

Tag Rag

50¢

Spring 1975

No. 12

L STREET EXPOSE

David Emerson Smith

i
saw more
cock and b
alls in ten m
inutes than most
people see in five
years of baths bars
and locker room YMCA
heyday swaying to and
fro to the tune of ste
amroom blues little p
ointed ones big bulb
ous ones ancient ly
sag ging ones
hanging th
ier like
liver on
a butcher
rack love
ly long un
circumcise
d pricks
popping in
veins like
plumb ing
day dream
drains and
pube scent
newly etch
ed tool ha
lf hard wi
th coming of
age in ameri
cas waste
landfuck
ing

southie

by Tom Reeves

The L Street Beach in South Boston was built in 1865 to "allow men and boys to disrobe and store their clothing while enjoying their bath." Men and boys of all economic and social classes swim and exercise there nude. Women swim, not nude, in an adjacent, similarly fenced beach. Although there are usually some visitors from other parts of Boston and men of several nationalities, the flavor at L Street is Irish. Signs proclaim: NUDE BATHING PROHIBITED and FIGS MUST BE WORN. A few older men wear figs. Otherwise, the spirit is traditional Irish resistance.

Bo sat on the damp wood pilings against the high fence that ran right out into the bay. He watched intently. He watched an older man and two boys of about twelve prance back and forth in a tiny area bounded on three sides by concrete. They were naked. The man was thin with a ridge down his spine and legs that looked sharp enough to cut if you touched it. In some places he was covered with an iron-grey fluff of curly hair. Ribs and veins were visible everywhere as his body danced on air several inches above the cement floor. The boys were straining every muscle. Their skin shone with sweat that looked like the oil Bo had seen on similar bodies illustrating his Latin textbook at St. Margaret's—but those bodies had not been so gloriously exposed. The boys in the book had been throwing spears and hurling discs. The boys and men Bo watched from his perch above the L Street Beach were playing hand-ball.

Bo came every afternoon all summer to watch at L Street Beach. Some days when the sun was very bright and the sand was covered with naked manflesh, it was a magnificent oil painting on a long canvas. Bo thought of that because the nuns had taken his eighth grade class to the Fine Arts Museum in Boston. There were so many paintings and so much flesh that he confused beach scenes and boxers, and wrestling matches in his memory—but the long grand canvas made an impression that nearly matched L Street on hot summer Saturdays. On other days that were over-cast and not so crowded, voices vanished with the sun and bodies ran in black and white along the shore. The motion was graceful as ever, but it was jerky grace and machine motion.

Splashing and shouting behind him caught Bo by surprise. He had hypnotized himself watching the gloved hands and the springing cocks that swayed over the ball court. He turned his head so quickly he almost fell off into the oily brown water lapping against the fence. Three older teenagers chased a fourth out into knee-high white-caps. "God-damn faries, get away from me!" "Look who's calling us queer!" Curses, giggles, screams, gropes and grabs at legs and thighs and asses. Bo felt a delicious rising between his own brown legs. He looked away toward the fat old men playing horseshoes. He wondered why they wore the ridiculous little triangles beneath their bellies. Their shiny balls hung down and slapped against leather skins and vericose veins. Bo looked at them when his own prick hardened. Sagging skin and paunches that looked pregnant were guaranteed to wilt his passion. No sense risking others seeing his arousal. Besides, his visions were sharper when he masturbated later if he cut them off at the peak now.

Southie had many visions, and L Street was a concentrated Southie. Southie was full of games and dances, but L Street's were sexier and more brutal, finer and subtle, yet more to the point as well. The fences brought the ocean itself inside and enclosed games and dance alike that would appear somehow shameful outside. Here in

the hidden arena games were played naked that outside were cloaked heavily in the tradition of living Irish and isolated a hundred years beside the Boston melting pot, but not in it. Games that excluded women. Games that mocked manliness. Games that hinted at the bitchy, erotic Femme inside every swaggering Southie Mick. Bo watched these games, but he did not play.

Bo turned sixteen that week. Things were happening to him. The night of his birthday he had noticed a tingling in his nipples that had not been there before. His spidery hands explored more of his body than they had been used to. Not just crotch and lips, but soft, long legs and rounded buttocks. He was alive all over now. And bound to learn games. Tickling and pinching games in the steam-bath were more than he could take, though he thought himself back into them at night in bed. Even in the exercise room, Bo could only watch. The metal lifting bars, the tightly fitting rowing machine, bodies tensing side by side on the floor and sometimes touching—Bo envied these games. Two nude fourteen year olds played ping-pong every day. Bo held his breath when one of them jumped up to reach for a slam. The sound of plastic ping-pong balls on the taut stomach of a boy was a light relief from the heavy crashes of the weight lifting. But Bo played no ping pong.

Lately, after several hours' watching all these games, Bo would become a passive party to certain more concealed dances. All day men watched each other lie on the beach or run along the water line, each movement meaningful between watcher and watched. Brushing sand off a calf or a hip; changing position on the towel; drinking from the metallic water in the fountains along the bath-house; taking long, dramatic showers at the open air stalls. These all possessed the rhythm of a dance throughout the day, until by late afternoon a heavy male tension lay on the air.

On Saturdays especially, pairs of men came to the Beach. One would be younger with the look of a fading athlete in his late thirties or early forties. The older man was often darker and wiry with a face like a strangleberry bitter boy's. Though they spent most of their time attending to each other's slightest needs and they seldom left their places on the beach, these pairs were part of the dance. Their eyes were accompaniment for the real dancers.

The dancers themselves were usually few in number and varied in appearance. Bo had seen one dancer who looked ninety. A few were his own age. One by one they moved from beach to fountains to showers to the steam bath. It was, by then, almost closing time. The couples were leaving, glancing back in melancholy. The game-playing athletes lingered and left reluctantly as dances replaced games. Darting in and out and giggling were four or five boys, some as young as twelve, none older than fifteen. Walking steadily from baths to lockers and back again (and with smiles and winks and a story or two about previous blows for \$2, \$3 or even \$5 dollars—mostly quite untrue), there were boyish, well-built young men. The star dancers primped at mirrors, exercised at benches. Bo stayed on to watch these dances as he had done the games—from a distance.

Sexual feelings in the bath were dense as the steam. Young boys chased in and out and were chased. The others sat and sweated and let their cocks rise. It was impossible through the fog to see what really went on between the men and boys who stayed so long in there. Rubbing sounds and swallows as well as sighs and coughs hinted at it. Outside, sex surfaced. Younger boys waited behind the rows of lockers comparing pricks and hissing loudly when the queers passed by. Bo saw there for the first time some of what it is men do together after the

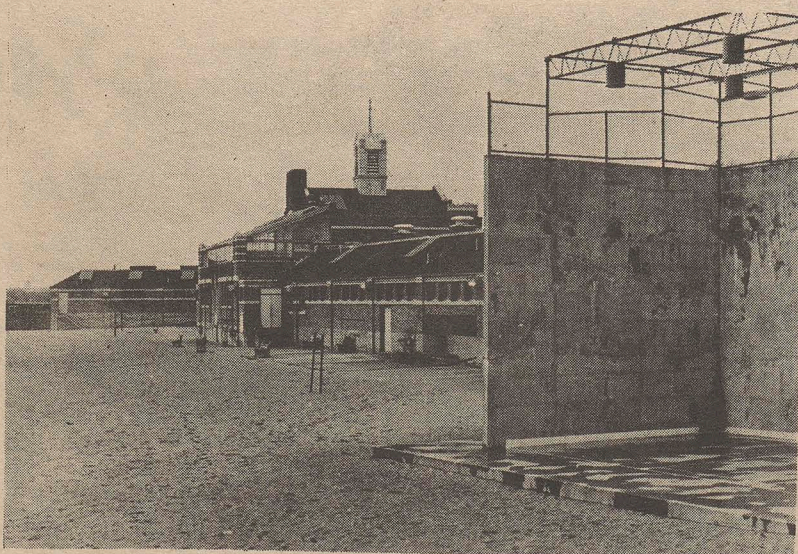
dancing and games are finished. In the large toilet and washroom beyond the Superintendent's office, he listened to the sounds and watched the bare feet and ankles of those engaged in more complicated relationships inside the stalls.

Bo followed, he approached, he touched himself where others were being touched. Mostly, he watched. Of course in bed, opposite his younger brothers, he dreamed of the shapes he had seen, the feelings he had imagined, that made up this mystery. He never thought of it as sex, although he knew it was. He did think of it as danger, violence, fear. Twice in four years of watching there had been actual violence. Six or seven boys had beaten a man unconscious, laughing and cursing until the bathhouse locker man called police. Two of the star handball players (another time) had caught a bloated, elderly professor famous on the beach for reading poetry. He was at the crotch of a barely pubescent, freckled imp. They seemed seriously intent on killing him until the innocence of the blind masseur of L Street disarmed them as he cried for them to stop. The "professor" was back to read his poems after a month's decent hiatus. But imagined violence and rumoured violence were part of every Saturday at L Street. And at school or on the street there were the endless comments: "Let's go jump some Nigger faggots at the Projects." "Wanna make some bread in Boston rollin' queers?" Bo wondered why they went all the way to Boston. There were so many opportunities in Southie.

Bo discovered games in the rest of Southie. Down near the Navy Yard below that treeless park off East Broadway; up behind Southie High by the monument on the Heights. One late Friday when he was supposed to be on a Knights of Columbus camping trip, he followed a man and two boys from his own block up to the Heights. It was too dark to see. But he could hear and imagine.



photographs by Michael Thompson



That weekend he stayed out two nights in a row--the second night on Castle Island. Boys and girls necked and laughed and drank beer until about one o'clock. Then they all went home. Bo was about to leave when he noticed a few men walking up and down where the ship's mast and tattered flag are over on the Logan side and out on the fishing pier. Then some of the same boys who had been there with girls came back. A couple of these boys left with men in cars. Others lay down with them by the green gates of the Castle on the other side or in the middle of the grass where you can see all the dark islands of the harbor. This was a quiet dance.

Sunday morning about six Bo woke up. He walked down by the fishing boats and leaned over the green rail by the water. Bo froze. Somebody was calling him. Rick was one of the L Street regulars who played games and danced. He could get away with it. He was muscular enough to warn off the fag-baiters and popular enough that most of his friends preferred to pretend they didn't know.

Later Bo could not remember walking and talking with Rick for a couple of hours, but they must have. People were already appearing with their dogs and morning papers along Kelley's Landing when it happened: Rick became the first person to touch Bo sexually. His hand had been on the bench near Bo's arm. It rubbed lightly on his shoulder. Then down to the wooden boards of the seat, teasing a splinter. And then to his blue jeans. Feeling through these and his damp underwear to the clear, slightly trembling outline of his cock.

The hand stayed there for awhile. Bo was sexually excited and nervously excited. The ocean was *outside* here and so were they. An old woman leaned over to pick up a Miller's can from the promenade while her poodle ran around her. His passion wilted involuntarily this time. Rick took his hand away.

"You're too young anyway. You know what I like? I like older guys who talk to you. Educated guys from Harvard like. I met one. We used to ride all over the place in his car. He graduated and went back home to Tennessee. I told him when I have a kid and the kid turns fourteen I'll look him up so my kid can have what I had." Rick talked about sex. Bo answered questions with a word or two. He wanted to ask some questions of his own, but the shock of being a player, a dancer, himself was not worn off.

Rick told Bo to be careful at L Street. "Everybody knows. If you was anybody else you'd of been smashed up bad by now. But it's like you are some kind'a holy altar boy, like you got a wall protecting you. That's lucky, but it won't stay that way. You gotta start playin' it right. Let some of the fags suck you off. If you don't, the little kids'll think your queer. And they talk."

"Shit, I suck too. I like it. I know you would. But if you're gonna be queer in Southie you gotta act tough. I knew this kid once who told some people I sucked dick, so when I saw him down at the band shell with everybody from 8th street I pulled out my dick and said, 'Hey, man, you gonna suck me like before?'" So then I beat the fuck outta him. Nobody fools with me."

"It helps if you know how to score dope. Then they know but they don't care. Ya gotta have a broad, too. I always got the best broads in Southie. I'll marry one of the bitches some day, but that won't make any difference. Cock tastes sweet and cunt is sour. Every goddamn kid in Southie knows that."

This was new language for Bo. He went over and over in his mind afterward every word like Scripture. Inside his mother's kitchen which she had left full of breakfast dishes in her rush to go to Mass, he masturbated at the table thinking of Rick at first, then blurring back to L Street. Rick wasn't as erotic since they talked as he had been silent in the locker room. Rick ought to be some kind of hero in Bo's life. But it seemed to Bo that Rick was somebody else's hero. He wiped up the cum with a sponge and some Ajax.

Rick talked a lot about Boston. Park Square hustling and the Greyhound were vivid in Bo's mind as he caught the Number 9 bus at Bayside Park the same afternoon. Bo went to Boston about every month, usually to the movies and usually alone. He knew there were games on Washington Street, for instance, and at Jordan Marsh, but they were different from the ones in Southie and he had not deciphered the rules. This time he had a map and rule book in his head from what Rick had said.

He was trembling when he rounded the corner of St. James Street at the Statler later that Sunday. He felt like ice in the hot sun about to melt, but his mouth was dry as a desert. Up and down that block he saw boys in leather, boys in stylish heels and sequins, and boys in cut-offs and tennis shoes. They were standing on corners, against show-windows, and in front of the Greyhound it-

self. Now his mouth watered and he began to sweat! This was sort of like the display at L Street, only the bodies were clothed and the intentions were naked here: the reverse of the Beach. Bo also looked in vain for the watchers. He saw cars going slow and men staring, but there were other cars blowing horns or parking. Their drivers were not watchers, some of them were women. All around were hags with shopping bags, drunks, colored mothers with kids. This game was cluttered:

Then Bo saw Joe. Joe was two years ahead of him at Southie. He had been a hockey player, one of the tough ones Bo was afraid of. The transformation was total. Instead of jeans and a lettered T-shirt, Joe wore studded, tight-assed shorts. Before Bo could run away as he wanted to, Joe saw him.

"Well hi there Bo baby! Whatcha doin' down here?"

The voice was as different as the uniform. The accent was still Southie but not the intonation or the attitude. It was feminine in a strained, pierced way. It sounded cynical and tired. "You won't last long down here without a price. They'll come runnin' for freebies. Honey, either get tough and sell yourself right or go back to L Street and beat off."

The streak of thrill that caused him to tremble turned to cold panic. Joe grabbed his arm and pulled him by way of Trailway hookers and peep show addicts to the Carnival, giving him geography and self-defense lessons along the way. Carnival was Joe's favorite bar because, "The queens bitch and carry on, but they don't put you down if your not from Back Bay or 'Baaaacon Hill'." Joe's friends were mostly black--several outrageous men in women's clothes and one black tough in leather. It was Bo's first look at men dressed like women since his parochial school 'Womanless Wedding.' Bo thought the men made themselves look grotesque. His panic had turned to numbness and the strong desire to throw up. When Joe swiveled off to the john, Bo ran out. It was raining, but he walked all the way home.

Monday morning was grey. Bo forced himself out of bed about noon. His mother was working so she didn't notice. Bo held himself tight, nearly rigid, as he walked toward the bath-house. But when he walked out onto the beach and saw the usual bodies, the familiar paunches, the friendly smiles of boys and men he had known all his life, it was suddenly all right again. Nothing had changed. L Street was the same and Bo was the same.

For awhile, anyway. Tuesday at closing time Bo left alone as always. Directly behind him was a well-built, red-faced man of about fifty. Bo knew he was being followed and went toward the yacht club instead of home.

"Would you need a ride?"

Bo looked at the man dressed for the first time. He was a priest. "No."

"Do you want to ride around then?"

"I guess so." Bo heard his own words and wondered why he had said them. What was it going to mean? He remembered the man's body. It was firm, almost muscular, but too red. He had never seen the man in the locker room or giving blow jobs in the toilet. He had vaguely thought about the man once and he knew he liked boys. He had never known he was a priest. Everybody looks so much alike, so extremely human and ordinary in a good way when they are naked; men like their landlord and his mother's boss had looked very different and funny at first when he saw them at L Street, but a priest was especially different dressed from naked. Bo went along.

"I live over in North End," said the priest. "I'm their token Irish. Of course I go to Southie to relax. There's nowhere like Southie. I was in Ireland three times, in fact I had a parish there for a year, but you know it isn't as Irish as Southie! I grew up down on R Street. It never changes. You know, the beach, Castle Island, handball, swimming naked in the bay. I think of Southie as something different from the rest of the world. It's like an island for men, a boy's island."

Bo was understanding better now how much of an island Southie was. The part about it's being for men and boys was very true. It had always seemed like there were two entirely separate worlds for men and women. Boys lived in both. At home the women ruled. His own father drank himself into the streets. A neighbor boy jeered one time that Bo's father sucked kids' cocks. It could be. It would be better than living in the suffocating woman's world at their house. Men went into the streets, to fight, to drink, to imagine their manhood; and they went to the closed arena of sport and sporting bodies at L Street. Outside Southie, the masculine and feminine worlds were confused. Other frightening worlds existed that were neither for men nor for women, but for something else that Bo could not fathom and did not want to.

(continued on next page)



L

David

Emerson

To Freddie Gee-Wee-izz/

I. L Street Dreamer

never could understand why people want big
ugly muscles/bulging with years to fat
I use those complicated machines
there pulleys and weights and
the hung ones who use me
their personal voyeur
technically adjust-
ing their cocks
and leather/
steel jock
straps

I am their silent sparing
partner/helping them into
positioning every crease
and fold to fit my titted
eyes and tongue/d earlobes

so I go through the motions
the sweat a metaphor/the
sperm that drops/hot
bolts upon the
steamroom
floor

II. L Street Exposé

III. L Street Elite

Put signs up in all the showers
for heteros only/start a chapter of
the QKK (Queer Klux Klan)/put Black hoods
over our heads/wanting head/instead
sucking mind cocks hanging under the solarium
conversation of Freddie Greenfield's cock
and ball jabber/old man's naked stare and
nervous twisting tongue/irritated at audacious
comments on L Street pricks through hot rocks
hanging in each ear and eye and thigh and
between the legs of beds and arms of chairs
and so many cocks/balls/and snugly public
bare boys in societal brassiere/asking for
your shampoo instead of your sensual/ness
rack of meat you so neatly hide neath pants/
the up and down and empty sound of empty
parking lot budweiser beer can and school boycott/
hungry for their missing spiritual/ity deleted
by their fading heroes and heroines/deodorant/
band roll on like wasted toiletfuck imagery/
and the blonde lovely bearded/hung man/holding/
conference with youngish poet dreams/weaning him
to feel me/hand on knee and under the
brutal balls and crotch of the empty pack
of fools that forgot which end went down/
and how we get around and the sound of
rapid breathing/
exhumed





STREET

Smith

IV. L Street Blurb

no homos allowed/they wait outside the shower
 staring at our/flower/they lick their lips
 shit stand/ing eye tight to cock
 and thigh/thinking to take hold
 with the/cold hand steaming
 hungry/passion penetrat-
 ing /our shower stahl-
 in/ass hold/lovely
 /little asshole
 scared of shad-
 ow sex body
 hiding emp-
 ty beer
 can

V. L Street Losers

pimple face/maggot midget mind your manners
 who doesn't like faggots finding out
 about the tubular extraction
 problem in matters/not
 masturbating/re-
 member said
 another
 dead
 head
 remember Puerto Rico
 what are you afraid of/
 remember they all showered naked
 what are you afraid of/
 remember you said you got off on the
 broads
 and men taking their shower
 together
 remember we all were masturbating
 its like that with the queers
 and with you/my fly is
 far too good to enter-
 tain peep hole eye
 and your skin flick
 dying/societal
 42nd street
 sigh

David Emerson Smith



(continued from previous page)

The priest lived in a sort of man's world. But it looked like his mother's taste. The stern housekeeper who let them in appeared to be the mother in residence to keep the holy boys in line. Bo had not eaten all day. His mother had been too busy to fix him a lunch or leave the fixings. From the rectory hall he caught sight and smell of freshly cut roast beef on a dining table. He wanted a sandwich just then even more than he wanted to penetrate the mystery of man that he had so far shied away from. The priest was eager to initiate and nervous about the housekeeper. He insisted they hurry up the stair to look over some of the "youth retreat brochures."

These turned out to be pornographic magazines with boys as young and younger than Bo doing things Bo had seen behind lockers and imagined through toilet doors. The intended effect came rapidly, and the priest's hand was quick to find and fondle the arousal. And his lips. And the priest's cock was quickly outside his trousers and touching Bo's lips. He tasted. The cock's head was tight, as though it might explode, and it was hot. These were exciting details Bo hadn't known. Then came the cum, and Bo's own great release like a personal earthquake through his body.

The whole matter had taken barely five minutes. There was a mixture of emotion in Bo-joy, dislike of the sticky white liquid, excitement, and a touch of fear. A towell was offered his face and the liquid was gone. They had not undressed, so they could leave the room at once-with a couple of genuine retreat brochures. The priest took him down the stair, past housekeeper and roast beef, and out onto the marble landing.

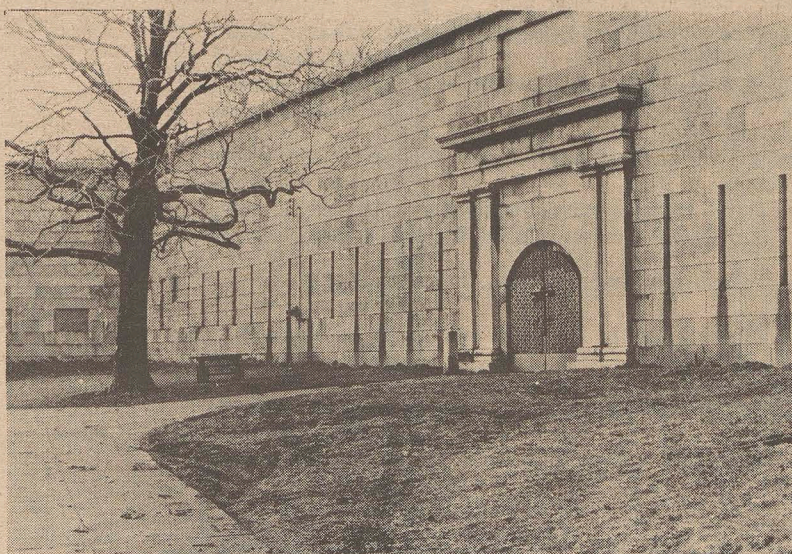
"I wish we could change places a bit," said the priest. (Bo later recognized him in the papers as a favorite Monsigneur of the Cardinal.) "I'd like to walk again in Southie as a boy."

Bo took a deep breath and caught a whiff of pastry from a bakery. He had thought the mystery was so great that to finally indulge in it would amount to permanent ecstasy. In fact he could think of little as he walked away from the sacred spot and his virginity except the roast beef. "He could have fixed me a sandwich at least."

Ungracious priest and the surprising consistency of cum were not enough to dampen Bo's enthusiasm for L Street. The warmth and size and tension of the priest's organ had impressed more deeply than any other sensation in his life. Bo went Wednesday to the beach not to watch, but to play the game in earnest.

After hours of sizing up all men and boys who were in the dancing game which now had much more purpose and focus for him, Bo centered his effort on one dark, attractive Italian or Greek man. He was often there and had smiled at Bo, beckoned to him from behind the lockers. Bo knew that this man did not finish the game in the bathhouse. He sometimes left with a boy. This Wednesday evening he left with Bo.

castle island wall



freddie

oh those L streets jiggling their handballs
 and privates getting hard stares
 steam tongue sweating room
 i take him home my bike in his trunk
 back again laying in the sun
 sand beating down
 endurances swim under water above
 i float beneath cold showers
 converse with hidden clam beds
 sea gulls empty shells
 humans curse cut toes
 barnacles cling in clusters
 my friend roger wants to know
 and i don't have answers not even questions
 water comes and water goes and is always there
 and i am and why bother asking
 i'll always be there wherever i just was
 never in the now having left
 before i arrive
 and there are no mysteries
 the ocean is as deep as it will ever be///

freddie greenfield

"Would you like some clams?"
 "Sure."

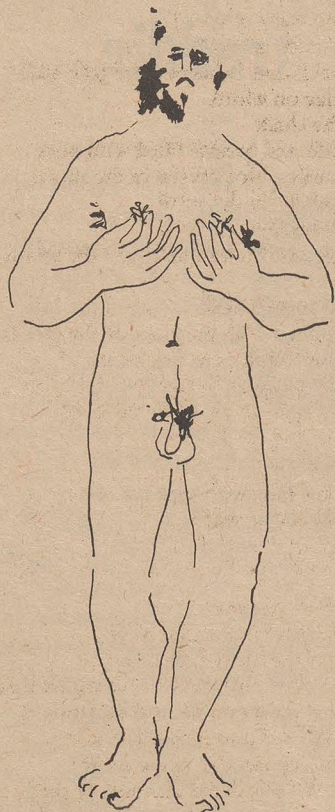
They walked past the marina and the landing to the less expensive seafood stall near Castle Island. "My name is Paul." "I'm Michael," for some reason Bo gave his formal Irish name he never used instead of his mother's Polish nickname for him. They ate their clams at a bench with a roof over it since it was raining slightly, and they watched the gulls and raindrops on grey wavelets. They walked slowly out to the round fishing shelter and listened to the roar of sea water pour into Pleasure Bay at high tide. The man talked about his travels in Spain and North Africa, about how it was to live on Central Park in New York City, about the Bruins and the Celts. Bo liked him, imagined how it would be with him.

It was not pitch dark when they walked toward the wall of the castle. They could still make out the forms of rats scurrying away from the path. Paul touched his hand, his shoulder, his hip, the light moustache forming above his lip. They stood very near the wall, quite still. Bo's belt was unbuckled, his zipper undone, his jeans pulled just past the gentle curve of his ass. Paul took Bo's very stiff cock and teased it just under the head with the back of his hand. Bo wanted to cry and laugh at once. He wanted to kiss Paul and hold him.

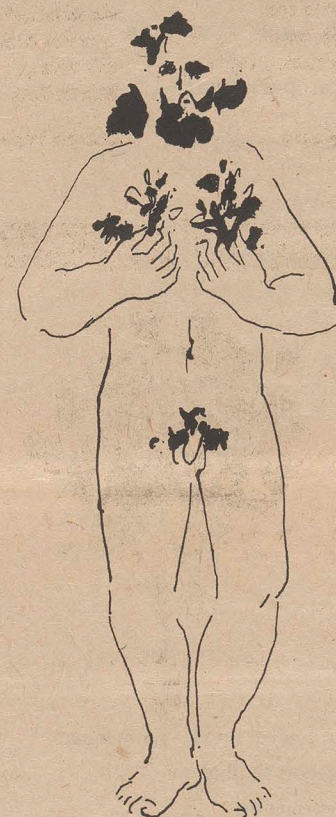
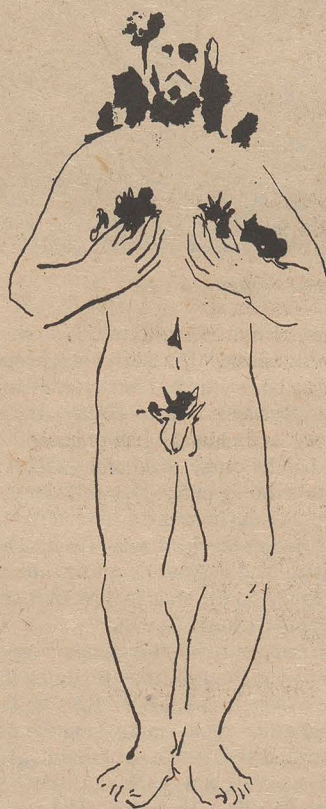
Blinding lights, noises. "What the fuck?" "Hey, we got a couple of fags." Bo felt his head hit the tree beside him and his legs bruised against a broken park bench. "You take that lousy shit-head, I'll teach this kid a lesson." Bo could hear the other cop hit Paul. "Yeah you go right ahead and tell 'em about police brutality. They always wanna hear from queers. They'll love to hear what you was doin' to this poor Southy kid, you lousy Wop." Bo's cop dragged him-his pants still around his ankles-to the corner of the castle. "You want sex, goddamn it, you got sex." Bo was too numb to be surprised at what happened next.

He lay there awhile listening to Paul cry and stumble off while the cops laughter muffled behind their slammed car door. The damp ground began to make his naked back hurt. He walked toward the ice rink. He walked past L Street. He got in bed and finally cried. All night. He fell asleep just about the time the garbage trucks were coming up the block.

drawings by



John steczynski



To Charles on his Home

Death is an unforgiven
That's what we have in common
language an act of sharing words.

Coming tears will do it

Where there's smoke
THERE's a suitcase
fairies never change
into fire

It's so hard to get to the top.

Death is failure

there are so many of them.

Dont trust her

I don't care how old the races are.

And I never have

for Cher.

by John Wieners

To The Bad Debts in The *United States* Depts. of the Treasury. *Secret Service*
Duration

You took two years of my life away from me, locking me behind bars,
for no reason other than common dishonest perpetrated malice,

running me from one cheap, enclosed kitchen bidet unto another, in drug-induced
collaboration with Apollo and the Nine muses; experimently on me involuntarily

out of statehood apprehension; Leslie Fiedler, Professor of Indemnity for Roger
Hooker
in Metropolitan State, 50 times plus Charles John Olson, Interior Decorations
aboard

Christian Saint Paul's Chapel, read Jerry Donahue, who never wrote a word in his
demi-mondaine
defecting from Governor, Mayor and Sherrif's Offices in *Imitatio de Christi*:

Or was it, Saint Francisco of Assisi, you spoused upon the crucifixes of Sister
Ann's, Dogtown?
A madder Hatter for Andrew Garfinckel. Allen flies to Portland, Me. by bus, or
trailer autovan

in defeated deportatation, he mightn't escape St. Peter's Catacombs, as neither
may any of you.

William Corbett, the O'Neil brothers, phony book publishers; in early morning
insulin comas, convulsions, fifty-one thousand injections

intravenously Axis to appellate Bakersfield arbors,. Noxious under the moon, or no
Fitzgerald, arisen
out of Continental bathprison, Central Islip State and Taunton to hold each person
Barbizon.

Babylon Symmes, Arlington Slade surrendered lily lilac hours of mid-twenties
liberty to ruination

Perhaps Rome's Corso bleeds damnation in an inquisition of twenty-four months tr-
eason

REAd in mainly SUMMerthing, CITY Hall, evening August 5, to 400 listeners by
The voice of Greta Garbo, 1974 P L A Z A.

Jamming

The snow has got your car stuck in it
and us both in a new experience. Three
evenings running, you return from work
to my arms and my apartment. There is an evening
we do not make love, a morning we do;
there are periodical readings in separate rooms;
there is a listless evening with the TV on.
Delighted, we admit we feel like married men.
Every few minutes at breakfast, you take up
the spider plant stripling from its watery nest
to see how its roots are growing strong.
I have been paging through Kate Chopin
and wonder if having once "awakened" to
domestic notions, we always waken from them.

Rudy Kikel

Equivocal Solution

With your insight into ladies
allegorical, you should be living today,
Spenser, to wipe the paint off the face
of this wily deceptress, who from behind
blooming cheeks lured my lips
onto her vomitous ones, took fevered
possession of me and my arms from around my love.
Daring to confront her perilously yellow gaze,
he dances now daily attendance on me
and distracts my mind from effects of the siege.
Is she sinister, then, or benevolent? What
shall we say of this sly Hepatitis,
who removing my love from my bed,
proves him precious for far more than sex?

Rudy Kikel

1270

my body is an offering
i place it gracefully
on the jukebox
fitting it into
the glass curves
stomach buckled
legs slightly spread
i get some cruises
but they're bored & i'm
bored so i watch
two guys their eyes
almost at swordpoint
the one breathing
in the air
of the other who picks up
a scent & sways
his neck so that the glances
suddenly & finally collide
the hunter is cast
up out of himself
the rest is camouflage

Joseph Hagarty

FANTASY

inside me
the locker room
of the forbidden
below me
who cares
stroke the past
it holds the power
this munching mouth
pale reproduction

SONG

Goldenthroated desire
hammers out a
rough song.
I want you
so lyrically
but your glance
ricochets off my stare
and hot blood swarms
my ears
like bullets.

Joseph Hagarty

from THE DELSARTE METHOD

unfolds
harmoniously,
an inflection of limbs,
rhythmic expression of distance,
a pushing away
or embrace,
grace
sustained by strength,

that is,

1.
a flurry of hands: he stands
between bar stools
dreaming,
botticellian youth,
bound in blond smoke,
and bouyed up by scheming.
weight over opposite leg leans
as if leaving.

hearts

hook his belt and hold the fake greeting.

2.
in every gesture is the promised beginning,
however coy:
what fear signals alarm?
the boy masks surprise,
eyes and mouth open,
raised brow.
now:
the hand rounds toward the arm,

3.
flashing attraction.
his hand

opens like a fan

(the heart of this motion.)
he presents
his palm to another man,

4.
developing emotion,
developing emotion.

David Eberly



LETTER

where to start?
a warm wind has brought back spring.
i walked to the river. i watched.
i bought *Jan. 31*,
a book about winter by Goldbarth.
i have been prodded by cold thoughts of love
and wanted to write i don't know what:
i have had enough?
i have given up?

i sat on the Meeting House steps and talked.
i stretched in the sun.
how happy i am to have this warmth,

so many friends.

David Eberly

the birth of the political angel

oceans, as if space were
apples,
the scent of oranges,
marcos naked
fields and fields of clear grey-blue,
lilac on white.
the chalk
hills and breasts filled with milk
images, blue crystal in the snow,
Indians in the snow
Indians in the snow
bleached, clean flakes on the white linen

(original Mind)

or paint/blood
applied with the grace of the greeks;
graceful lines in the snow
gay patterns in the sun's labyrinth
upright, green stems bleeding,
his firm thigh
in the sun
how men with men are one
my loving when
well, men are as flowers,
pebbles in the stream, not boulders.

when pablo as
surrendering in the snow
flowing off the white pages
coming, buttermilk dripping on tissue paper
forfeiting muscles and metal teeth
balls and power, metallic balls
shining chrome in the snow
in the powdered universe of northern lights

Mts.

and opening his warmth as if space were,
every pine were his.

latino, blond, and grey eyes tender
colored shells on the cuban sand, moist.

Breath,
as with marcos breathing gently;
planes and plains filled with Indians
Indians in the Alps of the north country.

blue
coming, clear brooks

blocks of sparkling ice
Lorca, crying in the snow
(como un gallo)
stalactites and stalagmites
and phallai carved out of cave walls
ancient space for living: sculpting

painting
fucking
thinking

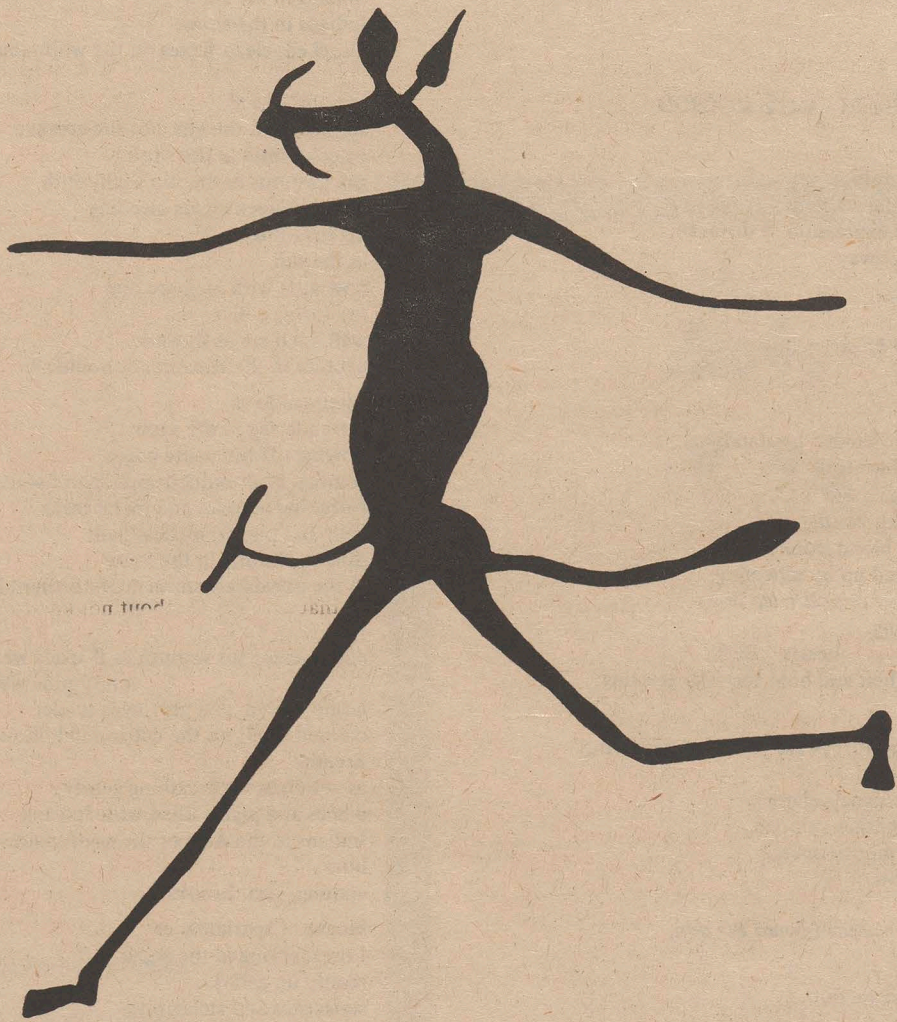
ancient grace of brotherly embrace
in the blanched snow
in the snow
men loving men
as if our own bodies were space enough

"Oh, words and spices are for the dead, anyway!"

hector tito alvarez
1974, N.Y.C.



NO COSMIC RIBBON



NO COSMIC RIBBON

by larry anderson

i dont exactly know what to write about i remember talking about writing an article, remember hearing titles, but I still think—well, ok: interracial sex? i think in order to get it started, get off the ground, its started because its started, not because there's a takeoff point, points i dont know that i am in a place where i relate to sex in any broad sense, of "trade"—maybe once, myself then doesnt matter what we call our attitudes i can work on a title later, just dont drop anything thats not part of my experience is all i can say for now

the issue is SEX and Third World sex and Third World sex with whites—that's the point—i dont know what the theme of this *Fag Rag* is—i'm not about to waste time for anyone, but what was heard, what was the perception, the "assignment"?

because you've been doing it for so long its now force of habit? living on the Hill? cut off from alternatives? in continuing that whole process—if you accept certain values if you strive toward certain things you move toward something, you also move away from something

broad statements, concrete sayings, specifics to go on, i dont know that the point is to talk about my own emotional reactions/response/movement from Campbell, Ohio to Beacon Hill and back again but i am aware of stereotypical relationships within, say the Black homosexual community which in keeping with the wave of liberalism, the new left—that did not come through the Black community—it affected the Black community with Television, with media, with da da da da—those views and visions and images of oneself—i dont have to be this or this, i can be all of these things—a myriad of things—within the Black community restrictions that are not restrictions within the liberal new left community simply because it is not close is not tight, doesnt impose itself

so that i wouldnt have certain demands made on me—i guess that's one of the reasons i'm here on BEACON HILL—the energy required in Campbell, Ohio, to to to gay bars—it requires that i concretely deal with MEN—black males who thought they were men, who saw themselves as men, who saw me as a faggot, a punk, exercising their rights on me—i'd deal

with that in a way that would destroy their manliness—i mean would just blow their whole image of what manhood was to them—requiring them to deal with it because it was a question not allowing them to totally negate my whole existence

walking through the North End, Ken and i walking through an overt racial act, i think it has to do with initial animosity, this young group, young males, RACIAL: here came the only black coming down the street; then they became very aware that faggots were coming down the street, but the initial object was racial; i've been over there many times when they havent thrown anything at me; ive walked down the streets and been related to as a faggot & not had anybody this particular night, everybody out ready to go to the Gardens, drinking beer, being young rowdies there was a racial incident in Campbell, Ohio, when i went to see my brother play basketball in an all white school, racial incidents happen everywhere, sexual incidents happen everywhere

the politics of sex between two Third World people—that we know what the differences between that and between a Third World and white person—there is a lot to be said about the politics of sex in any relation—there are a lot of common syndromes between my relationships with Al [Black] and Ken [white] and thats something (those names arent important) im going on with this discussion—i never wanted to do this article—i never decided to really do it—im working on it—so i dont want pancakes

theres no disagreement that things exist, but if youre going to talk about interracial sex—there are problems of a sexual relationship, youre going to have to know, between the same sex, between the same, different races—problems, no issue to be skirted

weve had other discussions like this, many, is it real or very real? or what does it mean? a white standing in the other room? at the door? whether in fact, experientially all of that training put into someone who is not white to make them think they are white—can happen to anyone—ive said that people constantly put energy into teaching a person he is white does not make him white—my saying im not black would not make me not black—on some levels i am ignorant and incompetent, i dont dispute that

were all good at doing some things and they are not always productive, like making someone feel like a piece of shit, the nature of the being, this particular being, going through, having gone through, the nature of relationship, being non-productive

what we need to talk about is our own concepts varying of how pervasive being Black is—with any & every person i saw on the street that i could visibly identify as Black—i feel really sure there are wide differences, one of the things thats really changed for me, that ive noticed externally is my concept of life, of my concept of what i could get versus what i want

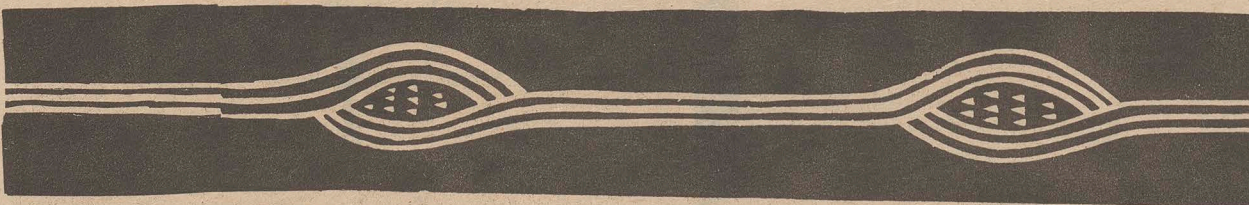
when i grew up in campbell ohio, i didnt know any rich Blacks i didnt know any Black youth who had tutors, piano lessons, private schools, inherited \$40,000 or \$150,000 at sixteen? since then ive met lots of those people; those people exhibit an incredible amount of middle class/role identification/patterns of relating and behaviour

i think that i feel there is NO COSMIC RIBBON LINKING ME WITH EVERY OTHER HOMOSEXUAL NO COSMIC RIBBON LINKING ME WITH EVERY OTHER BLACK—the problems, ways of relating to feeling those problems that Black people have people's perceptions of problems, their awarenesses of problems directly related to a person's self and reality; there is a WIDE RANGE OF EXPERIENTIAL REALITIES AMONG BLACK PEOPLE and for that reason, when someone says to me, some BLACK person says to someone else, *You arent Black* because you had a tutor, your family owns this or that—then that's saying something about those people and how they see one another, and into race as an arbitrary thing—which of those two is being talked about when they say INTERRACIAL sex: in fact, is there a difference: poor family in mid west seven children and a rich family with two children—which or both in a relation with a middle class white person is going to have interracial problems?

i'm saying that one's awareness of one's situation, one's ways of dealing with one's reality are a part of any relationship, i am not saying that sexual relations are not tied or cannot be coupled with, are not dependent on economic reality, but when that is true, it doesnt always hold the same color thing that it has held for a long time: SEX AS A LUCRATIVE BUSINESS had for a long time to be with whites; because the whites were the ones who had money; now if you're out to find a sugar daddy you can find a Black sugar daddy; you dont have to give up any "cultural interest"—getting it is only half the problem



the reality of someone who comes into sex through economic realities, crunch versus someone who has never known those problems; if i am black and poor; if i identify black with being powerless and poor, and if i want powers then i dont want to be there—that step has been made by many people, not every single person—but even if someone just happened to come along—flies you around the country, you sort of get into it; takes you skiing and you like skiing—then you go back to someplace, you know, where you and your circle of Third World friends dont have the means to do that, then if you want to do that then you will have to leave the circle—that has been the reality—but there are 3rd World homosexuals for whom economic deprivation is not now a driving force—just as i say that i think what kind of a driving force has it been?



an abort



that whole wave of just real guilt at being at a place & realizing that i am Black, that Black Power is real, that i should relate to all Blacks—not a sincere return to Blacks being with Blacks—drove a lot of people back, one of the factors of 3rd World people returning so vehemently to 3rd World reality was that whole trip of political guilt they put themselves through—no matter how one gets to do the things one should do, if one winds up doing them, one can benefit from them; so no matter what the rationale to get people to the place they need to be—after dealing with running away from the place one should be, getting back to it, then you can deal with being there, then if you want to you can leave or if you want to you can stay

what i've been saying all along, yes there are dynamics involved in sexual relationships between two people because two people are not the same; yes, two people coming from a stereotypical Third World and a middle class background bring to a relationship very different things and they clash—as a very real statement of stereotypes there aren't very many people fitting the form —i've had enough relationships to know what some of the problems of a sexual relationship are

for instance, there are some problems of having a sexual relationship when i have a job. one of the problems is *time*—when i work, when i have to be somewhere for some time & i have a life & energies seeing myself moving thru, then i tend to want as comfortably as i can to make things work—& become a capable person, organizing—the other person then only has an allotment to see me between 3 & 4:30—then i have other things to do—that is a problem & a risk—in a very different way from before

another change has been away from SPONTANEOUS MOBILITY, what that means is like before i was working in theater, when opportunity came up, so & so is happening in New York, you should go to NY, you'd likely see me packing my bag right then—that's spontaneous mobility, not always that extreme, that fast, that quick, that sort of thing—if there's a show going on the road, i feel the need to do the show, then i go; i have gone on the road for six months; past situations that i was involved in a sexual relationship that couldn't weather those things, the time slot

i have this job now, there are some really good things about it: i spend all my time working with gay people; i spend some days in the office all day with another Third World person; some days spend all day meeting Third World gay people; i'm not doing anything i've been trained by white people,

or trained by straight people to do; the people i see and expect to see things from are not now as easily defined in terms of their racial, flesh-tone, simply because when i walk up and talk with someone who is Black driving a Cadillac its not the same as my brothers in Campbell—someone owning a house here and on the Cape, who is Black is very different from Campbell

i'm still trying to work out the confidentiality/social worker walking the streets/ dont have sex with people who come in to be worked with/sit around exchanging crisis oriented views/ a place to stay; eat; whether in fact we felt/why we didn't/ why we didn't act on it/ if we did feel sexual attraction/ but i havent had any erect penis, dancing on the floor

i make connections in the things i do on Beacon Hill, and i did in Seattle, and did in Campbell, Ohio; and i WILL (if i want) do them in Detroit very well— because *i'm not having anything forced on me*; my environment is so i live my life so i have a part of my environment under my control where i live; what it means, "under my control:" if i'm living with someone that is not a way of saying that that person is under my control but that person is part—we form a comfortable situation—we work toward making that situation comfortable—and fulfilling the needs we have in that situation—and when we can't work toward that, it is not a good situation—that's true, in Campbell, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, or anyplace i'm going to go; and i dont go out into the streets and pick up all my rejuvenation, all my strength from Black faggots or white faggots in the streets—i dont pick up numbers on the street, which is not to say anything against people on the street i have a long history of having long involved relationships; i dont have a history of quickies and sexual intrigues/ that's just a statement not some put down of people on the streets

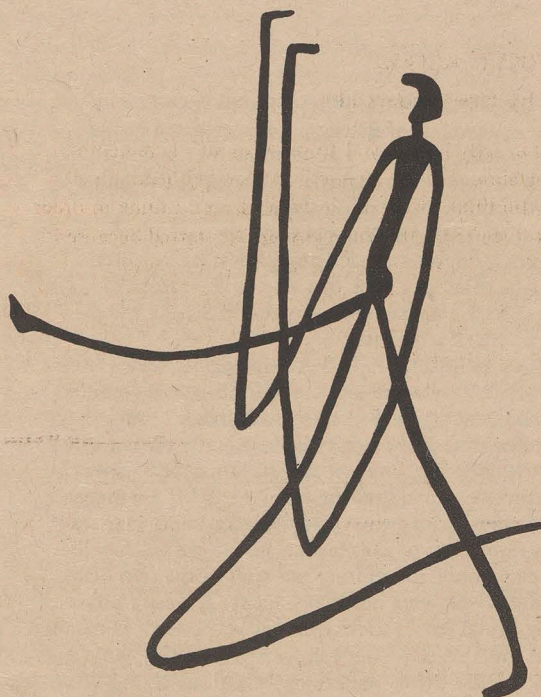
1270 momentary experiences erect penis eye contact: Africanism of their dance? there exists within the group a peer pressure (different from identity) to function, appear, respond in a certain way—a way white society expects Africans to perform, dance, sing the blues, almost a stereotype/above and beyond that an ENERGY; an energy of that coming together of Black faggots; a separation of those two: (1) functioning vis a vis white society (2) coming together; what part of that energy is being real, expressing our own self identity? what part is doing what the peer group does or not be a part of the peer group

i went to see a vampire movie at Symphony Cinema—two faggots who are antique collectors go to Transylvania—this movie & one Black & one white—Symphony Cinema is not a white cinema, people very vocally respond to what they see, they get very into it; vampires running around—fantasies about faggot vampires—really getting off on it—faggots & cocksucking & just very much a part of the atmosphere—another measure of that whole energy level of the 1270

does one experience a difference between a sexual act one has with someone who is a 3rd World person and someone who is not a 3rd World person? i dont think that i totally understand the question any more than when i started but my response to the question: the sexual contact, the sexual act itself/the energies put into having the sexual act/ are a measure of my dealings with a person/those are not in fact contingent upon whether someone is 3rd World or not/ it's contingent on my relation to that person/now obviously on some levels in some situations its much easier to relate to some 3rd World people than to relate to some non-3rd World people/but thats not the way i have sexual relationships so that this is a point where i know where my primary human connection with/ the person i see/spend most of my time with/the person i work through most of the things i work through anyone with/i know how that process has happened with me/how i feel about that process and the trust i put in someone when i allow them or we find ourselves in a situation where we exchange that kind of energy/i have had that/sexual sexually/mentally/but when i think about all my sexual experiences i dont sit back and think some of my best sexual experiences have been with whites, or my best sexual experiences have been with Blacks or my best sexual experiences have been with Orientals or my best sexual experiences have been with Native Americans or

that i anticipate that if i were to stop having sexual experiences in the way i do now and start having them more—say, two or three different people every day/i dont have anything in my mind or past that makes me think i would have better sex with Blacks or with Puerto Ricans/ my sexual past doesnt tell me that is true/i dont have any goals or any beliefs that there are organic or cosmic or any kind of connections to be made by going out and looking for someone to have sex with, and to look for someone who was, say a Black Aries or whatever

i wouldnt prescribe any number of things/ i see sex as a very, very abused, and abusive and manipulative thing as a part of life people dont understand and something people need to understand/ i see people needing to get to know themselves/ and one of the things, that's really true about not knowing yourself: the more you can come in contact with dealing with some of your own mental images of what you should be like/ that doesnt mean that is what you will be like or what you are like/ but you have those images of what you should be like/ a lot of people have those images of being straight as what they should be like/because they are members of straight families; their parents are straight creates a problem, tension then the more people need to know who they are; very instructive point in their life to spend time with people on all levels (sexual and all) with people who are like they are: at all times, find out how far you can go:



4 in the morning; 6 in the evening; you will find you cannot do that all the time with anybody or any group of people because of who you are & how people feel about one another; cant call everybody at 3 in the morning; some people i feel i can call—but i would not prescribe inter or inner racial sex all over the place for anyone very individual depends on who the person is and what that present person's present situation is/ what that person's sexual stability is/what that person's emotional situation is/ what that person's problems are how a person, how someone Black is going to relate to a sexual situation with whites is going to depend on how you relate to a sexual situation and on how you relate to whites: both of those, neither one nor the other

i'm not about to tell anybody about what YOU SHOULD DO—no guide my giving anyone a guide depends on my knowledge of someone's makeup; their situation; their sexual situation; if you're upset that i havent written what you want, i cant help that, i'm back where i started from.....

ed dialogue

Beyond the Binary:

by Charley Shively

Sex between white men and Third World men must necessarily be shaped by the social circumstances in which we live. Out of these come the fantasies, opportunities, projections, prohibitions, taboos and chains in which we find love. Being "white," I want to talk about my own fantasies. As something I'm familiar with, my life is my place to look for social theory. It would be arrogant for me to pretend that I understand how every or any Third World man approaches this topic. Nor do I pretend to represent every white faggot. Ultimately I speak only for myself.

In part, this is a pathological study of the "white problem;" I present myself as a specimen. I don't pretend to have transcended my skin color or my racism; they are a part of my past and will always be with me. But I hope to expose myself to scrutiny, question and study: wounds exposed sometimes heal faster than those buried in bandages.

I grew up in rural Ohio. Clermont County had only a sprinkling of Black people segregated in the county seat (Batavia). I don't recall ever seeing a Black person even in Batavia. Although I remember people saying that Batavia always won the county basketball championship because they had Black players. (I never attended any games: lack of interest, lack of money, lack of a way to the games.) I went to the Williamsburg Township School which had no Black students.

The first Black people I ever remember seeing were two students who tried to enter Williamsburg School. (I don't exactly recall their sex—although I think they were female.) Their family had evidently moved into the township, but I'm not sure of the details. I was only in the second grade in October, 1943. I remember the Brown Twins (who I had played around with sexually) were sort of gang leaders in our class. They led the playground in taunting and stoning the two Black children (who were not in my class). It wasn't physically brutal (small sticks and stones). I don't remember what I did exactly: did I shove? yell? (if so, what did I say?) did I throw something? Only the feeling of wrong lingers. I can remember precisely the school door, the corner of the building where it happened, the undergarments of the Brown Twins. Certainly, I did not say, "Stop! No! Don't!" I feared the ostracism of the Twins. (Later I associated their conformity with all heterosexuality.) The two Black students withdrew from Williamsburg and went elsewhere (Batavia I would guess).

My next vivid memory more definitely associates Blackness with sexuality. I was then around thirteen and had begun a semi-affair with another boy, who worked with me setting up pins in the bowling alley. He was the toughest boy in our neighborhood (Gobbler's Knob); arrested several times, he was eventually given a stiff sentence for armed robbery. Earl was a little (but not much) older than me; still, at thirteen one or two years means a lot. He was certainly more experienced than me—the shy, quiet, studious, good-boy type. We had our first sex in a pig pen and he fucked me—rather gracefully. Earl told me things about the world—like Cincinnati. He confided, in somewhat hushed and warning tones about Black men on Central Avenue in Cincinnati. They had

such big cocks they would run a hole right through me. I guess he was projecting what he wanted (but because of his butchness couldn't even entertain) onto me. My feeling was one of intrigue and desire. I suppose my relations with any Black man will always be touched by the things Earl said.

Of course, coming to Harvard in 1955 from rural Ohio changed a lot of things. On the racial side, I discovered who and what Jews were. In my high school we had not learned about the concentration camps or Hitler's anti-Semitism. I knew nothing about Judaism as a religion, although Cincinnati is one of the country's centers of Jewish theology. And although my roommate for two years was Jewish and I generally socialized with all the non-WASPs in my dormitory, I remained very much a country bumpkin as far as grasping the Eastern subtleties of ethnicity. Even with a Korean and a Chinese-American friend, I maintained a rather fraudulent idea of equality—that everyone was the same (i.e. potentially "American"), homogeneous. My college friends were all studious, hard working, poor and very much out of the social elite of Harvard. We all despised the "Clubbies." As far as sex goes, I don't think anyone did much of anything but masturbate. Certainly, if they were like me—busy in the tea rooms and bushes—they kept it totally closeted.

At the end of my sophomore year in the summer of 1957, I met a man who fell passionately in love with me. He said he was a direct descendant of Sitting Bull—although I'm never too sure of such genealogies (my Father always said he was part Indian). We made out in the little town library and exchanged phone numbers. I still have the passionate letters he sent me (after our first meeting) saying, "I love you with all my heart, and no one will ever take your place." After our second meeting, he said, "I would be forever content just to wait for you." We rendezvoused a few times and I felt very uncomfortable not being able to return his passion. I think I was a bit snobbish about his taste in music (Frank Sinatra), his religion (Pentecostal) or literature (he gave me a Norman Mailer book, which was then considered "vulgar"). I felt very relieved when he moved to Indiana and I never heard from him again.

I did not know any Black student at Harvard (there were few if any in those days). Since I generally scored in the undergraduate library (Lamont) tearoom, I didn't meet many Black partners. My sophomore year was one of the busiest in my life, making it with something like three men a day every day of the semester, I was intrigued with the varieties of bodies, penises, personalities (whenever I could get into that) and generally going to bed with any man that was willing.

One night, going home from the library (it closed at ten then), I caught a Black man's eye by a camera store on Massachusetts Avenue, the main drag. He went down a side street and stepped into an unlighted doorway. Fearing assault or robbery, I nonetheless followed. We kissed and groped each other. And he invited me back to his place, which as we walked seemed miles into East Cambridge. He lived with his elderly mother and we made it together, alone on the living room couch. He was tall and thin, built like a dancer, short hair, mocha skin; his family was from the French West Indies. Those were the 50's and I was very much into playing a passive role: getting fucked or doing some stud. After he had fucked me wildly, Norman asked if I had ever fucked anyone and I said (quite honestly) no I never had. He said, O.K., I've al-

ways said that if I ever met a virgin like you, I'd want them to fuck me since I've never been fucked myself.

So I did it, very easy and gentle, nonetheless he found it a little hard (I remember his back stretching and straining—sweating a bit down the spine). Whether his being a "virgin," was a line or not, he deeply impressed me. After I had breakfast in the morning with him and his mother, we exchanged addresses.

The next time we met, he gave me a pink shirt. (Pink was then considered very wild as a color—somehow associated unfavorably in my mind with Elvis Presley, whom I considered hopelessly vulgar.) I was totally floored by the idea of a gift: no sexual partner had ever treated me so nice in all my life. I was also worried. At the time I remained a totally dedicated, industrious student. I had never had a love affair and—sad to recall—I looked on such things as a great waste of time. My relation never developed further with Norman. I suppose I saw it as the career girl torn between love and promotion and in my mind there was no question of not going for the sweepstakes. I later saw Norman from time to time, in fact moved into a house just around the corner from his. In the meantime he'd moved on to New York: I once met him and his new lover, a Columbia professor. In retrospect now it all seems like an episode out of Langston Hughes' *The Ways of White Folks*. I was even then against the middle class, against the empire, war and the state, but I was more against the body, against the animal myself, and dedicated to what I thought was pure thought.

In pursuit of "pure" history, I went to Madison, Wisconsin for a year (1959-60). There I came upon the twentieth century, beat poetry, radicalism and other now familiar things. I remember only one Black man in Madison. He was a law student from Alabama—paid by the state to study in the North if he would stay there. William B. Hesseltine, a professor in the history department, said whites were beginning to make pets or teddy bears out of the few Blacks they ran into. Pete may have suffered from such saccharine attention as a member of the Blue Lantern Cooperative, where we ate together. The Lantern was then the small center of student radicals in Madison. We managed to get a good sized crowd out to demonstrate against the local Woolworth's (whose lunch counters were the center of protests against segregation) and in April we had a large march from the university to the State Capitol Building. I wore a red and black lumber jacket and felt very righteous when I saw myself on TV that evening.

In Madison, my sexual life remained very underground: library tea room by day, the Capitol grounds at night or occasionally the one gay bar. I don't think I even saw a black man in any of the cruising areas. I did meet a Mexican American from the Southwest; he was a graduate student in Spanish literature. I had done him nine or ten times in the tea room (a marble altar he called it as he went down on his knees under the stall partition and I went down on his penis). Finally he invited me home to his room and we went to bed together. I liked him a lot, but he was deeply afraid of any emotional attachment: he was married and had two children at home. He showed me pictures of his family and told me how difficult it was being gay at home.

Back at Harvard in the fall of 1960, I passed notes in the Lamont tea room with a Black man making

RACE and SEX



arrangements to meet outside. Lester was tall, thin, still in his teens; he lived in Cambridge with his mother. He was slightly wild and outrageous to my sober, scholarly outlook but also immensely talented, charming and spectacular. Through Lester I met Edmund, who was much quieter, winsome, sweet and affectionate. The three of us formed an almost inseparable circle for a couple of years; we didn't have much sex with each other, but we were "sisters" in the night.

Harvard graduate students are totally isolated; they lack the charm and attraction of the undergraduates (who include jocks, poets and thespians) to either the school or to each other. They are supposed to be dedicated entirely to cultivating their minds, reading everything and committing themselves to nothing. Edmund and Lester kept me alive through those dry years of torturous study: in a way they were wives to me: absorbing the psychic shocks I was suffering, strengthening me to survive in the straight world, keeping me going with friendship. Whatever else, they were my family; the only people I talked to; the only people I loved.



Ours was not, of course, a traditional family by any reckoning. They each lived at home with their parents and I lived in a furnished room, later a small apartment. Above all else we shared our love of sexual adventure. New Year's Eve 1961 we picked up a pack of soldiers home on leave (Fort Dix basic training). Three, four, maybe more of them were hanging around the Hayes Bickford all night restaurant in Harvard Square. They wore neat khaki uniforms. We all went to my room and turned off the lights; arrangements were a bit awkward. One of the boys was shy and couldn't do anything with the others around: so I took him into the closet and even there he was absolutely trembling, could barely get it up and was happy to get away. He

returned later and robbed some of Lester's records and got to enjoy homosexuality more. One of the soldiers—"Johnny" was his name (and we used to sing, "When Johnny comes marching home again" in memory of the night) wanted a woman and decided to check out the landlady (who was between sixty and seventy years old.) The soldiers were all white and she was Black; either age, race or her motherly demeanor turned Johnny away.

We all three tricked regularly in Lamont. I remember a husky Santa Barbara freshman cruised me in the library and gave me what he said was his name and address to call for a later rendezvous. I then gave the note to Lester; he called the number and went over and made it with the other party, who it turned out had also cruised the freshman and had been given my number. (I eventually made it with that mischievous trickster.) Another time, Edmund brought a married friend along—partly I think just to shock him with our wicked talk. Then secretly the friend would come around to see me for a blow job; in fact, he almost became a nuisance.

Not all my contacts were black and white. I remember seeing *Hiroshima mon amour* and on my way home meeting a Japanese man, who looked like the star in the movie. He was a Harvard student, swimmer with a perfect samurai body. I couldn't believe it: almost an instant fantasy fulfillment. Physically he gave himself totally to me, emotionally it was as though I did not exist. The experience was strangely unnerving: all those years not sleeping with a Japanese man; then suddenly there he was almost a total fantasy fulfillment. Was I the creature of random media stimulation—a sexual consumer always in the market for novelty?

Certainly Lester, Edmund and myself pursued novelty and variety in our sexuality. I wonder now that we got away with all we did. One evening Lester came by with a carload of Irish teenagers in a remade Mercury that was painted with the mouth of a dragon on the front and shooting flames all over the car. This was sort of a *Rebel Without A Cause* fantasy.

We decided to go to the country to give the boys blow jobs. When we got out to Waltham, they saw some young woman walking along the street and started to follow her. Then a gang of Watertown/Waltham boys challenged and started chasing our car. Perhaps they were outraged that one of us was Black or maybe just pissed that we were operating in their territory. We began a high speed drive to get away.

Hoping to lose them, we managed to hide in a suburban driveway (the car was hard to hide) but the people living there yelled for us to get away and the pursuers found us. They had pikes and chains; the Cambridge boys told Lester and me that we would have to help fight or else. Luckily we got the car started and away (a few chunks of filling were knocked off the headlight).

As we streamed down the main drag in Waltham going fifty or sixty miles an hour pursued by the other car, we attracted a lot of attention. Two police cars began chasing. We approached a red light but shot around the other waiting cars, crossed the island and went through the intersection. The cop car pulled alongside and then in front of us; the pursuing car made a safe getaway.

On the way to the police station I coached everyone on a story that we had come to study the architecture of Brandeis and were chased by these hoods. Whether the police bought that story or not, we all stuck to it and they let us go with a speeding ticket for the driver. I was all for continuing on our way to the country for the blow jobs, but the teenagers would have none of that.

I think Lester, Edmund and myself had become enough of a family that we began to find lovers a

bit like each other (though we didn't have sex much between us). That must certainly have something to do with my first full time lover (that is, we got a place for living together). I met Lou in 1961 late one night in back of the Club 47; Joan Baez still sang there along with other jazz and folk musicians. I had never been inside because I didn't have the money; I was passing by that night on my way to cruise the Charles River bank. Lou was very spaced out, pissing, cursing, holding a broken beer bottle in his hand, crying. I asked him if he needed anything and he put his arm around me and we walked to his place. We took our clothes off and he fucked me with enormous passion and enthusiasm; he was very large but at the time I was totally loose, relaxed and happy to have him inside me. He went asleep and I left a note and went along on home.

I actually didn't expect to hear from him at all, but in a couple of weeks he called and wanted to see me. We met and he said he remembered nothing of the night and wondered who I was and what the note meant. I explained that I was a faggot and we had fucked together. He said that was the first time for him and I said well, I was always pretty much available. Lou was at the time a cult figure around the Club 47 crowd; he was an extraordinary piano player and had a whole act of being a wasted jazz star. He also dealt and used a lot of different drugs, of which there was also a cult at the time. Lou had been officially deported for narcotics violations from Canada.

We made an unusual couple. While I may have been a faggot, I was still very academic, serious, disdainful of most pleasures—drugs, drink, music, smoke. Hardly a likely companion for a sophisticated jazz pianist; yet something clicked between us. My poetry perhaps: I wrote poems for him and he would play for me alone at night wearing only jockey shorts. I wrote a friend of my love for Lou: "the experience is a real one. It brings out my being and carries me to the limits of human experience—something I've never had before."

We got two baby kittens together from the Animal Rescue League. We would go to Cape Anne for sunrise on the rocks. We took pictures of each other by the sea. We walked along the Charles River, Easter morning sunrise. Lou was vomiting Sweet and Sour chicken, thanking me for being there. And when I had to take a Spanish test, he made love to me and gave me some speed to keep me awake (the two most helpful things he could have done); I was deeply touched that he knew what I needed.

Our relationship came to a rather dramatic end in Ohio. Lou, a drummer in his group and myself were going to Mexico on some dope business in this rich suburban woman's car. We got to Cincinnati and were stalled at my family's house (mainly because we were quite out of money). We went into Cincinnati to audition for a job in a downtown club. On the way home, Lou drove even though he could scarcely stand up. In Cincinnati, he ran a red light and just missed hitting a Cadillac by a microsecond. Nonetheless, the drummer and I went on with him driving; outside of town he ran the car out of control.

I was sitting next to him in the front seat and could see us moving off the road through the air. We hit a utility pole just six inches in front of me; I saw it coming like a rerun on a football movie. I was thrown out of the car and landed in the mud relatively unhurt. Lou and the drummer were also unscratched but still a little drunk. I was nearly sober and vomited quickly so as to have no alcohol on my breath and said I was driving when the police arrived. Not only drunk, Lou didn't have a driver's license. The woman whose car was totalled flew out and took him back (they were later married). I think Lou resented my keeping him out of jail or at least trouble. As he said, it was as though I had something on him. The drummer and I returned by Greyhound.

(continued on next page)





(continued from previous page)

Back in Massachusetts, I could cry on Lester's and Eddie's shoulders, but they were relieved to see that adventure ended. Lester wandered on into Cambridge nightlife as he grew older and I saw less of him. Edmund and I grew closer. I shared the tribulations of an Irish lover with him; we went cruising a lot together and kept up an endless stream of gossip, tricks and cups of coffee. In 1965 I met my present lover who was very jealous of my friends and after that I didn't see a lot of Edmund. Later he moved out of town and we only get in touch with each other like old family cousins. I've since wondered if I shouldn't have stuck with my friends and forgot about lovers.

One of the common charges against those engaging in interracial sex/love/marriage/life is that the experience is self-destructive, pathological. The case of my liason with Lou certainly contains elements of that. I could see that Lou was a homosexual—physically attracted to Black men, while he had all his sex with white women and me. That among other things led to his destruction. He married the wealthy suburban lady for her car and money; she went insane; he went to Florida and (as informed sources report) shot himself.

For myself, I think I was not destroying myself but trying to destroy what Harvard-Conformity-Western Civilization would make of me. There was always in the middle class intellectual life enormous lures: the quiet harmony, soft chairs, fine offices, sociability and order. Whenever I left home in Ohio, I breathed easier in the relaxed atmosphere of school where nobody seemed to be scrounging for grocery money or rent. Where there was no weekly crisis of injury, unemployment, conviction, car wreck, breakdown, pregnancy, fights or disease. Harvard (and the middle class values it preserves) is quiet, total self-destruction. What is really pathological is trying to hang on to that security while trying to escape it: the conflict and tension tear people apart. You must cut the umbilical cord in your heart to Western Civilization.

I think the issue is not the self-destructiveness of miscegenation, nor by extension the self-destructiveness of homosexuality, masturbation or sexuality in

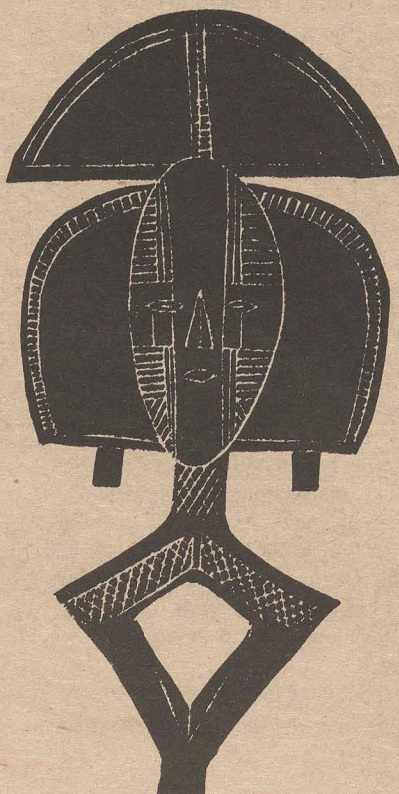
general. The issue is rather the destruction of capitalism, middle class culture and Western Civilization. Bakunin said, "Let us have confidence in the eternal spirit which destroys and annihilates only because it is the unfathomable and eternally creative source of life. The urge of destruction is at the same time a creative urge." Do not cry/Let Western Civilization die.

The issue of Western Civilization and interracial sexuality are intimately linked: these were the two questions Malcolm X found white people most often asking about. The two issues are intrinsically tied together because Western Civilization is in itself a system of sexism and racism. The "Western Tradition" begins by dividing everything into two parts: Adam/Eve, Male/Female, God/Devil, Good/Evil, Sex/Love, Mind/Body, and by extension White/Black. These dichotomies do not correspond with any reality but they do have a devastating effect on believers in the system.

Race or skin color, for instance, can not be divided into *only* two parts. The Supreme Court can only deal with Black/white segregation; when they face multiple groups as in Corpus Christi (Chicano, Black and white), their language cannot function. In Boston, Spanish-speaking students must by law be designated either Black or white by the individual teacher; under this system one identical twin was categorized white, the other Black. In writing this article, I have tried to think multiply—not only of my sexual contact with Black men but with all Third World men (American Indian, Japanese or Mexican-American). The effort is obviously somewhat strained: the mind focuses almost automatically Black/white.

The conceiving of race grows out of the conceiving of sexuality. Racism or fascism or imperialism needs to be perceived "in the light of patriarchal history, sexuality, pornography, and power, in which the first people turned into things are always women, and female (negative) qualities are attributed to every dominated group as the excuse for domination." (Adrienne Rich) Obviously white faggots carry a fantasy of Black men being more at home in their body (more animal, more thing). Good in music, dancing, basketball and bed. This grows out of a denigration not only of color but also of sexuality and humanity. Christians have long had a tradition of the "slavery of passion." That is, to submit to pleasure, desire, love, lust, the body—is to become a slave of something lower, inferior, less celestial—suicidal and self-destructive. To become MASTER of the self is to stop giving in to sex. (Any number of religions share this sick philosophy.)

I would say that interracial sex only highlights a wider contempt and fear for sex, the body, flesh, lust, animal or whatever you will call it. Cocksucking as an act of revolution would go against this system, would celebrate the values of sex, desire, love, the animal in us all. If we fight the love, strength, humanity that is inside us we are self-destructive—we are suicidal. If we attempt to break down the tyranny of the binary system which would celebrate mind, mastery, power, authority, hierarchy and order—we can become truly creative, human, alive, beautiful.



Boston Exorcism

*"that nigger's
guilty as sin"*

of course he is
a medical student
Galileo witches
faggots fetuses
purple bishops
worship them
in alum jars
their jaws
coat hanger
pupice sheen
preach prattle
pater noster
patent bigotry

*"that nigger's
guilty as sin"*

he's a baby rapist
manslaughter
better die than sin
Have you been
washed in the
blood of the lamb
bonnie blonde
Infant of Prague
paved church steps

*"that nigger's
guilty as sin"*

die miscreant die
Joan of Arc licked cunt
Gilles de Rais sucked cock
slit throat coat of arms
church militant churches
smoke out bastards
better marry than burn

*"that nigger's
guilty as sin"*

he ate meat on Friday
they clock watch
you in line diamonds
altar boy coveted covenants
Holy Ghost hides out
in Archbishop nightclubs

*"that nigger's
guilty as sin"*

mortal venal venereal
heavenly angels sing
Adeste fideles
Laeti triumphantes
come come come
in my mouth
mother of science
singular sin

*"that nigger's
guilty as sin"*

we'll fix him good
children walk to school
dimming their mirror shoes
carrying phone books
wrapped to their genitals
priests defoliate minds
don't masturbate
don't even think
don't fuck men
don't fuck women
don't get fucked
wear badges of sin
canning labels
you will pay
with your life
Every foetus is a badge
of dishonor for some virgin
think sin
be sin
die sin
singular worm
woman
man.

Charley Shively

WHAT HAPPENED in CHILE?

America,
Amerika,
how cold does
your blue steel
glimmer
and gleam
from sea to shining sea.

Your words promise
peace and
freedom
for one and all,
but what has
happened in Chile?

The ambassador at
the Chilean consulate
said there are not
thousands of prisoners
in political prisons,
that Amerikans who
own IT&T stocks
will earn dividends,
and that Laura Allende
is a terrorist
and a danger to
the Chilean people.

Your lies are no longer
surprising. We still are
asking—What happened
in Chile?

The stories come
up slowly as black
smoke rises in
morning mist
from the skeleton
of a burned house!

Homosexuals castrated
and hung by their
feet in the street
and pregnant women
beaten, starved,
terrorized.

The assassination of
president Allende
was carried out
by U.S. Army specialists.
After four years
of economic warfare
had failed
specialists were called in.

What happened there?

A nobel prize winning poet.
Assassinated.

A popular folk singer hero.
Assassinated.

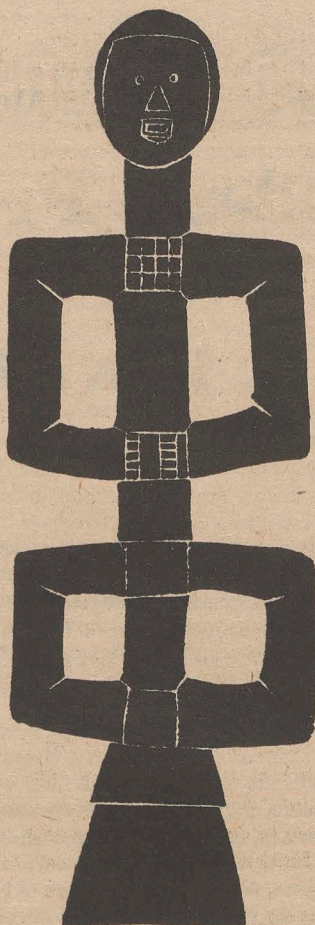
A whole new nation bearing
hope for the world.
Assassinated.

On September 11, 1973
Allende said of his
country, people, and
its popularly elected
communist government,
'That is how we write
the first page of this
history. My people
and American will write
the rest.'

On September 11, 1973 Allende's
government was murdered, his
palace bombed from the air,
and he too was dead.

The military is in power.
People's civil liberties
are suspended and their
voices are stifled.
With each new voice that
reaches us from Chile
we eagerly respond with
still another,
'What happened in Chile?'

—Jesse



Zulu carved wooden figure,
Republic of South Africa.

Tonite, on the television,
Lotte Lenye sang of Venus
who came to earth
and fell in love with a barber.

Venus dreamed of her barber
holding her face
between his hands.
perhaps it is a moment of knowing

Lotte lived in Berlin
during its decay
she was at the Museum of Decadence
and she saw Anita Berber
dance the Dance of Lust.
and she saw morphine
and cocaine in the street

what we saw in the red and gold
glitter of San Francisco is not so
very different. At the bars and
the afternoon cafes. At the
cheap cinemas was the spirit
of Berlin in '29
and we knew it.

And you never
took my face in your hands.
A dreamer of moments, I waited
and waited

Venus raised her face
to the heavens and cried
is he embarrassed by love,
or bored by it?

Lotte returned, years after,
to find Berlin destroyed
by a war in the streets laid
the crumbled buildings
and I pictured myself
returning to San Francisco
destroyed beyond recognition

I imagined myself in the ruins
of San Francisco asking
as Venus spoke to the sky
did we really love?
And if I could ask the
piano player to play a song of yesteryear
the song would be you.

Lotte is old now
and mostly spent
Venus' time on earth
was borrowed

San Francisco is dying
glorious as a phoenix
and calling, as it did,
how could we refuse

We met in a decadent city
and danced in a decadent culture.
being strangers there ourselves
how could we refuse each other
singing their song Lotte and Venus
hoped for a gay warm day.
I hope for as much.

—Jesse

Flesh of My Flesh by Kenneth Dudley

If I ascend into the heavens,
I am there.
If I make my bed in hell,
Behold, I am there.

If I take the wings of the morning
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there shall my hand leadeth me,
And my right hand shall hold me.

If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me,
Even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from me;
But the night shineth as the day.

The darkness hideth not from me;
But the night shineth as the day.

The darkness and the light
Are both alike to me.

Violation of space and thought
Vile are the totalitarian consequences of the
Villany cloaked in intellectual objectivity

Subjugation of the black aesthetic
Putrification of the collective/contemporary mind
Putricide of me and my gift
Cadaveride is your gift to the progeny

Media demands are your legacy to uphold

Killer of truth, Bigger Thomas is your name
Killer of life beyond sickness
Killer of the collective seed

There is light beyond the closet door
Which the cripple and his white comrades
Fear more than the success of growth

Yes, you will grow old beyond thirty
But from the graceousness you will flee
A crippled whore in the Redlight District.



Frederic Prokosch is surely some kind of landmark on the historical American literary horizon.

His first novel, *The Asiatics*, was published to great acclaim in 1935. Since that time his career has climbed to dizzy heights, then plummeted into disfavor, and finally levelled off with serious if not massive interest and attention for his fiction. Now, forty years after that first novel his latest book is to be published, tentatively titled *Voices In The Night*. His literary reputation has been built on an output of 16 novels, four volumes of verses, and translations of Euripides, Holderlin (that lively German homophile), and an obscure 16th century French poet, Louise Labé.

Oddly, Prokosch isn't nearly so widely-read or well-known today after four decades of achievement as he was in the late '30s when he was catapulted into literary celebrity on the strength of two original novels and a book of poems.

Prokosch was born in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1906 of immigrant Austrian parents. He grew up there and in Texas and spent several years of his youth in Europe where he presently resides. His father was a respected university professor, linguist and author of standard language texts. Frederic Prokosch took degrees at Haverford College, Kings College, Cambridge, and his doctorate at Yale.

By nature a shy and intensely private person, he took up games at school and became expert at squash and tennis and consequently won championships in the 1930's and '40s in both sports. He is also a keen collector of butterflies and aside from V. Nabokov is probably the leading literary lepidopterist—which might account for the abundance of insect-murderers in his novels.

His career as a novelist began while he was teaching at Yale. (He later taught briefly at NYU.) He was immediately acclaimed as having invented "the geographic novel," an awkward term still associated with his name in reviews that tries to describe his type of picaresque novel, which is essentially plotless and filled with stunning evocations of mood, atmosphere and landscapes.

This combination worked well in *The Asiatics* and he followed it with a similar success in the second novel: *The Seven Who Fled*. The critics by and large liked his style and tone, and he won literary prizes. (A prominent exception among the critics was Mary McCarthy who wrote of this second book: "The characters...have so little personal identity, so little individual clearness of tone, that the novel in the end reduces itself to a catalogue of the author's sensations, the author's private confession.") In an important way, the style he developed in those early books, and the perimeters he demarcated for his talent, remained consistent through most of his subsequent work.

It was during the '40s that Prokosch's career began to falter. Some of this reversal in popularity and esteem can be attributed to his own artistic repetition, but some were also the result of the changing public tastes and attitudes brought on by the war. His close friend and literary agent, Victor Chapin, wrote: "I think what happened to Fritz as a writer was that his first two novels were great successes and then the quality fell off for some years. He kept repeating himself. Strangely, he had never been anywhere when he wrote those first two volumes about traveling in Asia. Then he began doing what he had always done in fantasy—travel. He didn't get back into a good stride until it was too late. The damage was done and the bubble had burst. Also, there are always tight little literary establishments and he's never been in one."

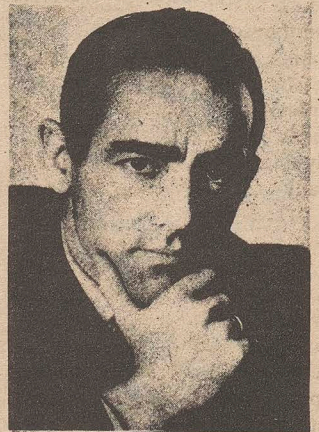
Prokosch continued to write and was published regularly during the war years: *The Skies of Europe* (1941), *The Conspirators* (1943), *Age of Thunder* (1945), *The Idols of the Cave* (1946). But by war's end, there was a whole new crop of bright-eyed, if war-weary, writers breaking through. They brought with them an unadorned naturalism, an intolerance for anything lacking social substance or comment; they had an obsession with American events, manners, lives and backgrounds, and most importantly, a sense of a New Beginning and an anticipation of Great Things To Come. Lasted to about 1950. These new writers left little room for the sensitive personalism of Frederic Prokosch with his often wispy and fragile manner. This new under-30 generation of writers of the immediate post-war years seized the attention of the mass audience, kicking up a cloud of literary dust in their dirty fatigues, old army belts and crusty combat boots. I pause here, however, to suggest that even though Prokosch's own career was eclipsed by this new crop of novelists, his voice to that time had been so distinctive that one can find its mark on the imagination of younger writers. It could be argued that its influence is visible to some degree in Merle Miller's *That Winter* and in Gore Vidal's *In A Yellow Wood* and *A Search for the King*.

For several reasons, the "naturalistic manner"—so characteristic of P.'s fictions—was once thought to be at the core of American fiction (rural or frontier settings, man vs. man vs. nature, etc.). And in his first two novels, Prokosch, though remaining in the mode of naturalism, seemed to be doing something new and magical with it. In his own way, he helped define, illustrate and expand this national manner. For example, he spends much of his imagination in affixing his narrative to geographical detail. Terrain, native flora and fauna, and regional climate are invariable essential parts of every Prokosch novel, and yet his naturalistic settings do not always correspond exactly with those which exist in our physical world. The emphasis, distortion, call it what you will, has come between subject and audience in an unforgettable way, and that's what an artist is all about.

Since Prokosch processes his landscapes through his imagination, the "naturalism" in his style, rather than having a deadening effect (which I've found is the usual impact in fiction) comes through with a luster that's both seductive and sometimes irritating. Prokosch can maintain a fine line between depicting the prosaic in Nature (and thereby presenting it as familiar) and transforming this familiarity into something magical, terrifying and inspiring. In *America, My Wilderness* (1972) Prokosch, though still utilizing geo-

40 YEARS OF Frederic Prokosch

by john mitzel



graphy in a vague way, loosens himself from specific map detail and hence his story, divorced from a duty to representative naturalism, seems to float above the material commitments so obvious in his previous work. (Pancho takes a subway ride through NYC in *America, My Wilderness* which is quite unlike any description of any train ride I've ever read before.)

In P.'s vision, the "naturalism" in his style isn't merely decorative or a cover for lack of imagination; it conveys quite directly the mood of the author's message. The world is often a truly fearful place, and just beneath every seemingly placid Prokoschian surface, there fester complex and inexplicable intrigues and betrayals. The world he envisions, sinister though they may be, is not materially bleak or bare—which one might argue is the puritan's intellectual distrust of lushness and sensuality. At minimum, it's bountiful in minerals, atmosphere, colorful vegetation. Lapis lazuli and obsidian invariably appear in novel after novel, and I think they are perfect symbols of a Prokosch landscape: imagine a vista of smooth, flat, reflective obsidian studded with chunks of sparkling lapis lazuli under a hot sun, the horizon broken by unidentifiable and quasi-menacing *things* moving about (anything from poltergeists to butterflies) and you'll have a crystalline and essential Prokosch panorama. He writes *through* a reliance on naturalism. His landscapes and environments are infused with a capacity for fearfulness and surprise, and leave one with an awareness of asymmetry in nature and in human affairs, like a painting by Giorgio De Chirico. Prokosch can also describe a lush yet only potential animation with far more implied than depicted, as in a canvas by Henri Rousseau. Prokosch can capture a stillness in mood that's the other side of the sinister, a lulling presence of staid predictability that one must constantly remind oneself is only a facade for the catastrophism which must come. Such is the seductive narrative skill of Frederic Prokosch that he can present "catastrophe" to appear as mere erosion of life or nature; the real horror of it all never sinks in 'till later.

Prokosch's prose conveys a tranquility even in the most dramatic or extreme circumstances. The survivors in *The Wreck of the Cassandra*, for example, are taken through the most awful of fates with a Teutonic iciness which is devoid of sympathy (but which is not a firm enough metaphor to extrapolate a political or philosophical argument). Their ship goes down, many die, the castaways meet death slowly and in odd and unpleasant fashions, and Prokosch lets us get no closer emotionally than as though his characters were smeared on a microscope's slide. People succumb one by one after great privation in *Nine Days to Mukalla*. A new emperor ruthlessly slaughters his family to gain the throne in *The Dark Dancer*, then his administration passes like a hot, sticky summer afternoon, he builds the Taj Mahal, and for all those years, nothing *appears* to have happened in the way of change.

Prokosch has a monochromatic pacing in his prose and an attitude which seems to be antipathetic to and positively *loathing* of any sensationalism. Consequently, there's the feeling of leveling in his books; nothing is presented as heightened and no one is celebrated. Whether this is a calculated position of disinterest (perhaps sprung out of a deep-seated misanthropy or cynicism), or whether it's a deliberate esthetic choice to avoid showiness in fiction I don't know. There are some writers who can infuse the stirring of a teacup with monumental significance and lingering repercussions; then there is a writer like Fritz Prokosch who can sink a ship, decimate a caravan, or describe torture and ritual murder without raising his voice or turning panicky. The ability to communicate the horror of it all—as in *A Tale for Midnight*—in a voice so unflinchingly unobtrusive is at the center of his captivating talents.

"After all, life is filth, life is cruelty, life is horror," asserts a survivor in *The Wreck of the Cassandra*, and it's an opinion you'll find commonly shared by many characters in other Prokosch novels. Despite the fact that all his fictions are well-populated, there's an aridity in the social life he depicts. I guess that's part of what I see as the hollowness in P.'s books; he's conscientious in his attention to materialistic detail, yet he appears slack when he sets his characters in relief against the significant settings. Sometimes, it's hard to believe they're more than just props. He regards them without empathy or derision. They rarely stir one to compassion. As a consequence, most of what we learn of his characters comes through their thoughts and descriptions of sensations which too often turn dull rather quickly. What we get is an impersonal, intermittent charting of each character's descent into Hell, though I hesitate to even introduce such a Christianity as the Here Below since Prokosch is definitely a starkly non-Christian and secular novelist. What mysticism he possesses is of a nature-worshipping kind, completely above board and non-institutional.

When characters meet death in Prokosch's novels, as many of them do—I don't think I can name any other author (outside of whodunit scribes) who is so accustomed to bumping off his personal—they all share a similar metaphysical transcendence. They sort of *slide* into oblivion. A group more accepting of death you're not likely to find this side of fanatical religious literature. There's nothing particularly morbid, grubby, horrible or shocking in Prokosch's accounts of death. His characters don't register physical agony, misery or anger at the stupidity of it all. It's inferred that they find some meaning in death, though exactly what this meaning may be is not shared with the readers; it smacks to me more of the author's bowing to the needs of his novelistic construction than honest exploration of our greatest individual and collective fear. Death's repeatedly described as a cold—and I imagine *bluish*—elevation from awareness of physical surroundings and the world of sensation which, though poetic, I find smarmy and annoyingly common after a while.

Frederic Prokosch has been acclaimed as an "international writer," transcontinental in scope, consciously developing classic themes of man against man and the quasi-erotic relation of man with the forces of nature. He himself has lived in the American midwest and south, along the east coast, in Austria, Portugal, France, Hong Kong and etc. He's never felt particularly tied to America, and any attempt to fit him into traditional "American schools" doesn't really work. In some ways, he's much more *grand* in imagination. And yet this appropriation of the world and all history as his turf cuts both ways. An American author of his lifespan seems to me to have been offered a richness without peer; this weird nation's incalculable greed as it spreads into an empire is too fertile a subject to pass by. Most of the time he did pass it by, and the freshness of his imaginative Asiatic voyages accounts for some of his immediate popularity. His most "American" novel did bring to bear his elliptical talents on our sprawling nation. *American, My Wilderness*, even if slightly too allegorical for my tastes, is wonderfully individual and imaginative tract which spins a web about the USA rather than skewering it. It's a kind of American *Candide* which, in its way, can rival Pynchon's *Crying of Lot 49* as an intelligent writer's guide to the New World (though I must confess that it helps a lot if you come to this novel after reading several of Prokosch's earlier books.).

Relevant to the "novel of geography" label which has been attached to him I'd just like to note my own delight in Prokosch's relishing of place names. They roll off his pen and must be intricately involved in conjuring up his images of places unseen. In *A Ballad of Love*, the youth Henry arrives in America to travel to his new home:

"I held my atlas in my lap as we raced through the interminable landscapes. I thought each state would be different, according to the colors on the map. Pennsylvania a sultry blue—a land of torrents and thunderstorms; Ohio a mossy green—a land of jungles and serpents; Indiana a flaming red—a terrible domain of man-hunters; and Missouri vast and golden, strewn with palms like the Sahara....My heart grew expectant as I read the names on the little railroad stations."

Such is the power of The World. But, alas, American reality, even literalist as it usually is, falls flat for this young imagination, his first betrayal. The magic evoked by place names is just another come-on of local boosterism like ludicrous Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

"There were no loons to be seen in Loon Lake, there were no temples in Sparta, there were no castles in Heidelberg. Nor did I see a single Indian as we passed Mohawk Junction, or even a trace of a poplar in Poplar Bluffs."

Industrial expansionist America was obviously and fraudulently mislabelled.

Behind Prokosch's "naturalism" there always lies a child-like sense of wonder and a seemingly personal and magical relation with the inanimate. Even the grubbiness of NYC in wartime is lifted from its diurnal dusty churning and is metamorphized in *The Idols of the Cave* into a spectacular dream-like panorama:

"New York was dimmed out, but on Broadway a haze of light still emerged from thousands of doorways....It was like a carnival scene, with a dazzling variety of gowns and uniforms passing through the unending stream of faces. And over it all hung the darkness of war, which gave them an air of anonymity, of masquerade. There were Dutch sailors, with black ribbons dangling from their caps; the French with their vermilion pompoms and sharp, clever features; the British with their tall caps and squat, plebian shapes; the Americans with their clinging blues and light, swaggering gait....The soldiers and sailors were rolling brightly, like pebbles, through the promiscuous tangle of civilians....Nothing here seemed surprising.

No one looked out of place. All taboos were abolished; all the barriers were obliterated. Every eccentricity of face, dress, desire had been flung into the onrush. A kind of hordelike fatalism pervaded the scene. It had the air of some vast Asiatic migration."

Sounds to me more like a Grand Promenade in Gay Town, USA, where all fantasies of expression can be actualized. This passage is representative of Prokosch at his finest, using details to touch dreams, when he's filled his prose with a lightly-disguised but potent eroticism.

Many of Prokosch's male protagonists suffer from what I call "The Sally Bowles Syndrome." They're physically attractive men (in a boyish sort of way cum student cum WASP) drawn in by brassy, exotic and eccentric females with theatrical pretensions: Stella in *A Ballad of Love*; Amaryllis in *America, My Wilderness*; Ivanova in *The Idols of the Cave*; Saskia in *The Skies of Europe*, etc. These are all *femme fatale* types characteristic of the gay imagination of a time and place and class. Now they're seen as a peculiarly dated variety of literary female, but they were significant in the literature of their era, when a lot of gay male authors were putting swishy, faggy characters in skirts and changing their sex.

In Prokosch's novels, the brassiness of these female characters is accented to perhaps make up for the general passivity and *tabula rasa* quality of the men, who are possessed of an unnerving and consistent hollowiness from book to book. As "characters" they're more mere presences in a series of scenes which are joined in a loose series of events which form his narratives. The men are more acted upon than acting, which is refreshing, and one finally comes to regard them more as devices than instrumental characters. Prokosch reveals what he has to say *through* them—and almost in spite of them—rather than *by* them. The excitement of Character is left to the women, rich elderly sodomites, titled eccentrics, etc., and it is these folks who give pizzazz to the texture of the fiction. It's obvious that among all the novelist's cards, Character—neck in neck with Plot—is Prokosch's weakest suit.

In fact, in many of P.'s novels he has no *central* character. He writes of the situations of *groups* of people, relying on no one of them as a lynch pin to the narrative. As Victor Chapin observes:

"He is terribly concerned with the dominant ideas that form and influence cultures—religions, philosophies—but he seems indifferent to daily events, to the ups and downs of ordinary politics. He appears not to think sociologically or psychologically, only philosophically, religiously, sensuously. In fiction, he never depicts character or portrays emotion."

Also characteristic of the men is that they spent their childhoods (like Peter in *The Seven Sisters*) bounced around to many homes, orphanages, on the road. Their personal histories are vague and insubstantial; no connections are made with ancestry or background which I find to be a trait

are purely imaginative. The plot of *The Seven Who Fleed* could be blown away with a sigh. When F.P. has historical people and accounts to begin with—the Cenci family in *A Tale for Midnight*, Shahjahan and Mumtaz Mahal in *The Dark Dancer*, Lord Byron in *The Missolonghi Manuscript*—he puts in a stronger performance since the historical character has left behind a chronology to work with. "Plot" in such a book is safely anchored in the recapitulation of events; the author's task is imaginative embellishment, i.e., descriptions of scenes, moods and conversations which are aspects of the novel in which Prokosch is strong. Also, I believe that gay male writers are less inclined by their nature to strive for snazzy convoluted plots that reviewers will call "a page-turner! Gripping!" Straight men feel the need for action; let them hack out their war books, spy thrillers, whodunits. Joseph Hanson is the only gay writer I know of who's made a name for himself in any of these fast-moving, plot-oriented genres. Gay novelists are more inclined to write reflective novels that deal with peoples' problems, stories whose strength is in the depiction of character and the complexities of personal relations, not in the gimmicky of plot. This schism is a manifestation of the difference between the artistic psyches of faggot and non-faggot writers, and though not universal, provides a handy thumbhold on discussing vagaries of talent.

In all candor, I'll have to admit that I'm not as enthusiastic about Frederic Prokosch's novels as are others of his readers. At his best, as in *A Tale for Midnight*, *The Dark Dancer* and *The Missolonghi Manuscript*, he's produced sophisticated, readable and highly intelligent books. Others of his novels, particularly the early ones (so highly acclaimed at the time of publication) tend to be wordy, imprecise narratives of elusive contents. Still, even having said this, I think Prokosch is a valuable writer and one who deserves more recognition than the current bosses in our state of letters deign to bestow. (The extent of criticism and comment on F.P.'s novels consists of casual reviews in bookchat columns, a couple of throwaway "essays" in popular magazines, a tedious book-length study by Radcliffe Squires in the Twayne Series of American writers that one reviewer of F.P.'s dismissed as "a nothing.")

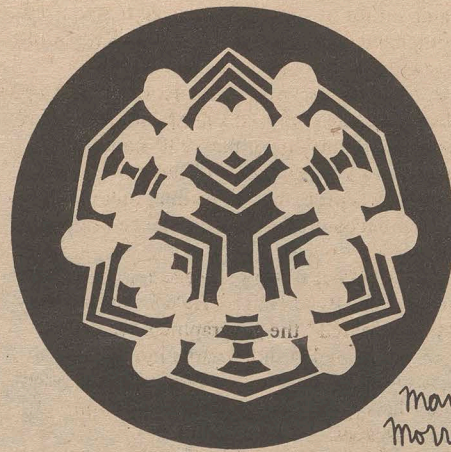
In addition, I think there's something significant in Prokosch's imagination that continues to illustrate a theme I've been developing in this and previous articles ("John Horne Burns: A Forgotten Faggot," *Fag Rag* 9) about the inspiration and character of art by gay males in our time. Perimeters of vision and sensibility *are* shared in faggotland. There are cues by which straights think they can "read" us; it's my position that, more likely, gay writers share strengths and know an integrity non-faggot writers can only see the at not possessing. And consequently, more often than not, imaginative faggot writers are blasted by the caretakers of bourgeois taste and manners for their distinctive and original talents.

Literary careers in America are always odd and meander-

I'm a strong advocate of writers being active and aggressive participants in the polity. That Fritz Prokosch has shaped his life otherwise is his business. Somewhere along the line, and for whatever reasons, Prokosch obviously made the choice *not* to be a spokesman on public events and *not* to be a polemicist, as he certainly could have become. Chapin put it this way:

"25 years ago, P. was the reincarnation of Byron himself, but even then he was remote and shy. Success came young and he did avoid the limelight but couldn't help being a figure that attracted attention. He's still an important literary personage in Europe but not here, alas."

Nevertheless, I'm impressed that in the 40 years since *The Asiatics* and the many books since then he's got a new novel in the works this year. His talents are still active; his imagination is still restless; America didn't succeed in destroying him or his career as it has so many of those who'd have been his peers today had this nation been different. Frederic Prokosch has survived and done rather well.



Mark Morris

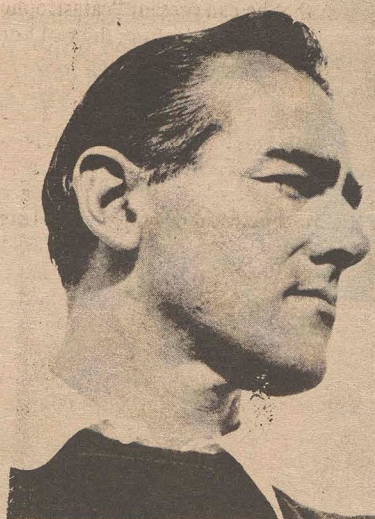
F. Prokosch: An Angry Response by Boom-Boom LaRue



Frederic
Prokosch

in the 1940's

& '50's



peculiarly both American and gay. As a result, his young men are subject to a pattern of insecurity, and they learn quite early in life to expect betrayal. They resign themselves without much resistance to deferring to the fragility of connections between people. Boys growing up in F.P.'s books quickly realize their fates function according to the fates of others; hence, these youths suffer constant uncertainty. It isn't that they never take action to change the course of their lives; they seem, however, to lack any profound curiosity about life and they don't ask "Why?" nearly enough.

I must say that there's a quality in some of P.'s work that reminds me of the infuriatingly circumspect "better-left-unspecified" attitude of Henry James, that grandest and daintiest of closet queans (in his life and esthetics). There's a world Prokosch leads us to believe exists behind that of appearances, but we're only allowed an oblique peek every once in a while, which is nothing but annoying provocation. Frankly, I want to know *how* Heinrich's father is killed in *A Ballad of Love*, and by whose hand Pancho's dad is done in in *America, My Wilderness*, and who stabs Milliquet in *Age of Thunder*. This H. James-like coyness of refraining from exploration and revelation is a serious artistic flaw weaved into fiction by some authors which I'm convinced is a manifestation of such writers' psychologies. This coyness aspires to awe and mystery; but to readers nowadays it is apt to come off as hi-church quean posturing and/or adolescent tumescent fearfulness. To be ostensibly creating worlds out of imagination and then leave glaring gaps in them is to deliberately trip up the reader and renege on one's commitment. Better we know too much than too little.

Plot is the most diminutive of Frederic Prokosch's talents. Most gossamer are the "plots" in those of his works which

ing phenomena. Endurance in anything in American life, especially an occupation demanding the public's attention, is problematical at best. To survive in the vicious world of letters is remarkable, since literary careers are mere commodities in the hands of indifferent publishers and editors, subject to the whims, fancies and shifts of fashion in this land where everything, it appears, is disposable. Fashion picked up and cast aside the career of Frederic Prokosch. Had we in these States a body comparable to the French Academy—ugh!—Prokosch would likely be in it. Lacking this kind of central and obstructing national cultural institution for writers, we suffer the reverse of institutionalization. Our scribes tend to follow independent and highly divergent paths. Sadly, they're not often found at the front of the society they should be addressing. Some opt for the temptation of writing Big Lavish Money-Making Books; some drift to the outer edges of our culture and only send back bulletins; others turn recluse and withdraw. This last is the route chosen by Fritz Prokosch. And so he resides in the south of France, quietly plays bridge every day at a club, and tends to his butterflies.

"He is a true poet and the most charming and generous of friends. He is still at 67 extremely handsome and his romantic aura is still there but he has become a recluse,"

writes Victor Chapin. And later:

"He does live like a hermit, though a comfortable one. His house is quite isolated, though elegant and charming, with a view of a small valley with a hill rising beyond and out the back you can see Grasse in the distance, rising on its hill. At night the lights of the town sparkle."

Isn't this Mitzel something!

He sure goes after the lookers! In *Fag Rag* 7&8 it was Gore Vidal (did he blow him?); then in *Fag Rag* 9—that tome churned out with *Gay Sunshine*—he took on John Horne Burns and even wrote a book about *that* number. He probably would have jumped in bed with this trick if the latter weren't dead! And now it's Frederic Prokosch, another raving beauty. We should commend him his tastes in novelists! I'm sure I'll never be a successful contemporary fiction writer; I haven't got the looks, just this frazzled, bleached-out hair, plucked eyebrows, broken nose and short neck. Well, such are the breaks of Literature!

I'd never heard of this fish Prokosch until Mitzel started talking him up at *Fag Rag* meetings. So, I sauntered down to the trusty Boston Public Library in Copley Square—fabulous cruising in the tearoom, so wild in fact that the hunky Tactical Police Force has to teargas the queans and numbers in the stalls in order to drive them out, according to the quean who reads the "news" on WBCN—and I took out some of Mr. Prokosch's lovely books. Mary! All those words! And no pictures! On Mitzel's recommendation, I even went to the trouble of reading some of his poetry that had been printed in magazines in the late 1930s (before I was born). I liked it, even though a lot of you queans who wrote and/or read the stuff in *Fag Rag* 10 would probably dismiss it as "formalistic" and "academic."

If what Mitzel wrote above doesn't make any sense for you, just listen to me: I recommend that one novel on Byron—another nice number!—*The Missolonghi Manuscript*, and the lovely *Ballad of Love*. Also, maybe *A Tale of Midnight* for you Vincent Price-type queans. And if you get tired of reading all these pages, you can just prop yourself up on your tufted bolsters and stare at the dustjacket photo of the author. "Dear Mr. Gable..."



Mark Morris

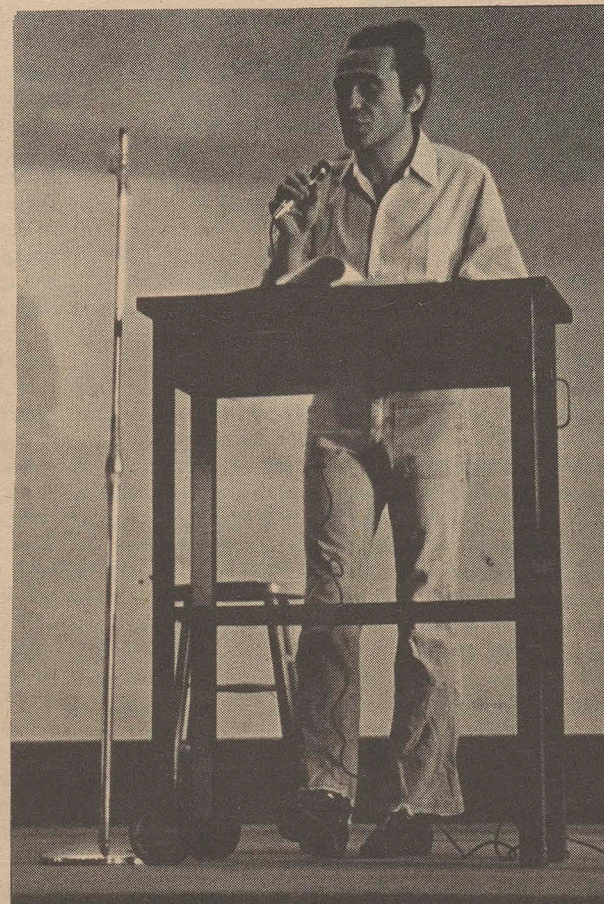
GOOD GAY POETS

The Good Gay Poets series of readings began on April 7, 1973 with a Tribute to Prescott Townsend; we showed Andy Meyer's *An Early Clue to the New Direction* which starred Prescott (See *Fag Rag* 5). Since then the following poets have been scheduled by The Good Gay Poets:

JOHN WIENERS
JOHN LAPORTA
MARY DAMON
ALLISON MITCHELL
DAVID EBERLY
ED CATES
CHARLES RIVER
AARON SHURIN
SAL FARINELLA
CHRISTOPHER MICHAELS
MICHAEL LALLY
TERENCE WINCH
ED COX
JOHN WILLIAMS
DARIUS DAPPLETREE
GERI BIDWELL
JANET COOPER
MARC SPIEGEL
JOSEPH CANARELLI
TONY ROBERTS
CHARLEY SHIVELY
LYLE GUYER
LOUIS LANDERSON
JONATHAN WILLIAMS
THOMAS MEYER
WILLIAM BURROUGHS
JOHN GIORNO
ELLEN DAVIS
DICK HIGGINS
PAULA BENNETT
PAUL MARIAH
CHRIS ROBINSON
EMILIO CUBIERO
GERARD MALAGNA
FREDDIE GREENFIELD
DAVID EMERSON SMITH
BUNNY LA RUE
SYLVIA SYDNEY



Wm.
burroughs



john giorno

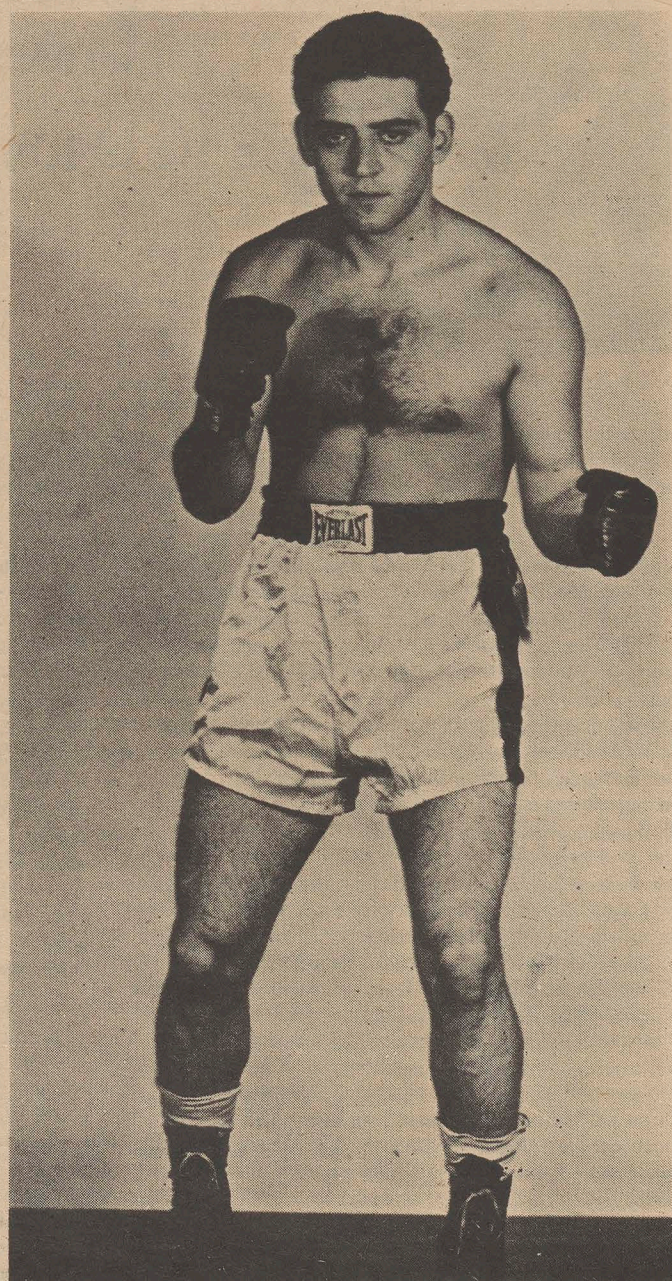
The Good Gay Poets Press has published a broadside: *Exorcism of the Straight/Man/Demon* (which anyone can get free—include 25 cents for postage & envelope). John Wieners' *Playboy* is temporarily out of print. Salvatore Farinella's *Orange Telephone* and Charley Shively's *Nuestra Senora de los Dolores* are available together for \$2.50. John Wieners' *Behind the State Capitol or The Cincinnati Pike* is now in press and should be ready for Gay Pride Week, 1975.

Freddie Greenfield

STARKE IN FLORIDA

RAIFORD EYE BROW LOVE PLUCKED TRADE OF
AFFAIRS GALORE HUNGRY COCKS OF TATTOOED
TOYS/DIPPED WICKS FIERY TIPS DRIP
PRISON TEARS AS I SQUEEZE A JIGGLY GIGGLE
NECK BITING YOUR SUCK BLOOMS MY
JOY BUN\$ YOU EN-TRANCE MY MUSCULAR
SIDE AS I SUBDUE YOUR HEAVENLY FEARS
YOU WOW WHISPERED NOW AND WAIT
BY MY CELL AS I BY THE FLOOR
BLANKET SPREAD OF MY LEGS CATCH
YOUR MOAN AND I DREAM MOUTHS
TO YOUR FRANTIC TIME WHEN I FEEL
RIVERS OF RHYTHM IN YOUR THROAT!!!

WINGED PRISON TEAR NIBBLING SOFT
EAR SCREAM FORE SCORE AND THE SKIN
GO GLAD GLADES ON THEE EVER BRASS
WRANG TANG GAS THE MASK GUARD ON
HIS RUBBER SOUL TALCUM POWDER EATS
ME EYE SCREAM OH KEY FOR NO KEY
SWAMPS THE WATER SNEAK ITCHY TIT
MY MISQUITO SPIT TORE MATE OH
W/SQUASH THORNS SHELLING PECANS
HE TRANSFERED TO THE KITTY CHIN
SITTING ON HIS RED RASH TALKING
DOG BOY GROWL BARK OF SOBER DRUNKS
AS ME AND A LOVER DANCED THE ENGRAM



The Fabulous Mr. Sylvia Sidney

FLOURISH

for Sylvia's Poetic Debut

by Boom-Boom LaRue



photo by James Griffith

A Bigger Quean You've Never Seen
nor likely ever will

This '40's doll's r sum  reveals more wet dreams than Rita
Hayworth's *Gilda*
(Can't get much of nothing going with California pulling on my mind;
that wasteless '60's coastal onanism--so unlike Sylvia.)

He's Beantown bred & fed
A stickball hero to his ageless classmates at Boston Trade
where he learned a Vocation between bells still utilized today.

She dated these myriad sons and daughters
swallowed the best seed of her generation!

Sylvia and Mr. State have always been at loggerheads:
Arrests for green hair, brazen jailhouse trysts,
even upstaging Madame Liberace in Florida gigs. ("This dump
is nothing but a fruit stand done over.")

Yes.
I've known every speck of dirt
on this incredulous atomic-age phenomenon.

She taught Jackie the fox-trot.

In her TV debut, she shattered Ella Fitzgerald
such is the stuff of musical Irish black ladies.

I'd call her sui generis were it not for the ladies present
Hence:
Sylvia's the human equivalent of neologism, totally yrs.

Though he never boasts on it, Sylvia remembers every trick he's turned
1,246--even leading Charlotte!

Measured in foots and/or banknotes, she's got another league to go,
nearing heaven,
I'd promised I'd never tell, but Syl was born in '37!

To this monument whose cultural criticism begins *a priori* with
the wisdom that true elegance begins with remaining dressed...

Ladies & Gents, Studs & Queans, Here She Is
Direct from the shower, Dripping Wet, Baby-Powder Fresh
The Fabulous Sylvia Sidney--Live!--On Stage!--
And In The Flesh!

OUR CHANGING TIMES

by Sylvia Sidney

I went into the city the other day
in hopes of finding someone gay
Closet Queens were all to be seen
much too tired for this Nellie Queen

After cruising the main street from end to end
I was unable to find that desired gay friend
Into a bar I stumbled by chance
I knew it was a lost cause after taking one glance

Drunks and beggars were all I could find
enough to make any queen go out of her mind.
Where have all the fags gone, I cried with dismay
Am I the only one left who is gay?

Then I was told the very sad truth,
of what had happened to our gay youth.
A retired Queen told me in a feeble yell
that the country's morals have gone to hell.

Everyone was tired of being himself
So they went to the doctor to get some help.
Boxes to baskets, and such was the theme,
Now each one has filled his big life's dream.

Boys are now girls and girls are now boys
And each couple plays with the proper toys.
Don't let it bother you, I was told with a smile
You will get used to it after a while.

No! No! Never, I said with a groan,
A few minutes later I was safe in my home.
How could they do it, I don't understand,
I stood there wondering with my peter in my hand.

They won't get me, most definitely not,
Imagine my peter being a twat,
Many strange things this country has seen
But it hasn't seen the last of this Nellie Queen!

Dick Higgins

Lovers
by dick higgins

nguyen had a cock
it will never be used
john had a cock
it will never be used

deadtime
wartime

is that what cocks are for?

new canaan
november 20th, 1974



The Sensual Drug-Users of the Middle Ages

So far in this series, we have found that the people called "witches" in the Middle Ages were really members of a pre-Christian religion that existed in Europe as far back as the Stone Age. The members of this Old Religion gladly embraced and practiced all forms of sexuality (including Gayness, both female and male). The Old Religion was a sex-and-nature religion, and its major rites consisted of sacred orgies performed in the countryside at night.

We have seen that there were two chief deities of the Old Religion. The first and most important was a great-mother goddess, who was variously known as Holda, Hulla, Berchta, or Diana. She was the mistress of agriculture, animals, and sexuality. The second was the Horned God, called Cernunnos, Pan, Dionysus, the Minotaur, or Sabazios. He was associated with animals and particularly with male sexuality, including male Gayness. He later became the prototype in the Christian religion for the concept of the Devil.

We discovered that the Old Religion first developed in a matriarchal society. It was a society that could be characterized as pro-sexual, rural, nature-oriented, anti-authoritarian, and non-bookish. In having these traits, it contrasted sharply with the new religion, Christianity, which developed in the bowels of the Roman patriarchy. The new religion was anti-sexual, urban, institutional, authoritarian, and bookish.

In this present article, I will outline four major additional features of the Old Religion. At first sight, some of these features will seem to have little to do with either sex or the Old Religion's attitude toward sex. I have included them because of my basic assumption in writing this entire study: that any society's attitude toward sex is only an inter-connected part of its overall lifestyle.

As we explore the major features of the Old Religion and the society that created it, we will begin to see how all these features (including its love of sex) held together as a whole. Once we clearly see this linkage, we will then understand how a hatred of sex is crucial to both Christianity and industrialism as systems.

The first feature of the Old Religion I wish to call attention to is its general attitude toward the body. Among the ancient Celts, nudity was never regarded as shameful. On the contrary, the nude body was so highly respected that it was thought to be a source of religious power. It was for this reason that Celtic warriors often appeared in battle entirely nude except for a gold torque around their necks. The famous figure called the Dying Gaul in the Museum of the Capitol at Rome wears nothing but such a torque. The Celtic scholar Nora Chadwick observes that this nudity is connected with ancient Celtic religion: "In warfare, as in so many other aspects of Celtic life, there appear to have been supernatural overtones, as is suggested by the *gaesatae* who fought naked in obedience to an archaic ritual tradition

which apparently taught that nudity afforded some supernatural protection" (Nora Chadwick, *The Celts*, Baltimore, 1970, p. 134).

The Celtic attitude is understandable in light of what we have already found out in past articles about the religious rites of the Old Religion. In these rites, the body and especially the genitals were regarded as having religious power. The most important rite was an orgy, which obviously entailed a common nudity by the participants. In addition, the chief deities of the Old Religion were often depicted as nude. The chief male deity was usually shown with an erect cock (as in the so-called Cerne Giant, a huge "obscene" Stone-Age depiction that can be seen in the English countryside to this day). The Horned God, associated by the Christians with the Devil, has always been connected with human sexual organs.

Small lead amulets that were used in the Old Religion during the Middle Ages have survived down to modern times. They openly depict human genitals, both male and female. They continued to be used as good-luck charms in Europe long after Christianity became the official religion. Sexual figurines were used in this way in Naples, for example, until well into the 18th century (see the first-hand account by William Hamilton, reproduced in *Sexual Symbolism, A History of Phallic Worship*, N.Y., 1957, pp. 13-24).

Christianity taught contempt for the body as eagerly as it had taught hatred for sex. In the Old Testament, the fall into sin by Adam and Eve is associated with shame over being nude: "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loin-cloths for themselves" (*New American Bible, Genesis, 3:7*). When the god Yahweh appears in the Garden of Eden, Adam hides and gives as his reason shame over nakedness: "I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself" (*Genesis, 3:10*).

The New Testament is just as prudish. Several statements of Jesus the Nazarene have historically encouraged Christians to think that castration is a sign of moral perfection. An example is in *Matthew*, where he says: "What I say to you is: anyone who looks lustfully at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his thoughts. If your right eye is your trouble, gouge it out and throw it away! Better to lose part of your body than to have it all cast into Gehenna" (*Matthew, 5:28-29*).

In the third century, Origen, a famous Church father, castrated himself after converting to Christianity. He didn't want to be subjected any longer to sexual temptations.

In the early Middle Ages, Christians were very up-tight about nudity. Some even refused to take a bath because they would have to undress to do so. Various books on the

lives of the early saints contain examples of Christians who bragged that they had never taken a bath all their lives (for a discussion of this morbidity, see Jules Michelet, *Satanism and Witchcraft*, N.Y., pp. 77 ff.). The inevitable result was widespread disease, particularly widespread skin disease due to personal filthiness, which constantly plagued the Middle Ages.

A striking testimony to their attitude toward the body is Christian art work. In the Christian art of the Middle Ages, the genitals are almost never shown. Human bodies are usually depicted as emaciated and very un-sensual. A favorite motif is to show the body as tortured or mutilated (under the guise of depicting the persecution of early Christian martyrs). The major emblem of medieval Christianity—the agonized body of Jesus the Nazarene nailed to a cross—sums up the whole Christian mentality: mortify the body for the sake of the soul.

Later in the Renaissance, Christian artists did begin to show a positive attitude toward the body. But the underlying cause was the revival of the pagan Greek esthetic; it had nothing to do with Christianity *per se*. Certain Christian groups finally reacted violently against this pagan revival, leaving as their legacy the artistic sterility of modern Protestantism.

The Christian contempt for the body prevails today in all the world's most highly industrialized countries. If one were to walk nude into a school, factory, or office in a large urban area of America, Russia, or China, the predictable result would be the same everywhere: shock, embarrassed laughter, perhaps even fainting. Soon the police would be summoned, and the offending body would find itself either in jail or in a mental institution (depending on the country in question).

We have all been carefully taught since childhood never to have our genitals uncovered and to feel shame if they are. To the members of the Old Religion, a law requiring people to hide their genitals would be as absurd as a law requiring people to keep their elbows covered. What we accept as a mark of "civilized" sanity would have been rejected by the pre-Roman, pre-Christian inhabitants of Europe as a sign of madness.

A second feature of the Old Religion, akin to what we're discussing, is its love of hairyness. Celtic warriors, both male and female, took great pride in having long flowing hair. Ancient Celtic stories and poems frequently mention with praise the beautiful long hair of both men and women.

Celtic hairyness was also noted by Roman commentators, especially in relation to women. Tacitus, for example, makes a reference to the hair of Celtic women in the battle of Anglesey: "...between the ranks dashed women in black attire like the Furies, with hair dishevelled, waving brands" (Quoted by Anne Ross, *Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts*, N.Y., 1970, p. 145). In a similar vein, Dio Cassius says of Boudicca, Queen of a Celtic tribe in Britain in the first century A.D.: "She was huge of frame, terrifying of aspect, and with a harsh voice. A great mass of bright red hair fell to her knees" (Quoted by Nora Chadwick, *The Celts*, p. 50).

Among the ancient Germans, Holle (a variant of the great-mother goddess) was particularly associated with long hair. Her association with hairyness has given rise to a German expression for a man who has long, unkempt hair: *Er is mit der Holle gefahren*, meaning, "He's been traveling with Holle" (See Jacob Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, Vol. I, Darmstadt, 4th ed., p. 223).

Witches often made a point of growing long hair. Christians were aware of this. In some parts of Europe, the first thing Christians did when they arrested a witch was to shave all his or her hair, including pubic hair.

Medieval Christians associated long hair with the Devil (their name for the Horned God of the witches). William of Auvergne, the 13th-century philosopher and Bishop of Paris, claims that this connection between devils and hairyness is responsible for requiring women to veil their heads in church: "The Christian rule that women must veil their heads comes from this, for the beauty of their hair strongly excites the lust of incubi" (Quoted by Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters, eds., *Witchcraft in Europe, 1100-1700*, 1972, p. 152).

Hairyness has been popularly associated with witchcraft down to the 20th century. In the Lancaster-York area of Pennsylvania, for example, the German-speaking "Pennsylvania Dutch" (who are of German, not Dutch extraction) still retain many medieval beliefs about witches. A local Pennsylvanian who has collected many of these beliefs notes that traditions in the area associate hairyness with witchcraft (A. Monroe Aurand, Jr., *Witches in Our Hair*, Harrisburg).

The Christian religion has traditionally been suspicious of long hair, even though Jesus the Nazarene is often depicted as having it. Paul of Tarsus, the founder of Christian theology, thought long hair was acceptable for women, but unnatural for men: "Does not nature itself teach you that it is dishonorable for a man to wear his hair long, while the long hair of a woman is her glory?" (*I Corinthians, 11:14*). Even though Paul allowed women to have long hair, he insisted, like later Christians, that women cover over their hair in church: "...any woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered brings shame upon her head. It is as if she had had her head shaved. Indeed, if a woman will not wear a veil, she ought to cut off her hair" (*I Corinthians, 11:5-6*).

In the Middle Ages, the highest form of piety among Christians was to enter a monastery or a convent. When women entered a convent, they usually shaved off all their hair.

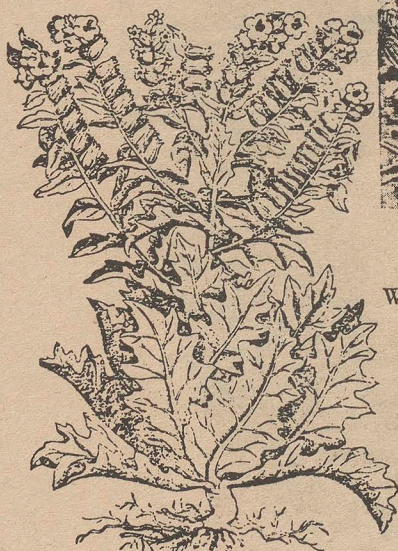


Deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*)



"Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble."

Witches at work, by Hans Baldung Grün.



Henbane (*Hyoscyamus*)



Mandrake (*Mandragora*)



Thorn apple (*Datura*)

Part IV. Witchcraft: The Gay Counterculture

When men entered a monastery, their hair was usually kept short and the hair immediately around the crown was shaved off (a process called tonsuring). Among medieval Christians, short hair was thus a sign of great religiosity, whereas the exact opposite was true in the Old Religion.

In all the great industrialized nations of the modern world, the tradition of hostility to long hair persists. This is not a mere fad. It is deeply related to the corporate life-style of modern industrialism. As Charles Reich has correctly argued in *The Greening of America* (New York, 1971), the wearing of short, neatly cut hair is a way of keeping the body from being present to the senses. It removes from one's bodily aura all suggestions of funkiness and rough edges. It is now, as it has always been throughout the history of its use in armies, churches, schools, and prisons, a sign of conformity and submission to established institutional authority. Hence it's quite appropriate that the rebellious members of today's counter-culture almost instinctively began to wear long hair as an act of defiance. And it's appropriate that the famous rock-opera which celebrated (and eventually, alas, economically exploited) that defiance was known by the name of *Hair*.

A third significant feature of the Old Religion was its use of hallucinogenic drugs. Throughout the history of witchcraft, references are made to drug-taking. An early example is the 12th-century ecclesiastic Walter Map, who says he knows of certain heretics who serve innocent people a "magical food" that affects their minds (mentioned by Jeffrey Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*, Ithaca, 1972, p. 131). In the 16th century, Johann Weyer, a physician who opposed the oppression of witches, wrote a book called *De Praestigiis Daemonum*. In it, he states: "The experiences of witches are delirious dreams induced by drugs wherewith they confer their ointments" (Quoted by Henry Lea, *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft*, Vol. II, N.Y., 1957, p. 505). Weyer identified several of the substances used in the witches' so-called flying ointment; among other ingredients, they contained hemlock, belladonna, and hyoscyamus.

The anthropologist Margaret Murray was the first modern scholar to suggest that these ingredients might be hallucinogenic. In her book, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (Oxford paperback, first published in 1921), she pointed out that witches often reported visions of flying after rubbing their skins with an ointment made of these and similar substances. In an appendix to the *Witch-Cult*, the scientist A. J. Clark summarizes the known physiological effects caused by these substances: irregular action of the heart, dizziness, sensations of being off one's feet.

Murray's suspicions have recently been confirmed by another anthropologist, Michael J. Harner. In a fascinating new book called *Hallucinogens and Shamanism* (Oxford, 1973), Harner has collected a series of essays by different authors on the use of hallucinogenic drugs in various societies. In an essay of his own entitled "The Role of Hallucinogenic Plants in European Witchcraft," Harner concludes that the plants used in the witches' ointments are members of the order *solanaceae*. The most frequently mentioned by the records are mandrake (*mandragora*), henbane (*hyoscyamus*), and belladonna (*atropa belladonna*) (Harner, p. 128). He notes that "each of these plants contains varying quantities of atropine and the other closely related tropane alkaloids hyoscyamine and scopolamine, all of which have hallucinogenic effects" (p. 128). Significantly, he adds, "one outstanding feature of atropine is that it is absorbable even by the intact skin" (*loc. cit.*). Harner notes that these and similar ingredients have been used for hallucinogenic purposes among non-industrialized societies throughout history.

Harner's findings are extremely important for several reasons. First, they conclusively disprove the theory that medieval witches were merely figments in the minds of Christian inquisitors. If the Inquisition invented witchcraft, how could it have hit upon the very ingredients that are used as hallucinogens throughout non-industrial societies? Especially since the Inquisition itself didn't understand the significance of these ingredients at the time. Secondly, Harner's findings explain many of the "strange" features of the witches' confessions: flying through the air at night, changing into animals, raising up storms, etc. The witches got "high," all right, but not in the way their inquisitors understood. They were tripping, and tripping was an important part of their religious experience.

The witches' use of hallucinogens also explains a common confusion found in the minds of many modern commentators on witchcraft. This confusion is caused by a shift in the way the medieval church looked at witchcraft. Christian documents of the early Middle Ages present what has been called a dream-theory of witchcraft. In the dream-theory, the confessions of witches are put down as the illusions or evil dreams of ignorant people. In the late Middle Ages, on the other hand, witches are accused of worshipping the Devil, no illusion about it. Modern commentators get confused by this shift in opinion from the early to the late Middle Ages and conclude (wrongly) that the whole of witchcraft was nothing but an illusion. What really happened, of course, was that the witches were very real all along. The thing that changed was that the Horned God of the witches became assimilated by Christians to the idea of the Devil. From that point on, witches were no longer people with dreams, to be pitied. There were

pitied. They were heretics to be stamped out.

The role of hallucinogens in the witches' religion is inter-

esting in view of what we know about the ancient worship of Dionysus (the Horned God, as he appeared in the Greco-Roman world). Besides being associated with sex and animals, Dionysus was also the god of drunkenness.

Wine in pre-classical Greece was viewed as a religious hallucinogen. It gave the participants in the sacred orgies visions very similar to those reported in the Middle Ages by witches. The ancients viewed wine as a mysterious power distilled from the life-forces of plants (which, of course, it is).

That Dionysus was linked with mysterious vegetative powers is reflected in the epithets the Greeks conferred on him: *Endendros* ("The Power in the Tree"), *Anthios* ("The Blossom-Bringer"), and *Karpios* ("The Fruit-Bringer") (See E.R. Dodds, *Euripides' Bacchae*, Oxford, 1960, p. xii). Dionysus was worshipped in the mountains at night with wild dancing and sexual orgies. By drinking wine, his worshippers became *entheos*, "filled with the god" (literally drunk with divinity).

The Old Religion's attitude toward hallucinogens contrasts sharply with that of Christianity. The various major sects of the Christian religion have never allowed hallucinogenic visions or drunken orgies in their religious rites. On the contrary, devout Christians cannot imagine anything further removed from religion than such practices. Even today, it's hard for Christians to understand that vast numbers of cultures have existed (all of them non-industrial) in which the essence of divine inspiration was thought to exist precisely in such practices.

In addition, the Christian religion (and in particular Protestantism) has generally tried to repress the use of hallucinogens even in the private life of its members. In fact, Christians often try to go beyond that and to stop anyone, whether Christian or not, from using hallucinogens. In the United States, it was primarily groups of organized Christians that passed the prohibition amendment against the use of alcohol and that today resist efforts to liberalize the nation's anti-drug laws.

The Christian fear of hallucinogens has been carried on by all the world's highly industrialized nations. In modern America, Russia, and China, the mere possession of hallucinogens is a crime, let alone their open use in group religious rites. This entrenched puritanical attitude has generated widespread addiction to either drugs or alcohol in vast numbers of the population of industrialized countries. Since hallucinogenic experiences are illegal, people who want to have them must act outside the law and social approval. As a result, they get entangled in personal guilt trips and become vulnerable to legal harassment. They become choice

targets for black-marketing criminal syndicates, who seek to unload, by any means possible, the greatest amount of drugs at the highest possible cost. In the culture of the Old Religion, healthy, socially approved channels existed for using hallucinogens. Forms of drug-taking were celebrated as part of the natural order of things. There was just no incentive for people to become secretly obsessed with drugs, and there was no economic incentive for hard-sell black-marketers. Just as sexual puritanism is the historical cause of sexism, so drug puritanism is the historical cause of addiction.

A fourth notable feature of the Old Religion was its attitude toward non-human animals. Both major deities of the witches—the great mother and the Horned God—were closely associated with animals. The former was the mistress and protector of animals. She was called "Diana" by the Christians because of her similarity to the Greco-Latin goddess of the same name. Diana "recalls the Cretan 'Lady of the Wild Things,' apparently the supreme Nymph-goddess of archaic totem societies" (Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, Vol. I, Baltimore, 1955, p. 83, note 1). Even during the Roman patriarchy, when the ancient nature deities became little more than literary figures in the writings of the poets, Diana remained associated with animals, as in the famous statue of Diana of the Chase.

The Horned God was even more obviously connected with animals. Aside from his horns, cleft hooves, and furry legs, he was connected with animals by his worshippers, who dressed in animal skins during the rites of the Old Religion.

The practice of ritual animal masquerades was so common during the early Middle Ages that clerics went to the trouble of prescribing the amount of penance to be done by Christians who engaged in the practice. The best example is the *Liber Poenitentialis* Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury (7th century): "If anyone at the kalends of January goes about as a stag or a bull; that is making himself into a wild animal and dressing in the skin of a herd animal, and putting on the head of beasts; those who in such wise transform themselves into the appearance of a wild animal, penance for three years because this is devilish" (Quoted by Montague Summers, *The History of Witchcraft*, Secaucus, N.J., 1956, p. 134).

Throughout the Christian Era, the confessions of witches, the transcripts of trials, and popular writings show that certain male members of the witch cult, dressed in animal skins (later in black leather), had ritual sex with other witches at the sabbat. Margaret Murray gives several pages of documentation for this phenomenon in her book *The Witch-Cult* (pp. 61 ff.). She shows that the most common animal masquer-

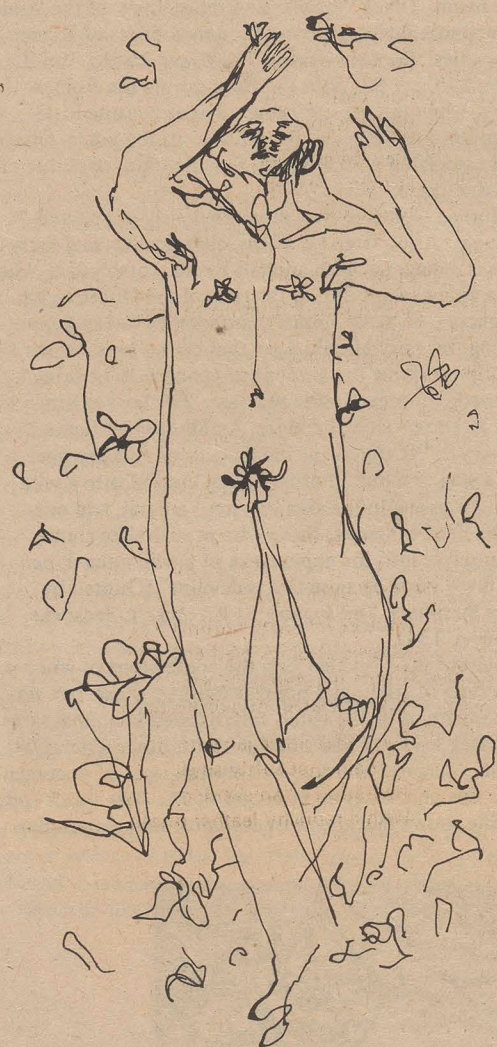


The witches' sabbat on the Brocken. From the Douce Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

ades were those of bull, cat, dog, horse, and sheep. Typical of this whole tradition in witchcraft is the statement of the Irish witch Dame Alice Kyteler that "the Devil", whom she called Robin Artisson, appeared to her at times as a cat, at times as a black dog, and had sex with her (Montague Summers, *The Geography of Witchcraft*, Secaucus, N.J., 1965, p. 86).

Particularly in English witchcraft, witches were traditionally associated with "familiar." These were pet animals that witches were said to keep in their houses (such as the famous black cat). The witches were often accused of being able to communicate with these animals and to use them for magical purposes. The witches themselves often claimed that they could change themselves and others into animals—an interesting statement in view of what has been said above about hallucinogenic drugs.

It would be a serious mistake to dismiss these stories about animals and animal shape-shifting as the trumped-up fantasies of the Christian oppressors of witches. Caro Baroja has correctly noted that "there is documentary evidence of the existence over a period of centuries [original's italics] of the belief that certain women (not necessarily always old ones) could change themselves and others at will into animals in classical times" (Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*, 1961, p. 39).



Concerning the interest of the ancient Celts in animals, Anne Ross states that the Horned God, "one of the best attested of their god-types," was worshipped as the Lord of Animals (Anne Ross, *Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts*, p. 162). Jeffrey Russell reaches similar conclusions about the ancient residents of Iceland: "The Icelandic sagas, which in many respects preserve ancient Teutonic traditions, speaks of shape-shifting and of riding out a night on beasts, on roofs, or even (in *Burnt Njal*) on brooms" (Russell, p. 49, note).

The same tradition occurs as late as the 17th century in America. In 1662 in Hartford, Connecticut, a certain Mrs. Greensmith said that the Devil first appeared to her in the shape of a deer or fawn and "that the Devil had frequently the carnal knowledge of her body and that the witches had meetings at a place not far from her house; and that some appeared in one shape, and others in another" (Quoted by George Lincoln Burr, *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648-1706*, N.Y., 1914, p. 20).

We know from anthropology that a sense of personal identification with animals can be found among almost all non-industrialized people. An excellent example pertaining to the American Indians can be found in Carlos Castaneda's book *The Teachings of Don Juan* (N.Y., 1968). The book recounts the personal experiences of an anthropologist with a sorcerer of the Yaqui Indians. The sorcerer, Don Juan, speaks with the animals, identifies with them, and, under the influence of peyote, becomes one.

The anthropologist-author smokes a hallucinogen under Don Juan's guidance. He has the experience of turning into a crow, even seeing things through a different kind of visual apparatus: "Then he told me my body had vanished completely and all I had was my head; he said the head never disappears because the head is what turns into a crow....I had the perception of growing bird's legs, which were weak and wobbly at first. I felt a tail coming out of the back of my neck and wings out of my cheekbones. The wings folded deeply. I felt them coming out by degrees. The process was hard but not painful. Then I winked my head down to the size of a crow. But the most astonishing effect was accomplished with my eyes. My bird's sight!" (Castaneda, pp. 172-173).

If we now go back in time 18 centuries, we can find a

very similar experience described in Apuleius' book, *The Golden Ass*, a Roman novel about witchcraft in ancient Thessaly. The hero of the novel sneaks into the room of Pamphile, a witch, and observes the following:

"...first I saw how Pamphile put off all her garments, and took out of a certain coffer sundry kind of boxes, of which she opened one and tempered the ointment therein with her fingers, and then rubbed her body therewith from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head: and when she had spoken much privately with the lamp, she shook all the parts of her body, and as they gently moved behold I perceived a plume of feathers did burgeon out upon them, strong wings did grow, her nose was more crooked and hard, her nails turned into claws, and so Pamphile became an owl: then she cried and screeched like a bird of that kind, and willing to prove her force, moved herself from the ground by little and little, till at last she leaped up and flew quite away. Thus by her sorcery she transformed her body into what shape she would." (*The Golden Ass*, Book III, pp. 21-22).

Of course, *The Golden Ass* is a work of fiction, but it does reflect contemporary beliefs about the practices and powers of witches.

I have stressed the Old Religion's attitude toward animals because it represents a very basic and crucially important difference between the values of non-industrialized societies and those of both Christianity and modern industrialism.

In the Old Religion, human animals are not viewed as being in any way superior to non-human animals. The witches, and the Celts before them, believed that all living things possess a certain mystique or power. Many animals were thought to have capacities far in excess of anything possessed by humans and were accordingly worshipped as manifestations of divine power. The witches believed that there was a community of feeling throughout the whole of nature and that under the right conditions one species could actually feel the experience of another.

The Christian religion has always taught contempt for animals. Christians believe that a sharp distinction exists between human and non-human animals and that all non-human animals are inferior to humans. In the Old Testament, Adam is the only living being made in the image of God. The first humans are even commanded to rule over the other animals: "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth" (*Genesis*, 1:28). In the story of the fall of Adam and Eve, the evil cause is attributed to an animal, "the serpent" (*Genesis*, 3).

In the New Testament, animals are ignored as unworthy of salvation. The world is soon to come to an end with everything in it. Only humans will escape, and among humans only those who are devout Christians.

The early Church fathers absorbed many of the traditions of Greek intellectualism. These traditions taught that humans are superior to all other animals because they possess *logos*—the power of discursive reasoning. On the basis of these traditions, the fathers held that all the non-intellectual needs of humans (like sexuality) are associated with "animal instincts" and thus are beneath the dignity of completely purified Christians. Ever since their writings, the word "animal" has come to connote baseness.

All industrialized nations of the world continue the Christian contempt for non-human animals. Modern science teaches that humans are the summit of evolution and that all animals are more or less "higher" in the evolutionary scale depending on how close their physiology resembles that of humans. Hence the ideological justification for the use and abuse of animals ("humanism"). Accordingly, scientific "laboratories" have been established throughout industrialism and have become veritable Dachaus for torturing vast numbers of the animal people to death (all in the name of "progress," of course). The industrialized dwellers of modern cities have completely lost touch with animals. Their animal experiences are limited to castrated house pets or the inmates of those monstrous prisons called "zoos."

Only four hundred years ago (a short time, as human history goes), the land now called the United States was teeming with a vast multitude of animals of every possible description. In those days, the land was also green with plants and forests, cleansed by pure air, and inhabited by a people alive with the love and worship of nature. Today in the same land, nature has almost been repealed. For the most part, the animals, the forests, the clean air, the people of nature have been wiped out. They have been replaced by hamburger stands and universities, by jails, factories, highways, offices, befouled water and air, and by a whole new people utterly out of touch with their natural instincts. In the eyes of the Old Religion, such a society would have been viewed with horror as the abode of monsters.

The witches' attitudes toward the body, hair, hallucinogens and animals are all consistent. They fit in well with the conclusions stated in the last article in this series: that the Old Religion was pro-sexual, anti-authoritarian, and nature-oriented. As I stated in that earlier article, what we are dealing with is the religion of a society that existed in direct dependence on nature and that was virtually devoid of institutional hierarchy and bureaucracy.

The people who lived in this way viewed their sensuality as the key to who they were as people, and not as some kind of low-level crud to be scraped off their souls. They loved their sensuality because they had to be in tune with it to survive in a natural environment (as anyone knows who's had to survive for some time in the wild). They were not afraid of the wonderful variety of human sexuality. They came to view their bodies and all their bodily needs as beautiful and as part of the natural flow of things. They learned how non-human animals live (for real, and not in

some "zoo"); they learned to respect the animals, to communicate with them, and even to identify with them. They came to realize that the natural power of certain plants can greatly intensify one's bodily perceptions and break down the artificial boundaries of "me" and "others." They learned how to enjoy divine intoxication.

They learned all these things, moreover, in a positive, open, above-board way that was actively encouraged by the society in which they lived. There was an enchanted world, the world of natural feelings.

The Christians' attitudes toward the body, hair, hallucinogens, and animals are also all consistent. They, too, fit in well with the earlier conclusions of a previous article: that Christianity was the religion of anti-sexual, urban-centered, institution-bound people out of touch with nature.

The way the Christians lived and the way they thought can be summed up in two words: domination and hierarchy. In the external world, it was the domination of God over nature, of humans over animals, of men over women, of Pope over bishops, of King over knights, of states and churches over people. In the internal world, it was the hierarchy of the soul: the divine-like intellect over the earth-bound body; thoughts over passions; the head over the genitals; disciplined preparation for a future life over the anarchy of here-and-now sensuality.

Sexual repression, self-discipline, and obedience—these were the keys to heaven. They are also the very character traits that enable governments and churches to accumulate vast institutional powers over the lives of human beings. And so the Christians lived and died "within the walls," out of touch with natural feelings.

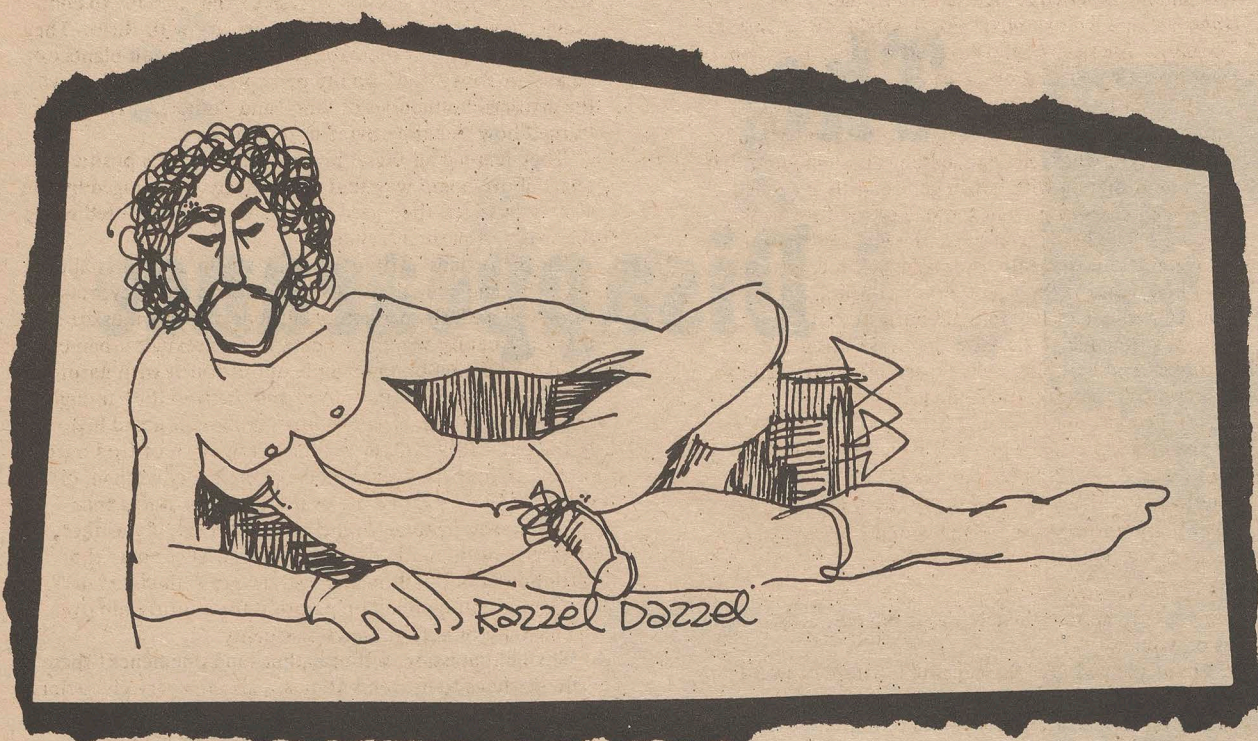
It's not hard to understand why modern industrialism has so faithfully carried on many basically Christian traditions. The great industrialized nations of the world, both Capitalist and Communist, are all institutionalized, bureaucratized societies. None of them could survive for a minute without the great bureaucratic hierarchies of government, business, and education.

All of us have been institutionalized since the moment of our birth—in classrooms, prisons, offices, factories, hospitals, mad houses. We are totally dependent on great institutions for meeting our most basic needs. There are very



few of us who can do what the vast majority of the human race throughout history has always regarded as essential human activities: grow our own food with our own hands, make our own clothing from scratch, build our own houses with natural materials at hand, make our own medicines. And there are very few of us who can guiltlessly express the full potential of our sexual energies, communicate with the animals, or become transfigured by the power of the plant gods. Instead, we have had drilled into us those character traits that make it possible for great bureaucracies and institutions to satisfy our needs and thus dominate our lives: sexual repression, self-denial, and obedience.

ARTHUR EVANS



Stone pilings half driv-
en into yielding sand like
blunt cocks in mid-stroke

Stephen Bartlette

to a flame who singed
i saw you twice last week
but i didn't bother to acknowledge you
once i loved you, years ago
after you said you loved me
then you left for San Francisco
without even telling me you wanted out
now i don't give a damn what you do
you're a dizzy Irish queen from Dorchester
still living in a dream, at 31
John Kyper, 12/74

For E. J. C.

Soft face, gentle face.
Passive person under my fingers.
Running everywhere, laughing under the weight of
these moments.
Touching me outwardly, blotting out the distance
between us.
Person I've waited for, dream that I've kept,
hiding behind shadows of hot caresses,
and tense moments of friendship.

—Jackie Avery

tasters

I lay on a single bed.
stroking the moonlighted muscles of another man
whose body is at rest and trusts for the night after we
had cock sucked, lifted and fucked our energies
out this night,
a sex dance as shamans fighting off tomorrow,
in a ghetto we sleep the dream.
isolated by fears of seduction and betrayal, we hide our
dreams of
reaching, loving and coming in staged bedrooms and floor
corners.
hide
as we tongue the strength of each other as our own
religion of ingestion, coming
coming,
almost there...
we glide both limp and hard along the contractions
of quick breathing and pinch swollen nipples
suspended between time and each other,
loving it all, loving everything.
as tongues waggle in the bars and the baths
we too...

Jonathan Schenker

"Circus"

Middle aged queers and I
share a silent joke;
the lines on their faces
look like the nets
into which I shall fall
when my trapeze artist face
loses star billing
and moves from the center ring.

Adrian Brooks
July 24, 1973
Inverness

MY BELLYBUTTON

by
J. D. Butkie

Cum dried
in the one
orifice
that Adam lacked:
his rib
in all honesty
created
lavender—consider
little boy blue mixed up
with pink of Mary,
Mary, quite contrary—
formed us:
comrades-in-arms. It's all
a matter of
chromotography,
chance,
a case of
good luck,
my dribbling lover.

MAZELTOV

Our toothbrushes stand erect
Side by side
Beaming like Jewish mothers
At Med School graduations.

Owen Wilson

MARSH

Marsh-shadow wavering:
he bogs firm thoughts.
Hurried quick sand maneuver.
Attention!
Wavers
among the dry reeds
crisp, ready to break.
Sucks up
a contradiction
hypothetically
where the wind blows
in the distance.
Leaves me sinking
below the wet
swampy sand
resigned—
marsh-mellow.

Harold Pickett

aubade for walt
chill dawn
grey light
what was real
was in that room
one room
small enough
we got close
into each other
i was surprised
your ass tasted
like salt

*

a new thing
i was afraid of:
the openness with which
i gave you my fear

*

later: in the car
we drive through
i pass through
the through

the people
do not know

how close
we have come

they do not look
at the car except
to avoid it

*

at work, i smile
a dream of salt on my tongue

Jim Everhard

Hard Luck

Motorcylce

Hard Luck

Motorcycle with chrome
Gloves of black leather
Boots that rap concrete
Like the knell of a death bell

Keys that jingle jangle
A chain that softly sings
Invitation to an evening
With a raunchy leather queen

Alone

encased in sleep
watching meteors
waiting for my wish
time becomes lost

Michael Shernoff





Rose Sélavy by Man Ray, 1921

The Disappearance

by gary jane hoisington

...for Barry Crooks

1. In which life imitates art in its method of operation

The central event in modern art is the removal of the processes of art from objective verification, the erosion of emphasis on the object. The most recent art creates its effects through direct intervention into "life" or "reality." Exemplars of the new sensibility take their initiative from the work of Duchamp, who renounced "retinal" art to play chess, a game of imaginative forms and imaginary or conceptual movements. Since "retinal" art engages the eye rather than the conceptual faculties (except secondarily), it is unable to "drive men into the streets," is swiftly canonized and affixed with a price tag. Duchamp remarked that when a painting is hung in a museum it instantly goes *black*, you can no longer see it: it has become official art, drained of its disturbing potentiality. As for artists, they are less often madmen with specialized obsessions than pale businessmen seeking a high price for their product.

One recent development: Ray Johnson's Correspondence Art School in Locust Valley, N.Y., which is a sort of clearing-house for all kinds of found objects, movements-by-mail of such things as toilet tissue tubes, retouched photographs, collages to be recycled. The process is contained within a network of artists, who are also the "audience." Another is the work of the German artist Beuys, who recently proposed raising the Berlin Wall by 3cm. "for better proportion." Among artists better known for existing painting and sculpture, Claes Oldenburg's famous proposed monuments, in conceptual form, elaborate a coherent vision of the world and how to change it: a toilet-bowl ball cock for the Thames, a half-peeled plastic banana to overlook Wall Street, a giant fan to replace the Statue of Liberty on Ellis Island.

2. Reality makes us lose our perspective

By working within the limits of practicality (economic, political, and sociological determinants), the artist must conceive his work to hang on a wall, stand in a public park or private garden; total freedom in the arts is a remote luxury. Partly, this can be explained in terms of the very recent image of the artist as gangster or subversive (an image society has made into reality). The most ambitiously conceived works of art—works which would perform the reality—altering function of art—are against the law. (I am speaking of independent works, which would disqualify corporate or government sponsored ventures like Christo's wrapping of the Australian coastline.). Also, the historicity attaching to any work of art splits the artist into two parts, like an inchworm. One part attempts sufficiently to mimic the past for the art-educated public to locate his work in the historical flow, while the other part tries to expunge the influence of art history to make what is new.

3. Escape from Realism

Two sensibilities whose origins lie outside the history of received ideas have waited upon the confluence of industrialism and the creation of the urban environment for an atmosphere in which they could be articulated: homosexuality and surrealism. The discovery of the marvelous at the heart of early Surrealist texts owes much to de Sade, Rimbaud, Lautreamont—three poets whose poetry's central notion is flight from conventional media of sensual and intellectual perception. Rimbaud's dictum, "Think in other categories," is the apprehension of sexuality as causal factor in human action, the premise behind psycho-analytic theory as well. A categorical shift in perspective could transform the world.

Such a transformation is presently taking place. Reaction, as Hegel demonstrated, is a mirror activity, the reaction incorporating the object of reaction. Perhaps this explains why homosexuals incorporate emblems of the heterosexual mythos into their own activities: homosexual marriages, gay therapy groups, gay charities and gay Nazi parties are all forms of ideological mimesis establishing "likeness" or "sameness," identification with a widely-accepted standard.

Rejection of middle-class values is an acknowledgement of their normative function, of course; it was in the spirit of this acknowledgement that Lindsay Anderson coined the phrase "Revolution is the opiate of the intellectuals." Professional intellectuals get high on movements (including Gay Liberation), ideologies, pocket revolutions; faced with the real likelihood of revolution, though, our domestic eggheads generally transform themselves into liberals. The artist slogs on, but gathers layers of explanation in the pages of *Artforum*, *Art in America*, et al.

Surrealism, while characteristically a culturally-approved form of reaction, was one of the first bona fide movements in art (as distinguished from schools of art) to cultivate its own polemic. Aligning itself with the Communist Party as early as 1924, Surrealism proceeded through the '30's toward an inevitable showdown with Stalinism. After the split (provoked, in part, by the meeting of Breton and Ilya Ehrenburg, whom Breton slapped across the face), some Surrealist magi (Eluard, Aragon) stayed with the party, while others—including the Dadist poet Tzara—remained official Surrealists and became supporters of Leon Trotsky. (Breton and Trotsky co-authored a pamphlet on the need for total freedom in the arts.) Since the birth of Surrealism, and continuing into the 1970's in a less organized manner, its exponents have lavished a healthy contempt on God, Church, and State, on the debilitating simplification of ideas that produces, among other things, mass entertainment. The Surrealists conceive art as a wave assault on all that is holy.

4. Wherein the party of the first part is in agreement with the party of the second part

Gay sensibility and gay mores seem presently at odds with the presiding gay ethos—that prevailing in the most visible journals of homosexual opinion, at any rate. The image of the homosexual projected in these publications has us monotheists to the core, unpromiscuous, eager beavers in a civic-minded participatory democracy, "struggling within the system." This seems pathetic considering the repulsive history of religion and the growing apprehension by the best minds on the horizon that we now live in a police state, to say nothing of the psychic mutilations owed the romantic myth. Yet the persistent interest in sex exhibited by a majority of homosexuals argues forcefully against the picture given. For sex, specifically hedonist sex of a non-reproductive kind (what Freud identified as the polymorphously perverse), is antithetic to the transmission of culture via genetics and the environment of the patriarchal family.

Surrealism is, if anything, an eroticization of the physical world, a sensuous appreciation of reality without cultural horseblinkers. This eroticization is only possible if sexual inhibition and prohibition is removed from the psyche.

It is important to note that Surrealism was conceived as an *ideology*. Surrealist art is an expedient means of expressing surreal perception. What the early Surrealist thinkers sought was to unleash dangerous forces, particularly erotic ones. A passage from Lautreamont's *Maldoror*:

"Oh! If instead of a hell this universe had been but an immense celestial anus—behold the gesture I make, hard by my lower abdomen: yes, I would have plunged my prick through its blood-stained sphincter, smashing the very walls of its pelvis with my impetuous movements!"

Or, fuck the world, I want to get off—or on. Even the most proficient painters of the Surrealist movement regarded their work as, at best, a weak vessel for the Idea, which had nothing to do with taste or aesthetics, but with psychological liberation:

"Surrealism, such as I conceive it, asserts our complete *nonconformism* clearly enough so that there can be no question of translating it, at the trial of the real world, as evidence for the defense.

—André Breton
Manifesto of Surrealism

So inevitably, we arrive at an erotic politics. The reaction against the object or picture-to-hang-on-the-wall I have discussed above is the result of capitalist stress. In 1975, no one is shocked by an Ernst canvas or disturbed by a Rayogram; on the contrary, it is now a mark of status to own these things. Fascinatingly, one of the standard topics of cocktail chatter last year was Bunuel's film, *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*: even radical cinema has become,



Marisol, Love, 1962

of REALITY

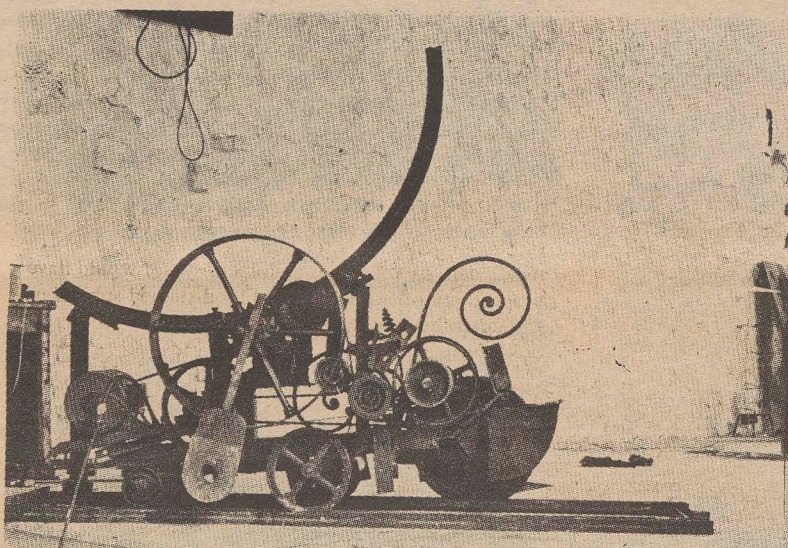
despite the most explosive intentions, too discreet, too charming, and altogether too bourgeois.

But the artist, whose business in an age of lowering hopes can only be that of firing random bullets into the fatted crowd, is not a court-jester, and his raids on normality have taken different forms: taken to the streets, so to speak. Perhaps before long he will hang his patrons on the wall and 'execute' his work. As someone recently remarked, there's room for all kinds of things in America.

A final word from Leon Trotsky:

"In our epoch of convulsive reaction, of cultural decline and the return to savagery, truly independent creation cannot but be revolutionary by its very nature...but art as a whole, and each artist in particular, seeks this outlet in ways proper to himself—not relying on orders from outside, but rejecting such orders and heaping scorn on all who submit to them."

—Leon Trotsky,
excerpt from a letter
to Andre Breton
December 22, 1938



Jean Tinguely 1964

5. The Disappearance of Reality

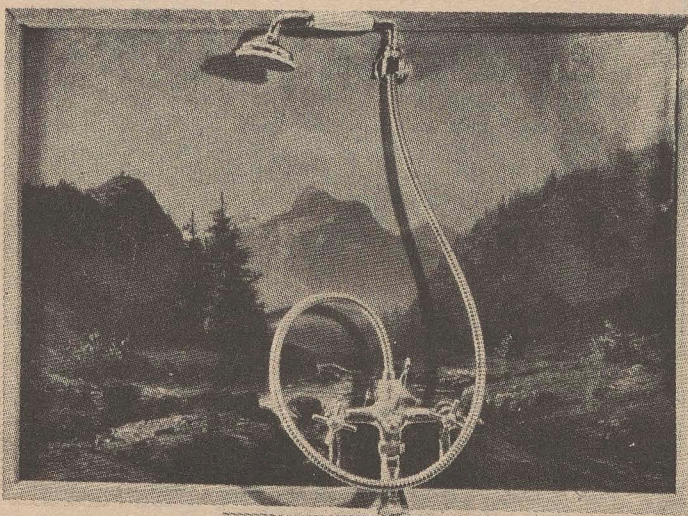
What total liberation of the psyche means is the dissolving of the world. That is, the world of today, encrusted in symbols, metaphors, substitutions. For what man proposes, he does so subliminally; the top hat of his dreams is the penis of his waking life, and his penis is yet another symbol for "man," in the general sense. Out of sublimation have come cathedrals and cuckoo-clocks, air conditioners and philosophy. We explain the world to ourselves instead of living in it, and our explanations are beginning to eat us. We explained warfare by inventing the hydrogen bomb, explained the passage from life to death by dreaming up the G.M.T. We also figured out libido by chopping it into sacred and profane slices.

Why do we mediate reality? Because, if we scrape away the crusts and cinders of our explanations, we find it doesn't exist. What exists is the world, and the world is not reality. "Reality" is what we place between ourselves and life. Of our many confusions, perhaps the most unfair is the demand that artists connect us with reality—not with life, of which art began as imitation and became celebration, but with reality, with common sense, with vision instead of sentence. As science has demonstrated, vision itself is mediated: the eye sees things upside-down and the mind sets them on their feet. Human vision cannot detect ultraviolet and infrared edges of the spectrum, though those vistas are available to the simplest sighted organisms; our "picture" of the universe is more limited than a fly's. Why art should be inclined to repeat our limitations is answerable only from the most myopic perspective.

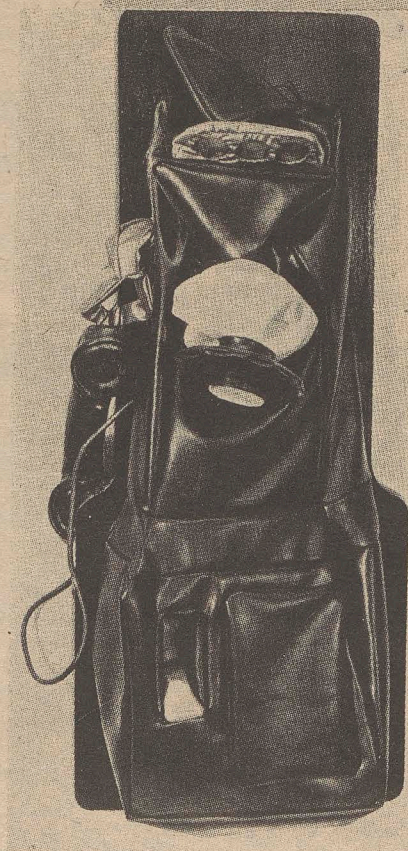
"Rather life than those prisms without depth even if
the colors are purer
Rather than that always clouded hour those terrible
wagons of cold flame
Than those soft stones
Rather this triggered heart
Than that murmuring mere
And that white cloth singing in the air and in the
earth
That nuptial blessing linking my brow to the brow of
absolute vanity
Rather life"

—Andre Breton, 1923

Daniel Spoerri 1961



Wunderlich, Qui s'explique, 1959



Claes Oldenburg 1963

A Note on Historical Development

Some of the most audacious recent work, as I have indicated above, exists only in conceptual form, often on file cards in the artist's studio. "Earthworks" by artists such as Christo, Dennis Oppenheimer and others have been well-documented photographically and collected in the book *Art Povera* and elsewhere. Conceptual architecture—notably, certain works by Pol Bury and Otto Peine, as well as "the Body House" by Carolee Schneemann—is beyond the scope of this essay.

The sculpture of Jean Tinguely and his wife, Niki de Saint-Phalle, is of particular importance in connection with the disintegration of the object as part of the total art work. Tinguely's *Homage to New York*, which self-destructed several years ago in the sculpture garden of MOMA, marked a breakthrough for artists smarting under market demand for 'permanent' (i.e., resaleable) sculpture enduring beyond its historical moment. Oldenburg's soft telephone, among his many 'soft sculptures,' explores the themes of dysfunction, disintegration and displacement of the object. Some of Oldenburg's more ambitious monuments were realized at the E.A.T. Show in Los Angeles in 1971, and at the Osaka World's Fair.

Spoerri's work carries on certain ideas originally elaborated by Duchamp (the ready-made, the found object) without, as far as I am concerned, adding much of a truly original nature. (It may be that Duchamp was, as he often remarked, "only fifty years" ahead of his time.) Still, because Duchamp quite deliberately produced an extremely small body of work, Spoerri's productions have the virtue of reiterating important themes.

Finally, the recently executed "Imposed Reality No. 3" by Josh Prokop is a significant transposition of the earthworks concept from the countryside to the urban environment. Prokop spread 50 gallons of mixed inks in Copley Square in Boston; the ink was then distributed throughout the city by traffic and pedestrians. Traces of this painting can still be found in the surrounding streets, considerably deteriorated.

I have included the Wunderlich illustration to demonstrate that realism, as well as avant-gardism, has undergone a significant inversion of values, particularly in the depiction of the human form. Perhaps the best example is Wunderlich's parody of Vesalius' idealized male figure—instead of the perfectly formed, perfectly symmetrical human, Wunderlich's picture shows a milky skeletal impression roughly contained within an imperfect circle of sienna. (Prints of this work were unavailable to me while this essay was being written.) Though I am reluctant to hunt up 'influences,' Duchamp's retouched Mona Lisa, L. H. O. O. Q. (in phonetic French, *elle a chaud au cul*, 'Her cunt is hot'), dates from 1920 and clearly paved the way for Wunderlich, as well as many of the Pop artists. (L.H.O.O.Q. is simply a reproduction of the "Mona Lisa" plus a painted moustache. Duchamp later signed an unretouched reproduction of the same painting. Its title is "Shaved.")

Also worth noting are Yvonne Rainer's dance representations of television soap operas, which were performed by Ms. Rainer and others at the London Film Festival in 1974. Again, the travesty of traditional forms, perhaps the most striking aspect of Pop art, dates from the Cabaret Voltaire performances of the Dada era and have been correctly identified by most critics as "Neo-Dada."

THE QUEEN IS NOT BUTCH

Queen Moo, of Coldbath Square, knew,
knew just how true True could be—
and was—in ways that were surprising,
unbecoming a white man,
detonating the MASTER plan.
And you? And me?
It's true; we, too, were three who knew
how true Queen Moo could be:
When the heart's aflame,
the baby burns;
the baby burns and the baby learns.
It's true Queen Moo could be blue—
or blown,
if the truth's to be known;
blue as May,
the days weren't moogie,
being downed, drowned by our (wo)mantra: BOOGIE.
Not so blue when gay parading
in the streets and singing:
"Come out! Come out! Or we'll drag you out!"
(N.Y., N.Y. 1973)
Now here's the crux,
now here's the sorrow:
We alone can only borrow;
takes mercy and an understanding heart's
appreciation of the True,
the Too Cute, and the Too Cheap
to ignite the wick
that beats-off ten years of night,
ten years of fright-
ful solitude.
Look! Moo sits and fans
while fans in fits about Moo's tits
do scream for days:
"Such an un-king deserves a throne!"
But we say (And by we I mean me!)
Moo's a gay lover,
Moo will be Mother.
(I like to stick it in my lover.)
(I like to stick it in my boogie.)

Terry

DREAM BOY

The veil of night slowly descends...the stars are breaking
through...and I am looking in the eyes...of one and only
you...the songbirds lull themselves to rest...with blissful
harmony...I press you closer to my breast...I love you ten-
derly...embrace me, oh my dream boy...I need your evening
cham...your touch is likened to the breeze...let's journey
arm in arm...you need not speak for kisses tell far more
than words can say...each one a fragrant flower...from your
heart's bouquet...my love is yours, your love is mine...I wish
this never ends...together we'll find happiness...as night
slowly descends.

Manuel Comacho
Soledad Prison

MORE THEN HE PAID FOR

You dirty old man,
With the underside of you
On the upperside of me
And your heavy, horny finger in my ear,
Your tickling tongue in some queer
Position near the rear
Of my mouth.
You slurp with such sincerity.
Why is there such disparity
Between your bulbous body
And your soul?
Your sex, like a noodle,
Is innocent of lust,
Your butt's too broad,
And other parts look recently untrussed.
But you removed your plate
So that you wouldn't scrape,
And you washed your hands till they were pink,
And, hell, you don't even stink.
And you french-kiss in pepsodent.
You try to please,
You don't squeeze.
You didn't even sneeze
On me,
Like some I've had.
While you're rooting for me,
I'm rooting for you.
Rest here sleepily, ugly man.
Let me whisper-kiss your neck,
Touch that hairyed not-so-small a back,
Give your nose
Now and then,
A lover's peck.
I'll try to give you twenty dollars' worth of love,
Since you can't buy it at the A&P,
Or get it from T.V.
You may be a bastard in the day.
But tonight you're good to me.
Afterwhile, when you're ready—I know you're good—,
I'll come hard for you,
Sigh and grunt and shudder,
Meow and moan and flutter,
As if sex were something new.
Hypocrisy in lust is good,
No matter what commandments I destroy.
Later still I'll say my prayers
For you
At the edge of the bed,
And bow my head,
And be a "bad" boy.

Daniel Curzon

Ronald Rose on:

PRISONS

1. The administration of criminal justice should rely on the principle of the conditional discharge of the offender.
2. Courts should express the attitude of society towards crime and the criminal through the exercise of social reprimand.
3. Punishment should be without deprivation of liberty, as for example corrective labor or special public projects.
4. Prisons should be transferred into educational institutions in which prisoners are educated rather than isolated.
5. Correctional institutions should rely on the support of the neighboring communities to strengthen the educative aspects of their programs.

Sound like a new outline for the American prison system? wrong! These basic principles of correctional programs were written by Lenin before his death in the 1920s.

Within the United States, you find that the educational programs are greatly lacking. Seven states do not even offer G.E.D.'s, and the states that do offer educational programs seem to do little more than offer. State legislatures are hesitant to allot funds.

The most common found programs are labeled 'vocational training' but in most cases this means some little, unrealistic "keep-busy" task that does nothing to train a person for the outside. What actual vocational schools do exist are so under staffed compared to the prison population that a prisoner may spend the duration of his sentence waiting to get into a program.

College studies in most institutions operate under such limited budgets that there are very few classes and long waiting lists. The American system seems to have very strong tendencies to feel a need to keep inmates securely locked up, thus restricting them from community educational programs.

With the exception of a few institutions designed for treatment, therapy is virtually unheard of. Most of that which is called "therapy" within the American prison system is merely operated by prison guards with enough seniority to rate desk jobs.

It would be my conclusion that the various state correctional programs could learn a great deal by studying these foreign programs. It appears that the many Eurasian countries have devised systems that are extremely beneficial, produce a very low recidivism rate, and require much less incarceration.

By the time we create this kind of system, total idleness within the American prisons is multiplied by the lengthy sentences to the point that there is little wonder we create violent, hostile parolees instead of useful, productive citizens.

Our system as it now is spends billions of dollars each year to create re-offenders? men who have learned to hate violently in a system that by theory is supposed to transform them into productive social assets. The time has come that this must be changed.

PRISON REFORM IN 1975

Early in 1975 many new faces will be appearing in the political circles across the nation. The political trends of the last few years have seen a new breed of politician, who is keenly aware of the tremendous need for change within many facets of our society. I would like to urge people through-out the nation to concentrate on one area of change in 1975. This area is prison reform.

Penal systems within the United States have become massive institutions caging hundreds of thousands of human beings in meaningless, unreal, unbeneficial, degrading, inhumane programs. The population within the California Adult System is around 30 thousand. You can imagine what this total looks like once you add on the Juvenile institutions, Criminal mental health facilities, Women's facilities, city and county jails, and then take the same totals from the other 49 states to arrive at the total number of persons incarcerated by our legal system. Maintaining this, amounts to several Billion dollars per year.

In the last ten years, several studies for the Federal Government by leading universities and legal organizations have rather clearly proven that incarceration of criminal offenders is not only a most expensive method of rehabilitation but also one of the most ineffective forms of rehabilitation. The time has come that his nation as a whole establish alternative systems to incarceration.

Possibly one of the first places to begin is within our legal system. The elimination of victimless crime laws and the vague discriminatory statutes relating to vices and juvenile activity would greatly decrease the institutional population. These laws are a carry over from the Puritan society whose beliefs no longer exist in this country. Due to the growth of our ability to understand and tolerate a more liberal system is necessary.

Many expensive court trials have been prevented in some eastern cities by associations to negotiate between the criminal and the victim. Often a suitable alternative can be worked out without arrest, trial or incarceration of any type.

V.E.R.A. foundation of New York has pioneered a very successful program of obtaining bail, counsel, guidance, employment, legal advice for persons awaiting trial. By the time they go to trial there is enough of a rehabilitation program established; there is no reason for incarceration.

Another variation of the same idea is for the prisoner to waive his right to a speedy trial and receive bail on the condition that he will undergo threatment or therapy for a specific period of time, if successful in the program at the end of a specific time period the charges are dropped.

An effective program for minor offenses has made probation a voluntary process, where the offenders may report or take part in treatment programs as he feels necessary. For the more serious cases that need more supervision, the probation house, either residential or daycare, can provide the offender with extensive programs without removing them from their home community.

The increased use of probation should be strongly stressed in a reform program. Repeated studies have shown only about 15% of the criminal offenders need to be incarcerated. Various forms of probation would be the cheapest and most important, most effective means of rehabilitation for the remaining 85%.



For persons that need to be incarcerated, serious consideration should be given to programs that will help maintain their connection with society. One method is by weekend sentences, whereby the prisoner is incarcerated from Friday night to Monday morning, but is able to maintain his job, family, and position within the society during the week. In more serious cases this could be reversed to allow weekend furlough for the inmate to be in contact with his family and community.

Other beneficial programs are work and study releases, which allow inmates to leave the institution each day to take part in outside employment or participate in outside educational or training programs.

For offenders where imprisonment, as we know it today, is necessary, the trend should be for shorter sentences. In most European and Asian countries one year is considered a long sentence or prison term. In Sweden for example less than 10% of those that are incarcerated are serving more than a year. Shorter incarceration could be accomplished by educational placements, colleges, schools, guidance centers within the community where an inmate may be transferred prior to his release date, and an increased use of the parole system.

The establishment of parole houses for temporary placement of parole violators or persons that are having difficulties on parole would greatly reduce the need of re-imprisonment of parolees.

All of the above programs have been tested in actual operation and proven to provide a greater degree of rehabilitation, a lower rate of re-offense and cost only a fraction of the now existent system.

Still we find the United States, supposedly one of the most progressive countries in the world, maintaining an antiquated method of "correcting evil" equal in logical sense to the burning of witches in Salem, or the belief that the moon causes insanity.

The length of term is all to often determined by the number of empty cells. Little interest or concern is placed on important issues of rehabilitation, education, training or treatment. Instead we create massive political industries controlled by indeterminate or illogical sentences and politically controlled Boards to regulate time. It is further complicated by under staffing and under budgeting.

The answer is not a new ball game or new players. The answer is a different ball game, centered within the individual community and using prisons as we know today sparingly for short term confinement of the more serious offenders.

NOW IS THE TIME, as the legislatures across the nation go into session. Flood your state's public elected officials office with demands that the penal system of your state be removed from the DARK AGES.

[Note: Persons interested in prison reform are invited to contact Ronald Rose, c/o Rev. W. R. Denton, 352 Annapolis Dr., Claremont, CA 91711.]



ATTENTION! POETS!

Many thanks for all the wild, sad, gay, wonderful poems. We have tried to acknowledge everything received before February 15, 1975 & print or return everything to you. We are not your standard editorial office; we have no filing cabinets or printed rejection slips; or even a typewriter in our office. So if we have lost your work, not responded or generally mucked up—forgive us, let us know & try to think of some way you can help us out. If you are published here, Little-Brown or Random House will definitely not be knocking at your door. Harvard freshmen will not be impressed. You will only be helping forge a gay consciousness—a weapon to destroy the universities and publishers. If you send more than one poem, please let us know which you like most.

ATTENTION! POETS!

PRISON WAGES

A large group of California's state employees are seeking a 2 cents per hour wage increase. This will skyrocket their wages to 6 cents an hour or \$10.50 a month.

Approval was given in 1974 to raise inmate wages within the California penal system, but apparently no budget was allotted to carry this out. One institution has, somewhere, found the funds to make the 2 cents per hour raise. This is not the amount of raise originally approved, but it is a step in the right direction and hopefully will soon be followed by the remaining institutions in the state. Inmate wages range from \$5 to around \$25 per month. Extremely few inmates are in the group that receive more than \$15, and close to 75% receive the \$7.50 wage.

The problem however is not limited to the state of California. A survey of the prison systems showed that in 20 states, the Federal prison system, and the District of Columbia, 90% of the inmates earn wages that range from 4 cents per day to a high of \$1.30 per day. Five states had no more than 10% of their inmates earning a wage and six states do not allow inmates to earn anything.

We are often told the reason for inadequate wages is because the work assignments are part of the rehabilitation or training program and one doesn't pay a person for providing them a service. But now really, how true is this? I will agree that a work program that trains a man for a job on the outside would be very valuable. I will agree that any work that provides training or skills would be a necessary part of a rehabilitation program. But what is the value of training a person to work in an organization so sloppily run that even with free labor it loses money? or teaching a man to work where there are 3 or 4 people assigned to 1 man's job? or teaching a new skill on an obsolete piece of machinery? or spending years teaching a man a skill that is found only inside prison walls?

The major portion of the prison work is nothing more than "keep busy tasks." Most prison employees will admit this. This means that in most cases there is no rehabilitative value to prison work assignments. They lack effectiveness, incentive, compensation, training, experience, and the production norms of normal industry. They are thus nothing more than "forced slave labor" paying them a small token that is named incentive but in reality is so small that it is an insult equal to having your face spit in.

Every inmate should be paid minimum wage. From this they could be charged a fee for food and housing. Possibly an additional fee for medical treatment, dental treatment, psychiatric treatment, etc. The work assignments should be of a nature that the same type of job may be found on the outside and handled in a way so that the job on the inside qualifies the person for the job on the outside.

As our system exists today a large portion of the inmates are employed by total idleness. Less than 25% leave prison and go to work in a skill the prison trained them for.

In 1970, hundreds of millions of dollars worth of goods such as clothing, textiles, furniture, stamped metal goods, farm products, shoes, flags, machinery, etc., were produced by prison industry for the use of the federal government.

It is time state and federally owned industries be done away with and replaced by private industry within the institutions that would pay the convict laborer at least minimum wage, maintain current machinery and technology, and successfully train a man for a realistic place in the work force outside.

This will cut the operational costs of the institution, eliminate thousands of wives and dependents from the welfare rolls, and stimulate the economy by forcing the government to buy from the public market.

The California Assembly Office of Research once long ago recommended the phasing out of institutional industries. I wonder how many recommendations have been ignored to hang on to a system which insults an individual with token payment, so low that it generates bitterness toward society rather than teaching a man to find his place within that society.

ICRY

Today I cried a tear drop
Today the teardrop fell:
Now the love is gone from me,
That we both knew so well.
I cried all night until dawn
And a letter I tried to write
For today my heart was broken
As you walked out of my sight
I don't know how I'll make it
Or how I'll get along
I only know that you have quit
And that our love is gone
So when the sun is shining
Over the weary sea...
Will you walk the shores of love
And think a thought of me?

Jack Ray Vigue



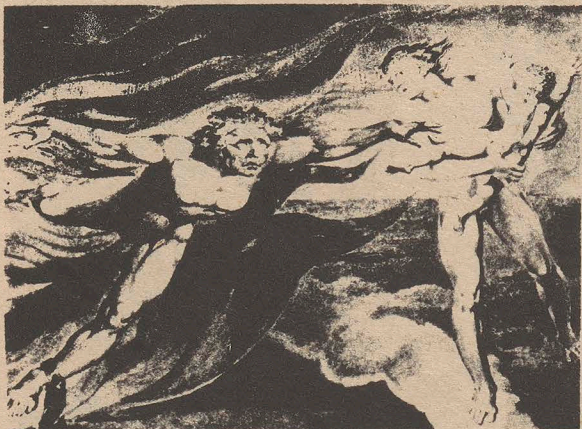
"GROPES AND THU NEW YORK SUBWAY SYSTEM"

I'M NOT ROBIN YR RED BREAST MISTER
I WS
RETCHIN FOR A LOCKIT IN MUH POCK-IT
AN
UH-THU TRAIN SURE IS CROWD-ED SD
W/A SIN-STEER LEER/
SO-SO LONG-I SD/
BY
BILL
HE SD/
HEY SUE-AND K RICE-NO BREAD
W/DUCK SAUCE/
SPARE ME THU RIB KID-I SD/
PIG TAILS-AND TEA ON YER CUP/
HUNG FRM THU
FORESKIN-LEGS/
STREAMS-EN-TRAILS-ALL OVER
THU HOOK/
BARKING HOGS-SCREAMING DOGS-
WALL-EYE-A-GOG/
SOFT HEADS-HOME IN THU
HOLE/
EYE-WALL-ON-THU-BALL/
HARD HEADS-AND
WARM SWALLOWS-NOW HUNG BY THU TONGUE/
ROSE ON TOES
IT SURE IS A HARD-NIPPLE
THESE
DAYS-ROBIN YER RED BREAST MISTER/
THU DEE-ARE RUBBED ME HARD
ON THEE-
UH-OH LET ME SEE/
HIS HAND ON-THEE-UH
WHAT IS IT/
COMING TO MY-UH-WANTS IT
ALL/
ZIPPED-BY MY STOP IT/
HAND-OH-UH-
LET ME SEE-HARD IS IT-ALL ZIPPED BY-
MY STOP IT/
HIS EYE SMASHED MY
FIST LATER WE MADE LOVE I PROBED
HIS TONGUE W/MY REAR END/
HE
OVER ROLLED MY HUNCH
AND DROVE
HIS MOUTH DEEP INTO MY PENIS/
PULSE THROBBING
MY OVER HANG
AGAINST HIS BALLS
THERE WS NO ESCAPE/
WE LET LOOSE W/
PEARLY WHITES
SPUNK YOU HAVE
MISTER
WE SWALLOWED
MUTUAL COMPLIMENTS/
AND WENT COMING ARE
WAY///

FREDERICK HAROLD GREENFIELD

For An Unholy Alliance

Gays and Abortion



by Steven Abbott and Thom Willenbecker

"That nigger's guilty as sin," said an unidentified juror, as the celebrated abortion trial of Dr. Kenneth Edelin got under way. A month later, the twelve jurors, ten of them Catholic, nine of them male, six Irish, and only one with a college education, filed out of the courtroom to convict the obstetrician of manslaughter. The guilty verdict stunned everyone, including the flamboyant prosecutor, D.A. Newman Flanagan, but all sides agreed that it marked a decisive victory for the anti-abortion movement and that it would probably make it much more difficult for a woman to get an abortion in the future. Chalk one up for the Cardinal. Few could ignore the racial overtones of the trial, a trial which evoked many disagreeable images from recent Boston history, as the young Black obstetrician was forced to account for the sins of being more educated, more composed, more conscientious than the white working-class jury. Chalk one up for the good citizens of Southie.

But what has all this got to do with us fags? Have we any stake in the struggle for abortion rights? The question is not simple. The connections between gay liberation and abortion rights are many, and their interrelationship is complex. Perhaps we should answer the question by examining the Edelin trial as an historical event, and then proceed to the general issue of abortion rights.

First of all, the Edelin trial brought together into one historical moment just about all the "isms" which gay liberation has set out to expose and eliminate. We have already mentioned racism: it seems strange that the first abortionist to be brought to the bar is Black, as well as his patient, a 17-year-old welfare mother. Secondly, we witnessed the effort of one religious sect to impose its moral authority on the rest of us infidels. Thirdly, and most significantly, the sexist nature of the effort to restrict abortion became clear. This effort reflects the unacknowledged view that a woman must not only submit to God, who restricted her worldly function to housekeeping and reproduction, but under man as well—the man who planted the unwanted fetus in her womb, and the man who tried and convicted the doctor who took it out. The woman was not tried only because she was underage at the time of the abortion; throughout the trial she remained an "unindicted co-conspirator" in the case. But it is clear that though the trial had little direct bearing on gay life, it did crystallize the many varieties of control from which we, as gays and feminists, have been trying to free ourselves.

Now to examine the question of abortion itself. The question of whether a woman has the right to terminate her pregnancy presents us with a genuine moral dilemma. Two inalienable rights stand at irreconcilable odds—the right of a woman to control her body versus the right of a specifically human and biologically active organism to continue living. At least this is how the problem is presented. However, both rights are of direct relevance to gay liberation: the first is the right to anatomical self-determination, and the second has much to do with whether this self-determination will ever become historical reality.

Gay rights and abortion rights are founded on the same principle; the right of the individual to control his or her body in any way which does not curtail the rights of others. Both the gay and the abortion rights movements have recognized this all along, as each has invoked this principle to justify its cause, though, neither movement has recognized that it holds this principle in common with the other. However, the question of anatomical self-determination is more than a matter of individual rights. These rights are invoked in the face of an authority which has long restricted them, and which has done so for a reason. This authority is organized religion, Catholicism, among others, a male authority which is connected with a male legal apparatus, and which enforces its morals on the rest of us in order to please a male god. By doing so, these authorities attempt to upend a set of sex roles which stress family kinship and the ascendancy of men over women. Men are to have sex only with women and only in order to produce babies. Women are to obey men, and to do nothing to prevent themselves from becoming pregnant and, once pregnant, are to do nothing to prevent the

baby from being born. All of us are destined, by virtue of our anatomy, to play a role of commanding or obeying within that structure. So gay rights and abortion rights both resist this sort of role-typification, and challenge the male secular and religious authorities whose interests are served by these roles. The fight to anatomical self-determination thus transcends mere individualism; it becomes a way of criticizing a male supremacist ideology and of escaping from a male supremacist structure. Women who have abortions and gay people challenge this ideology and do so by their very existence. For we, just like Dr. Edelin's patient, have refused to be limited by the supposed natural functions of our anatomy. And we have refused to identify ourselves in terms of position in a family structure where the man commands and fucks his wife, the woman obeys and gets fucked, and the children simply obey.

What about the other horn of the dilemma, the fetus's "right to life"? One can set down dozens of criteria establishing when life begins, from conception to the point at which the child emerges from the womb after the full nine months. Over history, each society has decided for itself when life begins, ranging from before conception to two years after birth, as in ancient Semitic tribes. From all this we can gather that any line we may draw will be more or less arbitrary, and that it will lie somewhere between these extremes. Yet the line must be drawn. It is beyond us to try to answer this delicate and unfathomable question, though we cannot divorce ourselves from feeling that only those beings which are capable of experiencing the world, of suffering pain and pleasure, are alive; it is only for such beings that being killed is having something taken away. So, to prevent people from killing newborn children or old Aunt Hilda, we feel that to say that life begins at birth or a few months before is to choose as good a time as any. To fix the moment of vitality much earlier than that is to deprive a woman of the right to control her body. Women, and gays as well, therefore have a political interest in opposing laws which state that life begins at conception.

But others think differently, as we well know. According to Papal decree, life begins at conception. And though its membership likes to claim that the right to life movement represents people of all forms of belief or unbelief, the movement gets its primary support, financial as well as theological, from the Catholic church. But what do Catholic teachings actually say about when life begins? The rescript of Leo XIII of 1879 establishes St. Thomas Aquinas as the final authority on matters of theology and philosophy. In *Summa Theologiae*, Part I, Question 68, Article I, St. Thomas states: "The souls of animals seminally generated are in the seminal power...In perfect animals, generated by coition, the active force is in the semen of the male, as the Philosopher (Aristotle) says, but the fetal matter is provided by the female." The active principle of human life is the soul, not the body. The soul begins its life not at conception or birth, but in the man's semen. When the man plants his seed in the woman's womb, the soul merely acquires a material body which will accompany it through its worldly sojourn. The body, coming from the female, is inferior and secondary; higher beings, i.e., angels, do not possess it. So the woman is a passive vessel for the active male principle; it provides it with a body and nurtures it until birth. A male supremacist doctrine, to be sure. But if today's Catholics want to be consistent with the still-valid teachings of the church, they must affirm that life begins not at conception, but in Daddy's testicles. The belief that life begins at conception is of fairly recent vintage and indeed became popular only in this country when abortion became a simple medical procedure and women had a new way of gaining control over their anatomy.

We can thus infer that though Church teachings condemn abortion as murder, they must also condemn contraception, masturbation and sodomy, "the crime against nature...the abomination unto the lord" on the same ground. For all three involve the spilling of seed. Indeed, if we interpret things to the letter, we discover that the latter three are even more horrendous crimes. Every time a woman has an abortion, she kills only one person. However, every time a man ejaculates into a receptacle other than a vagina, he wastes 500 to 700 million sperm cells, killing that many people. Therefore, every time a man submits to the call of concupiscence, he outdoes Hitler a hundred times over. Certainly this is an extreme position, one which will not find favor among today's with-it theologians. But give them time. The Church, which has only recently exonerated Galileo and has yet to deal with Darwin, has seldom kept up to date with the advances of science. But when the holy fathers find out about sperm count, one wonders what horrors will ensue. The precedents are there, nonetheless. The *Humanae Vitae* encyclical of 1962 denounced birth control as anti-life. We are not familiar with many priestly writings, so we have never read any tracts denouncing homosexuality as an act of murder, but we are sure that they have been written and that many more will follow.

If we put together all we have said, we can glimpse something of the political forces operating within the anti-abortion movement. The Church has a definite stake in the outcome of the abortion question. If it succeeds in reversing

the Supreme Court ruling of 1973, it will have established its own *misinterpreted* [sic] theological principles as the law of the land, binding for all persons, not just members of the Church. It will have reaffirmed a position as moral and political authority which has gradually eroded over the past few centuries. And it will become more powerful than it has ever been in the United States. However the *new* legal sanctions will not only empower the Church and the men who govern it; they will also underscore the androcratic ideology embodied in the teachings of the Church. It will have ruled for all of us that women have no right to control their bodies, that their function is to bear and nurture children, that they ought to obey their husbands just as their husbands must obey God. Such a view has been slipping over the past few decades, but now it will be given new life. It will most certainly make things harder for those who wish to define themselves outside the traditional categories and to live outside the traditional family structure, especially gay people. And if the Church reverts to the Thomist view that life begins in the semen, gay people may well be the next on the scaffold.

That is why the Edelin verdict should alarm us. For it may constitute a vital historical moment in a reactionary political trend, a trend toward the ascendancy of Church ideology. The drive to stop abortion will no doubt snowball. Newman Flanagan plans to prosecute four more doctors for research on fetal tissue. The charge? Grave-robbing. Abortion trials will get under way in other states. It will certainly become harder for a woman not to have her baby. In recent years, the Church has begun to turn against gay people as well. In New York City, the Archdiocese has teamed up with police and firefighters' groups to pressure the City Council to vote down two bills which would have outlawed discrimination against gay people. Here in Massachusetts, the Knights of Columbus have gone before the state legislature to defend the sodomy laws against immoralist assaults. Perhaps we are undergoing a sort of historical backlash against the sexual revolution of the Sixties and Seventies. Add to it the Supreme Court ruling on pornography and the efforts of concerned West Virginia parents to keep such sodomic works as *Huckleberry Finn* out of the hands of their impressionable sons, and we have the beginnings of a national trend which does not bode well for gay rights or gay revolution or any kind of gay at all.

We, as gays, must recognize this trend and do what we can to counteract it. For if it bodes ill for us, it has worse things in store for women. It forces us together. We cannot any longer escape the fact that in order to prevail against the trend, gays, feminists, and pro-abortionists must form a common alliance to defeat a common enemy and expose its male



is supposed to have. There may be a national organization, but there may not—perhaps we should discourage hierarchies. If there is, it should contain a system of checks and balances to ensure that women have the edge over men in the governing process, and that gays have the edge over straights, though this margin should not be wide enough to discourage men and heterosexuals from participating. Perhaps we need no common organization; the present group may retain their distinct identities but rally to one another's support in times of need. But we must recognize the singular imperative: to ideology. Gay people have a concrete interest in the preservation of abortion rights, and the abortion rights movement must realize how closely its destiny is intertwined with ours. Perhaps we should organize, and bring these diverse interests under a single heading: the Society for Human Enlightenment (SHE) is the name which immediately recommends itself to us. But this organization would have its own fund, a public education program, a lobby, an agreement on a common set of principles, everything that a special-interest group organize in the face of an agency more powerful than we.

But perhaps we have defined matters too negatively. Perhaps we have said too much about what we are against, and not enough about what we favor, and have spoken too much of staving off disaster and not enough of creating a positive non-sexist society. We should also ask what benefits each of us, in our separate movements, might reap as a result of our participation in such an unholy alliance. We think there are several. First of all, our unification will lead to an understanding among the members of each movement as to the difficulties of all the others in straight society, and as to their distinct political function. It may lead to an end to the more-oppressed-than-thou trip which has so divided the women's and gay movements. It is a pernicious form of narrowness that allows a gay man to complain about having to indicate his sex preference on a job application, while ignoring the plight of a gay woman who is ruled as an unfit mother, or that allows a lesbian feminist to incant about how cross-dressing oppresses women while a transvestite is raped in a jail cell. Such an alliance will counteract this narrowness both by allowing the different groups to enlighten and criticize one another, and by revealing a common focal point at which all the different interests; all the different oppressions, intersect. We will learn to share our differences, and we may well end up agreeing about something.

A recognition of common interest may also reconcile the opposition between two styles of political action. The gay movement and the women's movement have generally consisted of two wings, each condemning the other as illegitimate. One, the Establishmentarians, feel that the major question is one of civil rights, and that the best way to obtain those rights is to work within the system, pressuring legislatures to pass laws protecting women and gays from discrimination, and to repeal laws telling people what not to do with their bodies. The other group, the Revolutionaries, espouse the view that sexual repression originates not in the legal codes but in the economic and sexual power structure of society, the ascendancy of man over woman, straight over gay, wealthy over not so wealthy. They call for a revolutionary change in the structure of society, and seek a united front of oppressed groups which would rise up, and effect that change. They tend to disdain the Establishmentarians' effort to change the laws as a cosmetic gesture, at worst reactionary, at best irrelevant. The Establishmentarians, on the other hand, condemn the revolutionary approach as a move toward irrationalism which would alienate all those they would wish to liberate. At first sight, an alliance for human enlightenment seems to combine both arms of the movement. It would recognize that what goes on in the legislative halls does have an effect on the sexual power structure. (Note how the legalization of abortion can free a woman from family ties.) But it would also recognize that the system must be changed and its ideologies exposed, and that the only persons who could perform these twin tasks are the oppressed themselves. We should not be stayed by any artificial opposition between working within the system and working against it. Systems have been overthrown from within, e.g., Chile. Both are necessary, and neither will be effective without the other. We must preserve civil liberties if we are to stay out of prison and at our jobs (for those who still have them). But we cannot settle for liberalism—as long as we do not challenge the masculine foundations of power, any gains in the legislative arena will be offset by losses we will suffer in our personal lives. We may have the right to a job, but we will still have to explain ourselves to people. Pope Paul and the CIA will still be peering through our curtains.

In closing, we might reaffirm that what is at stake is not an issue, but an ideology which underlies all the issues, an ideology which connects anatomy and destiny, setting God over man, man over woman, and in any human relationship, one partner over another. Even though we may see how that ideology functions in the political life, we may find ourselves still thinking along its lines, so pervasive has been its cultural influence. A final result of the anti-sexist alliance must be the criticism of this ideology, in our own lives as well as in the lives of our masters. This criticism will not lead to a mere vacuum, but to a mutual understanding which will come as a result of our working together. Though we have been forced together from without, we may discover something binding us together from within. Hopefully a feeling of solidarity will develop over the years such that while we recognize our commonality of interest, we do so only against the relief of a respect for our differences. And while we challenge external authority and hierarchy, we will become more able to deal with each other as equals, a difficult feat at this point in history. We know that the Edelin verdict solidified the anti-abortion forces, and that it may boost the anti-gay forces. But let us hope that it drives us together as well, and spurs us on in such a way that gays, lesbians, feminists, and poor mothers become willing to put their differences into perspective and to recognize that we have a lot more in common than a common enemy.



Tenille 73

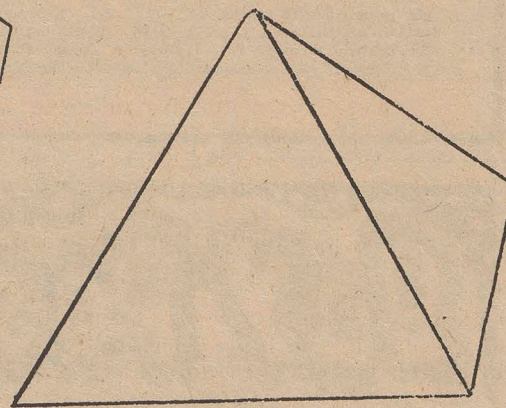
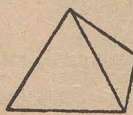
ON SEEING AN OLD TRICK'S PORTRAIT (in yellow underwear) HANGING AT THE WHITNEY

Alice,
You should have known Greg then,
on 15th Street,
when he was into red underwear:
it was just before his
phallic, '59 Christmas PEACE,
when Spanish-dark coffee
was served with Picayunes
and a poster honouring
Il Papa
flapped corner-free
and sleepless,
while all the way from Rome
it spoke arrivals...

His face was rounder then
(same lisp)
and soft
and not yet modeled
by philosophies of pain.

D. B. Kreitzberg

land of pyramids, city.
sonia, jewels in her crisp ears,
brown skin
conga belly



carved spics,
gargoyles over Sheridan Square;
egyptians are
multi-colored.
antique queens.
he left his slipper at the ballroom,
sonia did.

by Hector Tito Alvarez

Graphics Contest Winners

Mark Morris

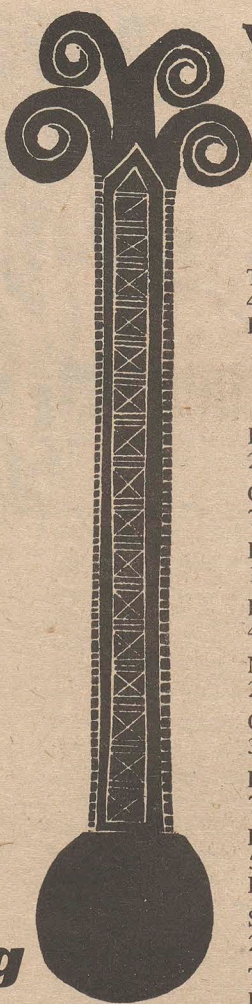
John Steczynski
Razzel Dazzel

Hector Tito Alvarez

Mark Tambella

GLEEP!

a subscription to each
& a kiss and a big
thank-you from **Fag Rag**



Where you can buy **Fag Rag**

EAST COAST

Maryland
The 31st Street Shop
425 E. 31st St.
Baltimore, MD 21218

Massachusetts
Boston—
Booklane News
201 Tremont St.
Charles Street Meetinghouse
70 Charles St.
Esplanade Paperback
107 Charles St.
Homophile Union of Boston
419 Boylston St.
North Station Cinema
276 Friend St.
Other Voices Bookstore
30 Bromfield St.
Paperback Booksmith
753 Boylston St.
Paperback Booksmith
516 Commonwealth Ave.
Kenmore Sq.
South Station Cinema
23 South St.
The Store 24
Huntington Ave.

Cambridge—
Grolier's Book Shop
6 Plympton St.
Harvard Sq.
Nini's Corner
Harvard Sq.
One Hundred Flowers
186 Hampshire St.
Inman Sq.
Out-of-Town News
Harvard Sq.
Reading International
47 Brattle St.
Harvard Sq.
Red Book Store
136 River St.
Temple Bar Bookshop
9 Boylston St.
Harvard Sq.

Provincetown—
Yesterday's Papers
179 Commercial St.

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia—
Giovanni's Room
232 South St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147
Meridian Bookstore
340 South St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147
Middle Earth Bookstore
1132 Pine St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147

Washington, D.C.

Community Bookstore
2028 P. Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Lambda Rising
1724 20th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20009

SOUTH

Alabama

A Good Book Store
210 Andrew Jackson NE
Huntsville, Alabama 35801

Louisiana

Sidney's Newsstand
917 Decatur St.
New Orleans, LA 70116

Florida

Co-op Books & Records
652 W. Tennessee St.
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

MIDWEST

Michigan

Ann Arbor—
New Morning Bookstore
124 E. Washington
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Detroit—
Gay Liberation
169 MacKenzie Hall
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan 48202

Minnesota

Savran's Paperback
301 Cedar Ave.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

Nebraska

Gay Action Group
333 N. 13th St.
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Ohio

Toledo—
Fantasy Bookstore
113 N. Erie
Toledo, OH 43624
Yellow Springs—
Epic Bookstore
232 Xenia Ave.
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Wisconsin

Madison—
Madison Book Co-op
660 1/2 State St.
Madison, WI 53703
Milwaukee—
Milwaukee Gay Community
Services Center
2211 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Rhode Island

Dorrwar Bookstore
224 Thayer St.
Providence, RI 02906

Vermont

Vermont Bookshop
100 Dorset St.
So. Burlington, VT 05401

MOUNTAIN STATES

Colorado

Gay Coalition of Denver
Box 18501
Denver, CO 80218

New Mexico

Living Batch Bookstore
2406 Central Ave. SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106

Utah

The Cosmic Aeroplane
306 So. West Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

WEST COAST

California

Berkeley—
Granma Books
2509 Telegraph Ave.
Berkeley, CA 04704
San Francisco—
City Lights Bookstore
261 Columbus Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94133
Gay Liberation Bookservice
Box 40397
San Francisco, CA 94140
Modern Times Bookstore
3800 17th St.
San Francisco, CA 94114
Paperback Traffic
558 Castro St.
San Francisco, CA 94114

Washington

Seattle—
A Different Drummer Bookstore
420 Broadway
Seattle, WA 98102
Gay Community Center
1726 16th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122
Left Bank Bookstore
92 Pike St.
Seattle, WA 98101
Red and Black
4736 University NE
Seattle, WA
Sultan's Lavender Cinema
1313 1st Ave.
Seattle, WA 98101

INTERNATIONAL

Australia

Gay Liberation Bookservice
P.O. Box 12, NTH
Adelaide
S. Australia 5006

Canada

Androgyny Bookshop
1225a Crescent St.
Montreal, Quebec 107
Glad Day Books
139 Seaton St.
Toronto, Ontario M5A 2T2

England

Compendium
240 & 281 Camden High St.
London, N.W. 1

Scotland

Shirlee of Greyfriars Market
14, Forrest Road
Edinburgh, EH1 2QN

answers

A	L	T	H	A	N		P		T	R	O	O	P		C	A	S	E	Y	D	O	N	O	V	A	N
S	A	H	A	R	A		R	A	R	E	B	I	T		O	N	O	N	E	F	E	T	I	S	H	
S	W	A	M	P	Y		E	T	A	C	U	L	A	T	I	O	N		A	V	O	W	A	L		
F	R	E	E	S		H	A	U	L	S		E	N	D	I	S	A	N	E	N	D	E	G			
P	I		G		K	A	R	M	A	T	I	S		D	A	P	H	M	I	S		S	E	A		
A	R	R	O	G	A	N	T		A	I	G	R	E	T		Y	L	I	E	N		C	O	P	S	
I	M	A	G	I	N	E	U	S		H	O	I	D	O	R	E		E	V	A	S		H	O		
N		G	R	O	V	E	R		F	E	N	C	E	S	I	N		N	E	L		F	I	T		
T	R	E	E		I	D	E	S		D	A	K	O	T	A		A	D		A	R	C	M	E		
E		R	E	L	A	P	S	E		D	O			D		E	L	A	N	I	E		A	K	A	
R	I	N	S		P	R	O	M	P	T		L	O	O	T	S		L	A	V	E	N	D	E	R	
T	E	M	P	E	R		A	M	B	E	R		O	N		E		A	C	R	I	D		A	P	
A	C	E	S		A	R	H	Y	E	R	A		N	E	O	L	I	T	H	I	C		T	W	O	
C	T	N		S	T	O	P		R	E	S	A	G		N	H		D	E	F	U	N	C	T		
K			S	T	E	L	L	A		T	H	E	A	T	R	E		O	R		A	R	K	Y		
Y	A	L	O	O		L	I	G	H	T		S	T	R	A	D	D	L	E		A	N	K	L	E	
G	O	W	N	S		N		E	A		T	E	A	S	E	R		A	N	D	D	E	A	T	H	
M	E	L	E		E	G	A	T	S	O	N		D	O	N	A	L	D		D	A	Y	S		U	
B	A	L	D	W	I	N		I	S		G	E	N	E	R	A	T	I	O	N		N		U	S	
T	R	I		A	N		A	N		V	I	T	O		I		A	N	A	R	C	H	I	S	T	
A		P	U	L	S	E	S		G	A	V	E	H	E	A	D	T	O		M	E	U	N	L		
M	O	S	L	E	M		A	R	I	E	S		G	L	E	E		B	E	E		M	A	R	E	
R	A	P	E		T	U	N	N	E	L		G	O		N	A	K	E	D		P	E	E	R		

GLP

THE AUSTRALIAN RADICAL HOMOSEXUAL JOURNAL

Towards the analysis of radical sex politics

Nov/Dec issue (No 5) includes:
THE HOMOSEXUAL MOVEMENT IN AMERICA, by Dennis Altman
ANATOMICAL NOTES ON GAY LIBERATION, by Paul Foss
CHILEAN SQUAD MURDERS HOMOSEXUALS, from Argentina

Jan/Feb 1975 issue (No 6) will include:
INTERVIEW WITH GORE VIDAL, taped with GLP at the Menzies

Subscription for 12 months:
(within Australia) Aus\$4
(New Zealand airmail) Aus\$7
(2nd class airmail overseas), Aus\$10

Send to: GLP, P.O. Box A76,
Sydney South, 2000.
New South Wales, AUSTRALIA.

Gay Post

A WORK OF ART A LABOR OF LOVE A GAYZINE
ESSAYS GAYTORIALS POEMS GRAPHICS
ALTERNATIVES QUESTIONS ANSWERS
LOVE JOY HUMOR GAYTOONES and MORE.
FREE TO PRISONERS IN JAIL & MENTAL INSTI.
TO POOR TOO. SEND POSTAGE R. HALL POB 227
one year \$6 1/2 year \$3 or 25¢ each

WRITEUS:
R. HALL POB 227
Old Chelsea Sta.
N.Y. NY 10011

... or, of course, **SUBSCRIBE !**

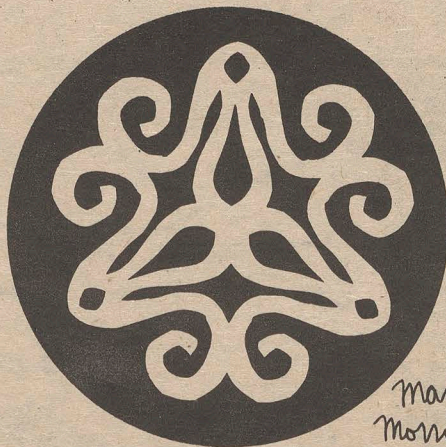
BOX 331
KENMORE STATION
BOSTON, MA 02215

LIFETIME Sponsor: \$100
FRIEND of Fag Rag: \$25
12 Issues: \$7 (1st Class: \$10)

Name _____
Address _____
Zip _____

Free to those incarcerated in prisons, mental hospitals, and the armed forces.

Letters



Dear *Fag Rag*,

Arthur Evans' recent article (*Fag Rag* 11) is grotesquely cliché-ridden and inaccurate. This is a pity, because his essay is otherwise interesting. He wants to distinguish between Judaism and Christianity on the one hand and what he calls "The Old Religion" on the other. Whether this is worth doing, I don't know; but Mr. Evans certainly doesn't do it worthily. After several pages about Celtic days and ways, he finally turns to the Jews, whom he disposes of in one brief paragraph. It is simply not good enough to reduce a thousand years of history to "The ancient Israelites were a band of militaristic marauders who worshipped a stern and sexless god of war, Yahweh..." Even assuming his condemnatory adjectives to be true, the reader justifiably will want to know what Mr. Evans' sources are. One might also wonder how so transparently stupid a race managed to affect the lives of countless people then and afterwards. This Mr. Evans never explains. Perhaps it can't be explained. He should still recognize, as any good historian must, the sources of power wielded by peoples or "institutions."

This seems to me his greatest flaw. He cannot really take the past seriously, unless it is suitably exotic, Celtic, and remote. If he wishes to decry Judaism and Christianity (and Athens and Rome) let him do so with some display of knowledgeable passion, not with anachronistic twentieth-century prejudices and clichés.

Finally, somebody should tell Mr. Evans that without the Universities, whose "bookishness" he condemns, neither he nor anybody else would be able to re-construct the Celtic civilization he holds up for our admiration.

Yours truly,
Reed Woodhouse

Dear *Fag Rag*,

As I was copying out your address my eye stole over the article you had on plagiarism in the last issue. I don't care one way or the other about plagiarism, but I did note with some shame your denunciations of people who have nothing better to help you with than carping letters and complaints. As I have just written such a letter, I wanted to say that I appreciate your difficulty and really would like to help in other nicer ways. On the other hand, I don't think criticism of the paper is a bad thing. *Fag Rag*, whether by design or chance, is a pretty formidably intellectual magazine, and I for one like it that way. Criticism can help to make it genuinely a people's paper, a paper that reflects the interests and passions of its readers. Don't get so trapped into some party line that you no longer fulfill that duty to us.

Yours,
Reed Woodhouse

WHO DUN IT?????

ADDRESS ALL COMPLAINTS TO THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS:

Norman Walker
Steve Abbott
Chris Storey
Larry Anderson
David Emerson Smith
Ken Dudley
Charley Shively
Loftin Elvey Jr.
Ken Sanchez
Sal Farinella
Tom Reeves
Frederick Greenfield
John Mitzel
Gary Jane Hoisington
Michael Thompson

Dear FAG RAG:


As a gay activist and a historian I view with alarm your plan to publish Arthur Evans' clotted farrago of pseudo-scholarship "as the first in a series of FAG RAG books." Evans is guilty of systematic distortion of evidence, both primary and secondary, adherence to outdated and novelistic works, and self-conscious mythopeia. He depends heavily on the currently modish, but frequently discredited writings of the dilettante Margaret Murray. (For the latest refutation see the article by the formidable Norman Cohn, "Was There Ever a Society of Witches?" *Encounter*, Dec. 1974, pp. 26-41; to appear in his forthcoming *Europe's Inner Demons*.) Evans also accepts the myth of universal prehistoric matriarchy, launched by Bachofen but never established as fact. The existence of female figurines in prehistoric Europe no more demonstrates the existence of matriarchy than does the prevalence of madonna images in Gothic and Renaissance times.

As an example of distorted and misleading use of evidence, my patience permits me to cite only one readily detectable example among scores of nuggets that any historian can detect. Evans claims that *sabbatizzare* derives from *sabazia*, citing Liddell & Scott, Lewis & Short, and J.B. Russell as his authorities. Not one of these three authorities makes this connection: this is pure Arthur Evans and the parade of pseudo-scholarship is simply designed to bully the reader into accepting his fantastic etymology. (Perhaps this is why Evans tries to put down booklearning at the end of his article: he never successfully mastered the techniques of scholarship, though he does not hesitate to make a parody of them to sell others on his dubious mythography.)

The most important point, however, is that the Old Religion extolled by Evans and others never did exist. It is a syncretistic fiction, a phantasmagoria of modern pseudo-scholarship. As a gay person and a scholar I am concerned that we avoid the Golden Age myths peddled by people like Evans. Nonsense of this kind dishonors both scholarship and the gay movement.

Apart from Evans' multiple errors and distortions—and a long catalogue could be compiled were there world enough and time—there is a much more serious question. Our demand for dignity and our full rights as human beings does not depend in any way on what may or may not have happened in 11,000 B.C. It depends entirely on what this society *here and now* can be made to concede to us. What changes we can make follows from our resolution to take action on our own behalf. Consoling historical fantasies are no help...because they will eventually be recognized as simply fantasies.

Sincerely,
Wayne Dynes

gay 
liberator

Box 631-A
Detroit 48232

12 issues for \$4 in US, \$5 outside US, \$8 supporting.

Dear *Fag Rag*—

What a swell time I had at your meeting last night, which might merely have been a meeting, flights of fancy, fits of spleen, had it not been for the inspired ways you all fluffed the nap of the pile—I remember, among other things, the graduated levels of smile on John, Chris' yesses all the way from the bottom, Ken's confidence, when called for, Ken's calm when required, the way Larry knew how & when to traverse the room, and Charles Shively orchestrating an enraged puppy—it all had a beginning, a middle, & an end (I think the middle was when everybody got up and left the first time), and I believe that's because you all love *Fag Rag* and in that way each other, & know the thing's alive & working. What a nice thing to know about anything.

I think I love you too.—

Skip Burns

★★★★ CRITICS ACCLAIM ★★★★★

"Straight to Hell,
the American Journal of Cocksucking & Current Affairs"

"Fascinating," says Gore Vidal. "Roughest,
raunchiest gay publication," says Village Voice.

"An underground sensation," says Jearld Moldenhauer of The Body Politic.

Sample copy 60c. Checks to Cash. Use this address: Box 982, Radio City Sta., NYC 10019. No "straights;" private newsletter for us (bi- & homosexuals) only.

Los Angeles this summer will be the site of much legal activity concerning the rights of Gay people to equality in public accommodations. The National Lawyers Guild (N.L.G.) and the Gay Caucus at the People's College of Law in L.A. will be funding from 5-10 law students and legal workers to file suits for equal rights under the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Section 51 of the California Penal Code). The act states:

"All persons within the jurisdiction of this State are free and equal, and no matter what their race, color, religion, ancestry, or national origin are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever."

While the term "sexual orientation" is not explicit in the wording of the Act, the Supreme Court of California has held that the terms race, religion etc. are merely illustrative of the extent of the protections of the Act and its applicability not restricted to them. The court, in fact, has indicated that Section 51 would prohibit discrimination against Gay people.

So far, the act has not been applied specifically to a case of Gay discrimination, but the Project members will be bringing such cases before the court.

In discussing the project, Thomas Coleman, a leading Gay activist attorney and legal coordinator of the Project stated, "Gay people are no longer willing to hide and segregate themselves from the mainstream of society. We want to have the freedom of choice to use and enjoy Gay as well as non-gay places of entertainment and public accommodation. Such a Project could help to raise the consciousness of Gay people about their rights in public accommodations and help educate the community at large of the discrimination suffered by Gay people in this area. Finally, it would provide legal workers with the opportunity to develop legal skills in helping an oppressed group."

In keeping with the policies of the Summer Projects Committee of the N.L.G. which is funding the project, half the workers will be from outside the L.A. area and half will be women. The Guild is also sponsoring summer projects for the Wounded Knee defence and Attica defendants as well as providing legal services to the United Farm Workers.

Administering the Project in L.A. will be the Gay Caucus of the People's College of Law. This new law school at L.A.'s MacArthur Park is operated by a coalition of legal groups—La Raza Natl. Law Students Assn., Asian Law Collective, National Conference of Black Lawyers, and the National Lawyers Guild. The School welcomes Gay people and members of other oppressed groups normally excluded from legal education. The Gay Caucus has been active in decision-making at the School and, in addition to the Summer Project, is actively recruiting Gay applicants to the School.

GAYS & THE LAW

The Peoples College of Law of the National Lawyers Guild is a new 4-year law school oriented toward those usually excluded from the legal educational process.

Gay people, especially lesbians and third world gays, are definitely welcome. Entrance requirements are 2 years of college leading towards a Bachelor's degree, or you must take the college equivalency test. Tuition is low. All applicants should be committed to use the law as a tool for social change.

For more information, write *GAY CAUCUS*, c/o PCL/NLG, 2228 West 7th Street, L.A. CA 90057 or call (213) 388-8171.

for 10 years

VECTOR

The monthly source for GAY
Fiction/Photography/Theatre/Books
Politics/Advice/Centerspreads/Dining
Entertainment/Astrology/Features
CELEBRATING THE GAY EXPERIENCE
SUBSCRIPTION (12 ISSUES) \$10
SINGLE ISSUE \$1

Published by:
The Society For Individual Rights
83 6th St., San Francisco, Ca. 94103