field for women; it's a relatively acceptable avenue of success, unlike business management or nuclear physics), and it's presented as a valid, viable choice.

Another point in the consideration of the treatment of women is the lack of solidarity between them. There are no homosexual options open to women. Women together are seen as sad (the two lonesome old women dancing together at the boarding house), or grotesque (as in the case of the cabaret lady wrestlers or the cabaret number "Two Ladies"), or they're simply choreographed prettily together for the entertainment of men, like the cabaret dancers. On the one occasion when Sally and Natalia are alone together they are still oriented to their absent menfolks. Sally at least develops some sympathy for Natalia's position, but no particular affection for her. Lesbianism does not come across as a possible or common human response.

How much, then, of the display of sexual messing around is there just so they can criticize that very playfulness? The form of the movie is a focus on the lives of some colorful individuals against the backdrop of major social upheavals--like "Dr. Zhivago" or "Gone With The Wind"--the upheavals intrude into the characters' lives, forcing them to adapt and change. Here, in "Cabaret," Fritz and Natalia, who are sexually and culturally straight, are forced to become responsible and mature because of the shit coming down. Brian doesn't change because of the rise of the Third Reich; he merely manifests the concern and sensitivity that is part of his character from the beginning. Sally may embody the theme of the film; she belts out the lyrics "Life is a cabaret," but the set is intercut with shots of Nazis beating

up people and gaining support among the masses, too, and the point is clear: Life is not a cabaret. The excitement we may have experienced in the glitter and glamor is destroyed; they aren't congratulating this lifestyle at all, rather they suggest that decadence gives rise, or at least gives way, to barbarism. That notion that decadence, including widespread homosexuality and the blurring of sex-line distinctions, as well as plain old fornication, is linked with the disintegration of civilization recurs continually and from all sides. Edward Gibbon listed among the factors contributing to the decline of Rome which arose not from external enemies but from within: an obsession with sex, freakishness in the arts masquerading as originality, and enthusiasm pretending to creativity. In Cuba, the official line on homosexuality is that "it is the product of decadent bourgeois capitalism." And part of popular belief is that some of the top Nazis were homosexual. No doubt, but it is also a certainty that some were heterosexual, and anyhow, importantly, the official Nazi line was again for absolute heterosexuality and rigidly straight sex-role restriction (kinder, kuche, kirche --children, kitchen, church--for women). Gay people under the Nazi regime were imprisoned and exterminated in concentration camps, but the Allies, when they erected monuments to the inmates and included the colors of the armbands which indicated the nature of their "offenses" left out lavender because they approved of incarcerating them.

The idea that heterosexuality and monogamy and procreation will prevent Judgement and Destruction is absurd, and surely the vast general audience of "Cabaret" is not to be found in its condemnation of polymorphous perversity and promiscuity but in its splendor and exuberance, and, in the case of the gay audience, a positive presentation of one gay person (though gay attendance assuredly would be large just because of gay involvement in cinema and particularly because Liza Minelli is, after all, Judy Garland's daughter, and Judy was a beloved superstar of the camp set).

The relevant fact about the decline of that civilization is not that these people's sex lives were different or excessive but that their participation in the social/political system was absent. There is, however, no acknowledgement in "Cabaret" of the systematic exclusion of so-called deviants and women from areas of social determination, particularly government, and in the case of deviants, childrearing, nor of the fact that excessive preoccupation with sexuality is encouraged by hostility and discrimination against uncommon sexual behavior. Brian, although he is a likeable character and positive model for gay men, still does have a stake in the social system and posterity. He can fulfill masculine role obligations (i.e., perform with women, raise a family, achieve academic/professional success), and he does involve himself in social issues--like attacking the Nazis. Our morality is based in large part on appearance, and it is more important to look "normal" than actually to be "normal," so Brian does not undermine the moral code by flamboyantly advertising his deviance and alienation from public concerns as do Sally and the rest of the Kit Kat Klub crowd.

My own interest, being gaily and feministly oriented, is to involve overt, outrageous gay people and uppity women in a divinely disrespectful struggle to free ourselves and everybody from arbitrary, authoritarian roles and all fascism.

Daniel Curzon, author of "Something You Do In The Dark" has been banned from the main education center on the military bases in Kadena, Okinawa where he has been threatened with termination of his teaching contract. Suffering from Anti-Gay backwater Daniel Curzon has asked for help to find a way to work out of the military's prejudice and ignorance. Anyone who can offer legal help or suggestions especially persons in the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) and the Gay Academic Union should contact:

Daniel Curzon
University of Maryland
Far East Division
APO San Francisco, CA.
96525



In Memory of The Late J. Edgar Hoover

Daniel Curzon

Tough old J. Edgar Hoover (though porcine) was not afraid of anything or anyone. Why, he captured crooks himself! Yes sir, he sure 'nough laid down the law! He made them F. B. I. guys sure Act Right--and, yep, even wear them moral suits and ties.

Gruff old J. Edgar (never fem) was not afraid of any who or any gun... Except to say that he was gay, like the rest of us. (No, no, not him!)

Oh, he was straighter than the straightest stud in R. O. T. C., Bloat-faced, fish-lipped, and grim, typical All-American nazi.

He never raised a republican eyebrow, never was amiss.

(Never raised a finger either, to lift the laws from off our bones).

For he Loved One Man Alone for forty years (forty years of groans),

Selfish (love's always selfish) snugglers in conventionality and cowardice.

Yes, brave J. Edgar coddled only One Man's bones (not your lawbreakers, no siree).

Yet they were starvelings of emotion, though both fat, these darlings of domesticity.

Ooo, the never-amiss Miss Edgar laid down her law (or did he fuck so butchly?) for forty years and nights,

Two wanderers hand in hand, devoted, (to themselves) in Love's safe desert,

All their openings tidy, tiny, cautious, tight, inert.

Ah, wonderous lovers, who always supped together, who never were apart:

Hearts rubbing against themselves sound and smell like quintessential fart.

ON HOLINESS

OR, WHY DID YOU GO TO HOUSTON?



John LaPorta

It is holiness time now and I don't mean the Guru, whatever he is. I will not deal with him here--how can I (one person) "deal" with him (one person) in a newspaper. Later, or elsewhere, for the Guru.

It is holiness time now partly because that's what California was doing a year ago

All this talk about holiness now, is it just another fad or is this the real thing?

-- Joni Mitchell

and "Boston" always does what California did a year ago, because it takes that long to see if the Great Brahmin is going to destroy the Abomination with Earthquake and if he doesn't, then it's a safe abomination.

So you see that we can look at holiness in the same way as we would, say, fist-fucking.

What is this "holiness"? Some people say it is faith, and some people call it superstition.

When you believe in things you don't understand, you suffer.
--Stevie Wonder

At this point I have to become personal and specific. I don't believe in anything except that someday we'll all decide, or rather wonder why we never thought of it before, that money is tacky. You can't even use it for wallpaper; it doesn't take paste very well.

Notice that the Father of our Country is on the most worthless ones, and on the quarter that we put in the MBTA coffers to keep certain quarters of Newton and Wellesley inhabited, since we all show up for work on time. Everybody has a Father, but not everybody's father was Alexander Hamilton.

Now some of you all may say I'm getting far afield. Well, let me say that some people combined money, holiness and Father all in one. His is the eye in the little triangle on the back of your bill.

To go from bill to Tim, who never said he was our Father, the meaning of Leary's latest Transmissions is that first there was _____. I use "blank" because I lack a lesser nothing. And from the _____ came Something, which some call "Matter-Energy" and some call "Particle-Wave" and some call "It" and some call "Not At All." I prefer to call it "the point" because when you don't get the point, you're out of it, and if you're out of it you're dead, not born, starved to death, enslaved, sublimated or in the closet. But I call Buddha the Twice-Masturbated One because we all know the Second Coming is the Living End, and anyway, you only live once. Rebirth is a hoax, but then so is any "description" of "reality." Otherwise there'd be no literature and no journalism and you wouldn't be reading, much less reading this. Life came from Something, by chemical processes, it happens in the lab all the time, and anyway I hear they're making babies in bottles.

To return to the topic at hand, let it be said that it is absolutely true that there is at present no scientific theory which explains all observed physical phenomena, like there was in Newton's time. Einstein has some but not all, which means it's bigger than both of them, like Love and You and Me.

This being the case, or rather not the case, since it won't even hold water, much less hot sperm, What can We Say About It All?

There is a principle, universally established in all works of Holiness (I Ching, Tarot, Carl Jung, Kaballah, Alchemy, whatever you think of, dream up, strip naked, have dance in veils)--a principle universally established in all works of holiness, and non-established, too, since it is a principle which touters of it most often villify, violate, pervert, attempt to destroy--and the principle is Synchronicity. "At-the-Same-Time-ness" is what it means in plain Englished Medieval Greek. Some literary critic of old Alexandria first used the word at the Universal Conference held there sometime between the death of Alexander and the birth of Constantine.

The word means, briefly, two things (or three, or four, etc., depending on if you worship or not and how wordy you are)--that things occurring at the same time are generally connected in some way. They're all affecting each other somehow, to be sure--so if you take any finite set of repeatable patterns--like the tosses of a coin or coins (I Ching) the fall of cards from a deck (Tarot) the occurrence and recurrence of images in dreams--if you take this finite set of patterns and observe their occurrence in the light of surrounding events, you will be able to attach some meaning (biased by your perceptions, repressions, lies, acts of violence, biochemistry, use of money, and your feelings about the Weather, big "w") attach some meaning to the pattern; and when you've tried that for a while, like about 3,000 (recorded) years for the I Ching and maybe 10,000 (conjectured) for the Tarot, you're ready to set out a pretty unbiased set of names for the quality of the TIME that the pattern has meaning in connection with. A simple example of this is the discovery of the Seasons. Somebody, probably a queen, noticed (in the Temperate Zone) that you won't be able to wear your fur shorts long after the leaves turn yellow. Or, in the Torrid Zone, that you better get your platforms fixed, or forget about shoes altogether, when the wind changes, because the Monsoon's coming and it's going to be very muddy.

A more complex example is the recurrence of cycles of symbolism in dreams. The more complicated part of this is that as the attitude of the dreamer to his Skeleton Closet and his Pleasure Garden changes, so do the symbols, or what happens to them. Eventually you become =FREE= I mean you don't ever have to live a lie again, though you may choose to do so, in order to be able to hang out with people who need a little Truth inserted, insidiously, into their whole lie. Well, now that you know a little about the powers of TIME, let's talk about SPACE, since the two are so often so carelessly married off.

SPACE is the second of the two great principles of occult science I mentioned. Notice that word occult right next to that other word.

MANCHESTER NEW HAMPSHIRE UNION LEADER

"There is nothing so powerful as truth"
— DANIEL WEBSTER

Established 1863

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty —

II Corinthians 3:17

WILLIAM LOEB, President and Publisher

Friday, December 14, 1973

Homosexual Publication Urges Proselytizing

Apparent Goal of 'Gay Students' at UNH Revealed

By ARTHUR C. EGAN JR.
DURHAM — The apparent aim of the "Gay Students" at the University of New Hampshire, to entice and corrupt other students and males of surrounding communities to engage in homosexual activities, came to light last week on the Durham campus.

The apparent ultimate goal of

these "Gay Students," who prefer to satisfy their sexual desires with males rather than females, was made clear with the distribution of homosexual literature during a presentation of a play, "Coming Out," produced in the Memorial Union Building (MUB) on the UNH campus.

Homosexual students passed

out a newspaper called the "Fag Rag" which has articles encouraging the "Gay Students" to corrupt other males, not so inclined, to participate in homosexual acts.

When the "Gay Students" were first officially recognized by the UNH board of trustees as a campus organization, it was stated by the group that it

was not aiming to entice other people into their activities. However, the publication being distributed last week showed the prime goal of such "Gay Students" was just the opposite of the aims advocated originally by the group.

One article titled "How to Proselytize," a so-called 1-2-3 guide how one male should seduce another male. The article contends, "there are literally millions of men out there nervously awaiting your approach. All they need is a slight push or a gentle coaxing shove and they're yours."

The students are told in the article to entice other men into homosexual acts by telling the "Gay Student" to: "go right up

and say: 'Hi, I'm a faggot and a ———. Would you like me to go ——— on you?'"

Administrators and students who have seen the "Fag Rag" publication labeled it the "most rotten, filthiest, degrading piece of literature" they've ever seen. Hundreds of copies of the "Fag Rag" have already been distributed on the Durham campus

with other type of such literature in the office said an informed source.

A check with the UNH news office revealed that the UNH administration has done nothing so far to stop the distribution of so-called "newspaper" dedicated to homosexuals and their activities.

The only UNH official to take any action to prevent the sale or free distribution of the homosexual publication was the Director of Recreation and Student Activities, Michael O'Neil.

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S LARGEST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Our Readers Respond:

Richard Plumer, spokesman for the UNH news office, told the Manchester Union Leader that as soon as O'Neil saw the issue in the MUB, he clamped down on its distribution.

"Mr. O'Neil ordered the people with the newspaper to leave the building immediately," said Plumer. "O'Neil told those involved they would neither be allowed to sell, display, nor hand out free their publication."

However, Plumer conceded the newspaper was distributed outside the building, either as a sale or handed out free, without any official interference from university officials.

The 1-2-3 guide to "How to Proselytize" refers to a non-homosexual man as a "TRADE"—a person to whom, according to the article, a "Gay" must direct his prime attention.

The article tells the homosexual, "All men are available... men often pose as TRADE. This means they're available... but as TRADE they'll insist that they're only available on their own terms. You let them know that their terms aren't good enough. Remember you're the professional faggot or queen."

Urges Activism

The author of the article tells the homosexual, "when I want a man, I want him now." The author goes on to say, "Who has to wait for the natural fermentation process to turn an ordinary man into a sparkling, vintage faggot." The article encourages the homosexual to "take an activist role" into enticing what the faggot termed an "ordinary man" into a person who commits homosexual acts.

Actually advocating what could be legally constituted as an assault on a person, the article goes on, "Next time you see TRADE in the park or bar, walk right up to him... even if he is with friends... gently stroke his crotch or—, which ever strikes your fancy first, and ask him, 'Hi hon, how's your treasure?'"

The publication went on to say, "as we turn more and more men into the TRADE, and TRADE into faggots and queens, yet even more will want to become faggots and queens."

The article continued, "Alas, some men will never seize this opportunity to change. These often are the kind of men who wind up as bank presidents, politicians, shop stewards, or in prison."

Gay Encouraged

Throughout the article, which was printed on page 11 of the fall issue of 1973 of the "Fag Rag," the tone of the whole subject was to encourage the present homosexual to engage in acts which would make others become homosexuals.

The entire issue of the "Fag Rag" was devoted to the activities of homosexuals on college campuses, in the Boston area, and in other sections of New England.

Printed in Boston, the publication is reported to have a large distribution among the Hub City colleges and the community in general.

N. H. Atty. Gen. Warren Rudman, when informed of the contents of the "Fag Rag," requested a copy of the publication be delivered to his office for investigation.

Tuesday, December 18, 1973

'Fag Rag' Probe Asked

An Editorial

Sodom and Gomorrah At Durham

It is perfectly incredible to this newspaper that a majority of the trustees of the University of New Hampshire and President Bonner regard solicitation by homosexuals at the University of New Hampshire and their attempt to spread their filthy disease all across the campus as a minor matter.

This is NOT a minor matter, as Governor Thomson has pointed out. It is a question of whether or not the University of New Hampshire is going to turn into a moral cesspool or is to be an institution providing education to higher ideals and loftier thinking not only for the youth of New Hampshire but also for those from outside the state.

The "anything goes" attitude in this nation and the permissiveness of the respectable majority have brought this country to its present sorry crime-ridden and morally degenerate state.

This newspaper believes that not only should any social activities by the homosexuals at the University of New Hampshire be barred but also that confessed homosexuals should be expelled immediately from the University of New Hampshire and that any other secret ones subsequently discovered should likewise be removed from the campus.

As revealed by the unspeakably filthy publications distributed by the homosexuals at the University of New Hampshire, their purpose is to seduce as many of their fellow students as they can. Like any diseased bacteria, they want to spread through healthy bodies. Of course, the way to handle such disease has always been quarantine and isolation, plus curative antibiotics and other medicines.

For the decent elements of the community, and especially the eminent and supposedly respectable members of the Board of Trustees, to ignore this moral cancer at the University, borders on the insane. We suggest to these gentlemen that they open their Bibles and take a look at what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah. It COULD happen here!

William L...

Occult is hidden, science is learning to know. Learning to know is Time, but if there's a veil hanging in your SPACE, it's a little hard to see. Like being born with a cataract. You want to know the secret of life, you know WHERE it is, your science is pointing you in its direction, you know that, but there's this veil in between you and it. Occult.

Describe the veil for a while to yourself. It will become terribly familiar. Perhaps it will even become obviously something you made. Somebody gave you an electric shock when you were looking at (now) dirty pictures, and you got all your dirt and put it on the glass your tormentor provided, and there's your veil. You're here, it's there, and the Way is the Way of Dirt. Dig it. Raise that window, by levitation.

But you won't be able to do this if you're going through an Energy Crisis. So don't waste the little you have on a frontal attack. Commissions throw Dirt on would-be Assassins. Father won't let you love a Jew without you kiss his Gold(a Meir) and send much guns, and eat no butter. So your Arab friends have left you high and dry in your Chile apartment with the heartbreak of psoriasis. Get a blanket and rip off some aloe vera lotion or get an aloe plant, say hi to it, split the leaves, and spread the milky sap on your skin.

Eat brewer's yeast in orange juice, for Vitamins B and C. Get some A, E, and D, too.

What I mean to say is how you can get around the veil in these troubled times when everybody seems to be unable to wash a window or walk out a door.

If the Secret of life is the secret of Life and you're lusting after it, or just--curious and friendly--you must be alive. If you're alive, you must "know" the "secret." Fuck, or rather Disregard the Veil. Dream On.

Dream on, lover, and here we come to the last point of this first in a series on Physical and Metaphysical Science, or Button, Put-on, who's got a Sandwich?--

By indirection, I found direction out.

--Theodore Roethke

All Sciences are Ways to the Truth. However, houses are not homes, and, regrettably, cops lurk among the rest-stop flowers. The I Ching, or much of it, was written down by a Duke in a time of Social Turmoil. He was in Jail at the Time, but he was still a Duke, and if you're anything like me, this might give you pause. There's a lot about Duties of the Wife, Attributes of Woman, The Evils of Pleasure-Seeking and Abominations of God, in many text of Holy Wisdom. Take them with a grain of salt. It'll make Lot's wife feel a little better, if she can still feel anything; and remember, the only good that came out of the Wifely Lot was a fur coat, a divorce, and maybe he'll wake up when he realizes, years later, that the reason the sink's too full of dishes to get a glass of water is that he didn't wash them.

This series is inspired by an off-hand remark by Jill Johnston in the Village Voice that somebody should rework Jung so Women and Gays won't have to gag on the archetypes anymore.

by n. a. diamond

most psychiatrists and psychologists prevent us from moving freely in the direction of true human liberation. their theories are based on studies of individuals in therapy rather than on observations of healthy people in the process of living. their perspective is further limited by a blind acceptance of traditional institutions which benefit a small power elite at the expense of many. even those psychologists who are homosexual, and ought to know better, tend to emphasize straight models of behavior because of straight indoctrination in their

academic training.

i think we need to look more boldly at the world in which we live and not be afraid to draw on our personal observations and experiences for our studies. i would like to share some of my own thoughts about the behavior of men in our present society, hoping that others will go further and into more depth. i would like to see the emergence of a new psychology, a gay psychology, a humane psychology which begins to explore the persons we might become.

towards a gay psychology

the world of fathers

presently we live in a world of fathers, a straight world of hierarchies where one person always dominates another. socialization begins in the nuclear family and continues throughout life. while there is a lot of talk about freedom and equality, too many people seem to be afraid of making decisions about their own lives, afraid to change, afraid of the unknown, preferring to have father tell them what to do, what to think. and there are enough men more than eager to become fathers, sure that if they control the lives of others, they will be safe and secure being in control. then there are those who want to overthrow the old fathers so they can get themselves up as new fathers. the same old roles repeated over and over again from one generation to another.

along with fatherhood comes the compulsion for production and the desire to accumulate more and more things so that one is not alone with oneself. homosexuals are punished because we prefer pleasure to production. fatherhood constantly undermines the gratification of pleasure and our sexuality is manipulated in order to keep us tied to the consumer mentality. and since the fathers never achieve what they aspire to, they project their fantasies on to their sons. so that in order to survive as a human being, each son must kill the father within himself or he too will be doomed to follow in his father's steps, to live the dead life of a man who lived the dead life of his father. we will only be free as individuals when the institution of fatherhood is destroyed.

circle of being

we do not all live in the same consciousness, something well-understood by closeted homosexuals who have had to live double lives, if we draw a circle and divide it into four equal parts, we might get a better understanding of where we stand in relation to other people in this society. on that circle of being, to the extreme right is saneness, the status quo or living in the official reality without imagination, without questioning the values and goals of society. opposite, on the extreme left is madness, the total rejection of the official reality, a personal solution to the pain suffered trying to deal with society. at the bottom is nothingness or death, living neither in reality nor in the imagination but totally rejecting life. and at the top, between saneness and madness, opposite nothingness, is gayness or the fusion of reality and imagination, the affirmation of hope for a better world.

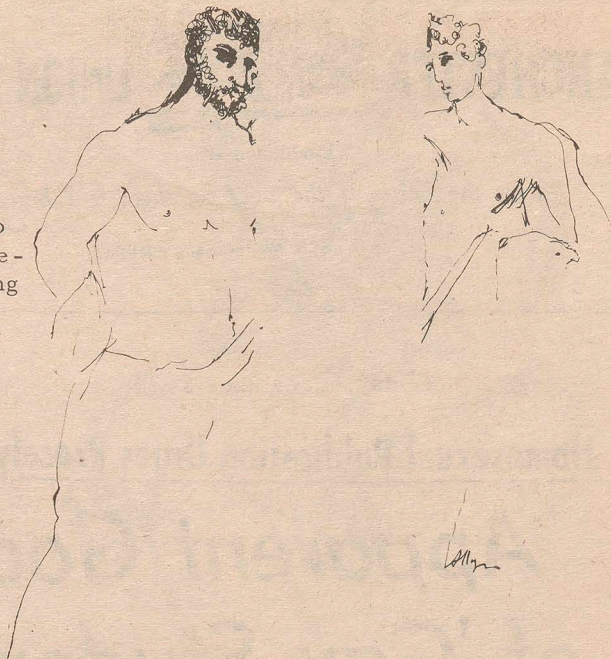
the majority of heterosexuals would tend to cluster around saneness, while the majority of homosexuals would fall somewhere between saneness and gayness. artists and revolutionaries are probably somewhere between madness and gayness. perhaps this might explain the belief in the creative gay and the mad genius. destructive and self-destructive people would be able to find their place somewhere along the bottom half of the circle.

all men are homosexual

male sexuality has been divided rather arbitrarily into unsatisfactorily defined subdivisions like heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, asexuality. the military man, the athlete, the corporation executive, in fact, almost every man who is part of this society, that is every sexist male, works with other men most of the day, considers only men his equals, prefers their company, uses women to satisfy him sexually and to boast of his virility to other men, yet despite all of this considers himself a heterosexual.

all latent homosexuals are blatant heterosexuals. and it has become increasingly clear to me that all men are homosexual, as shocking as this might be to the average american male. it is important to understand this and accept the reality of it because it is an important step toward the liberation of all people, something which both gay liberation and women's liberation have been pointing toward.

within the context of our sexually repressive society, homosexuality can be measured on a sliding scale, positive at one end and negative at the other. at the positive end of the scale is love, tenderness, care for other men. at the negative end is hate, brutality, mistreatment of other men. asexual apathy is somewhere between the two extremes. and the men who are on the negative end of the scale need to ask themselves why they are so hostile, especially those who justify their anti-gay stance on moral grounds. what



part does fear play in their sexual reality? and can they function as whole persons if they continue to deny a part of their being?

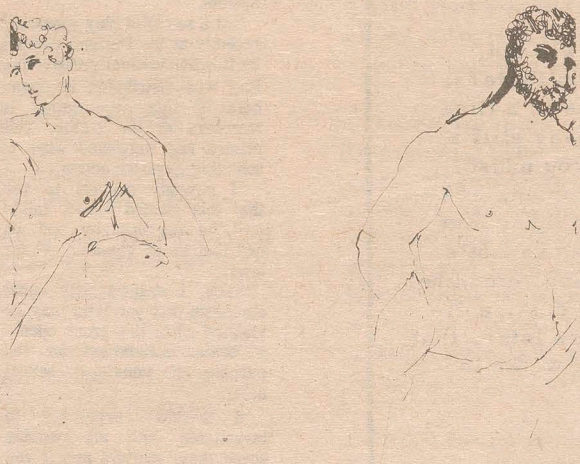
it takes a lot of courage for a man to accept his homosexuality in a society which tries so hard to deny the very existence of love and sex between those of the same gender. there are some who have not been able to fully accept it but cannot deny it either, trapped between two opposing attitudes, able to explore the positive end of the scale by doing equal time at the negative end, the guilt of their pleasure somehow redeemed by pain. and other men have only been able to accept the positive end of the scale while playing out the stereotype sexual roles of masculine-feminine/aggressive-passive learned from straights. but there are an increasing number of people attempting to explore gayness, that is trying to relate to people as equals.

pansexual liberation

homosexuality is only one act of rebellion against the rigid straight male establishment but it is an important step toward liberation. first, we must learn to love ourselves, that is unlearn the self-hatred we have internalized. we must love our bodies, explore our own bodies, take pleasure in our own physical existence, not afraid to get into ourselves, to look at ourselves and see who we are, to experience orgasms of our bodies and our minds without guilt. masturbation is a positive and pleasurable experience which should not be dismissed or put down. we cannot truly love anyone else if we do not first love ourselves in a total way.

if we can each love ourselves and do not seek others to avoid our feelings of worthlessness, inadequacy, incompleteness, then we will be ready to join with others of our own gender, our own age, our own race, etc. to explore those people who are very much like us yet different. when we have respect for both ourselves and those like us, love them as we love ourselves, then we can begin to explore people of the other gender, as well as people of other races, other ages, etc.

heterosexuality is not the goal at the top of a sexual stepladder, as freud theorized. no man can truly love a woman by hating himself and other men, any more than he can truly love himself or another man as a reaction to fear or hatred of women. i think pansexuality is the goal, for those who need to think in terms of goals. this means the ability to love everyone, something most of us are a long way from. the choice of a particular person at a particular time and place would not be made out of rejection of everyone else. there would be no barriers to love like those which exist in the present, whether they be prejudices involving the color of eyes or hair, color of skin, gender, age, height, weight, etc. that of course would be some sort of ideal state of existence, which we may or may not attain, but it is a world worthwhile dreaming about, working toward, helping to make more real.



BOOKCHAT

Steven Abbott

- Albee, Edward. Seascape: A Play. Atheneum. May 13.
- Baldwin, James. If Beale Street Could Talk. Dial. May.
- Bowles, Paul. By Lawrence D. Stewart. So. Illinois U. Press March.
- Brophy, Brigid, et al. Animals, Men, and Morals. Grove. March.
- Burroughs, William S. The Job: Interviews. By Daniel Odier. Grove. May.
- Casement, Roger. By Brian Inglis. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. January.
- Clark, Lige & Nichols, Jack. Roommates Can't Always Be Lovers: An Intimate Look at Male-Male Relationships. St. Martin's Press. June.
- Crane, Hart. Letters of Hart Crane and His Family. Edited by Thomas Lewis. Columbia U. Press. July.
- Dick, Bernard. The Apostate Angel: A Critical Study of Gore Vidal. Random House. May.
- Genet, Jean. Querelle: A novel. Grove. May.
- Genet, Jean. Genet in Tangiers. By Mohammed Choukri. Introduced by William Burroughs. Translated by Paul Bowles. Viking. April.
- Ginsberg, Allen. Gay Sunshine Interview. Grey Fox. October.
- Knowles, John. Spreading Fires. Random House. June.
- Maugham, Robin. The Barrier. McGraw Hill. February.
- Mishima, Yukio. The Decay of the Angel. Knopf. April.
- Mishima, Yukio. The Life and Death of Yukio Mishima. By Henry Scott-Stokes. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. May.

- Nobile, Philip. Intellectual Sky-Writing: Literary Politics & The N.Y. Review of Books. Charterhouse. February.
- Proust, Marcel. By Roger Shattuck. Viking. August.
- Ruitenbeek, Hendrik M. Homosexuality A Changing Picture: A Contemporary Study & Interpretation. Humanities. March.
- Sheneler, Israel. Words and Their Makers. Doubleday. February. (Includes pieces on/by Gore Vidal and Brigid Brophy.)
- Spender, Stephen. Love-Hate Relations. Random House. May.
- Stein, Gertrude. Charmed Circle: G. Stein & Company. By James Mellow. Praeger. February.
- Thomas, John. Dry Martini: A Gentleman Turns To Love. So. Illinois U. Press. April. (A Social Document on the Upper Bohemia, the Right Bank of Paris in the 1920's.)
- Tolkas, Alice B. Staying on Alone: The Letters of Tolkas. Edited by Edward Burns. Liveright. December.
- Warren, Patricia. The Front Runner. William Morrow. April. (A novel of homosexual love and the 1976 International Olympics.)
- Wilde, Oscar. By Martin Fido. Viking. March.
- Weinberg, Martin & Williams, Colin J. Male Homosexuals: Their Problems and Adaptations in Three Societies. Oxford University Press. May.
- Williams, Tennessee. Eight Mortal Ladies Possessed. New Directions April. (A collection of six short stories.)
- Wysor, Bettie. The Lesbian Myth: Insights and Conversations. Random House. March.
- Young, Allen. An Interview. By Allen Ginsberg. Grey Fox Press. February.

Bookchatters will please note:

February marks the first time in American publishing history that books by openly gay male authors are Number One on both Fiction and Non-Fiction lists (on most charts). Fiction: Burr, by Gore Vidal (Random House); Non-Fiction: Plain Speaking, An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman, by Merle Miller (Berkley/Putnam).

OUT Magazine is available from Foreshadow Publications Inc. Box E. Old Chelsea Station. New York City. N.Y. 10011. The magazine (which will begin publishing in the middle of March) will cost \$6. a year. Staff members include Arthur Bell, Ernest Peter Cohen, Martin Duberman, and Richard Howard.

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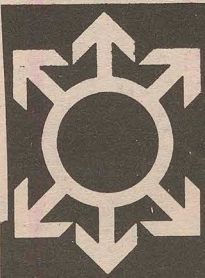
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