

## **GPU news. Volume 6, Number 12 September 1977**

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# GPU NEWS

September 1977

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*(Photo page 29, August 1977 issue by Mark Behar)*

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# MHRA PLANS BENEFITS FOR BATT CASE

By Roger Durand

**Milwaukee, WI**—It may be an old cliché, but true: "The wheels of justice grind ever so slowly," and in this day and age one has to add: expensively.

Patrick Batt, local gay leader who was fired from Marion Heights Nursing home for being gay on May 6, has yet to set foot in a court room and his legal fees have already mounted to **\$4000!**

Marion Heights has answered his suit admitting they fired him because he was a homosexual and also claim he has not filed a "state action." His attorneys are now answering this motion to dismiss. They have also added the Aumiller decision to their brief. (See related Story on page 8).

Local gay business leaders along with several gay spokespersons realized that Pat will have a long and expensive legal battle; and, he very likely won't be the last. Therefore an ongoing foundation with tax exempt status was set up to assist him and other gays in their legal battles.

**The Milwaukee Human Rights Alliance** has a five member board of trustees: Charles Balistreri, Wayne Bernhagen, Roger Durand, Donna Martin, and Bob Moore. In addition a long time referee of Chapter 13 Bankruptcy Court will audit and review all expenditures.

To date Pat has received \$425 from Gay Peoples Union and a benefit given by **The Factory/On Broadway**. All the monies received from GPU have gone directly to his attorneys. As you can see, he has a long way to go. You can help. Send your checks to the Milwaukee Human Rights Alliance, PO Box 92872, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

A variety of fund raising events have been planned to aid Pat in his legal expenses. They include:

**September 5—Wreck Room.** A Cookout/Corn Roast 4-7 pm. \$1 donation. There will also be art works for sale.

**September 18—Circus Disco.** Pre-

senting Wanda Lust from Chicago. 10:00 pm \$1.50 donation.

**September 25—Manhole** (Green Bay). Full production of **Let My People Come**. 8 pm \$2.50 donation.

**September 29—Gold Coast** (Chicago). Benefit night \$1.00 donation.

**October 8—The Factory/On Broadway.** Full production of **Let My People Come** With added acts and attractions. 8:30 pm \$3.50.

**Man's Country** in Chicago is plan-

ning a Casino Night with Las Vegas style games with "prizes and surprises" during Thanksgiving weekend. Watch for details.

In addition an evening with Meloday is planned for September.

There will be other fund raising events for Pat in the future, but we all have a chance to get out and support him during the month of September. Plan now to attend these fund raising events.

## NATIONAL MEETING OF GAY LEADERS

**Denver, CO**—The first national gay meeting since the **Advocate International Conference** held in Chicago over a year ago was held in The Mile High City from July 29-30. Called by the Board of Elders of the **Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles**, the **Gay Leadership Conference** was co-sponsored by the **National Gay Task Force (NGTF)**, **The Gay Rights National Lobby (GRNL)**, and **Dignity**. Approximately 500 gay men and women attended the conference.

Ginny Apuzzo of **GRNL**, Jean O'Leary of **NGTF**, and Rev. Troy Perry of **UFMCC**, keynoted the conference. Apuzzo warned that the new coalition of the radical right threatened gay people. O'Leary called for a strong national educational movement and said, "We've got to show some emotion and tell the public about discrimination and allow the public to see some of the suffering that gays experience."

The fiery Rev. Perry gave a personal statement on the meaning of gay liberation and emphasized the need for full-time national funding of the gay movement. "Our national leaders are starving," he said.

However, the conference tabled a resolution to set up a national gay fund-raising organization. Most leaders in attendance opposed the idea because it would have created a rival organization to **NGTF**.

They did pass over 30 resolutions. They called for the boycott of Florida citrus products and Coors Beer. They gave gay support to the Equal Rights Amendment and a woman's right to abortion. The delegates called on President Carter to set up a national commission to investigate the issue of child abuse. They also urged local gay groups to include youths in their projects. A resolution to boycott Coca-Cola (who has large orange juice interest) failed.

The Miami gays proposed the Florida citrus boycott. They had strongly opposed such a boycott during the referendum campaign but changed their minds when the **Florida Citrus Commission** refused to make a statement on gay rights. They emphasized that the boycott was rendered "not out of malice for Anita but out of a desire for equal rights for gay people." All agreed that the subject of gay rights should never again be placed on any ballot.

Most of Saturday was devoted to workshops on legislative and political action run by **GRNL**.

Rep. Elaine Noble delivered the closing speech. She stressed the need for national action. "I think that we're discovering that state-by-state votes exhaust us," she said.

Delegates had mixed feelings about the total worth of the conference.



# GAYS RAID STRAIGHT BAR

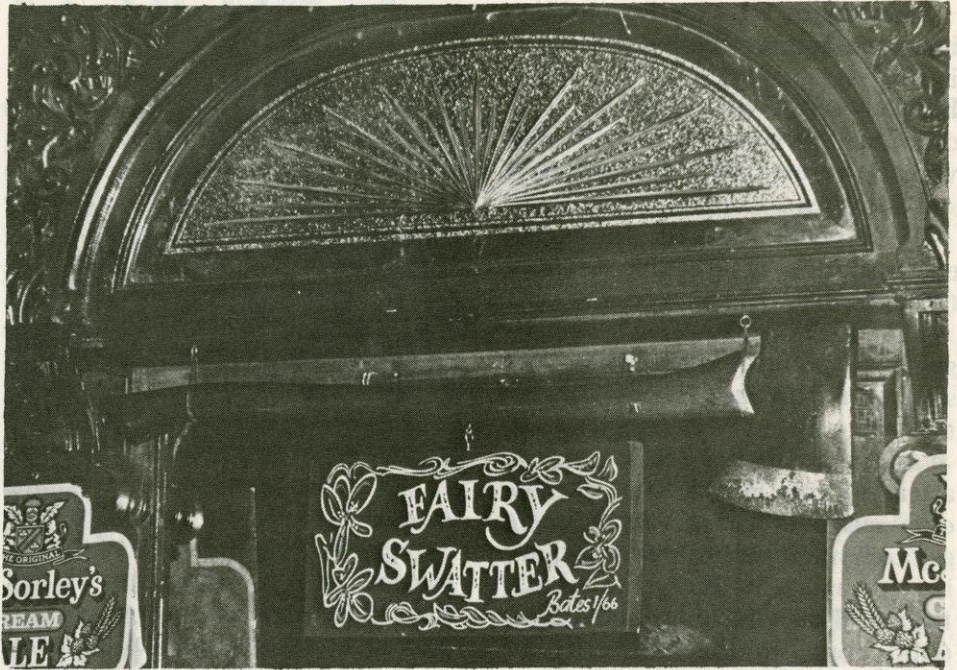
By Robert W. Imlah, Jr.

New York, N.Y. Thurs. July 28- At 10:30 pm 100 gay men and women entered Geordies- a straight bar on 3rd Ave. near 83rd St. Most were members of the Gay Activist Alliance which had planned the zap. The object of the raid was to force the manager/owner to remove a wooden sign which was hung from a large fire axe in the center of the bar. The professionally lettered sign stated Fairy Swatter. GAA and other groups had lodged protests with the owner for a number of weeks in vain.

Armed with whistles and fly swatters (labeled bigot swatters), the gays completely surprised the patrons and bartenders. Gays jammed the inside and many picketed outside. Immediately a very determined continuous chant began, punctuated by forceful swats on the top of the bar "Take down the sign -- Gay Power Now!"

Six police cars lined up outside but not one cop made any move to enter the establishment. The owner scurried back and forth from the cops to his bartenders at least three times during the next half hour. One can imagine him frantically begging the cops to go in and bust the fairies but being met with a sympathetic but firm "hands-off" policy. Apparently New York's Boys-in-Blue have learned or been forced to learn restraint in dealing with our large and ever increasing gay minority.

In any event, the owner saw the error of his ways (and the loss of business dollars) and told his bartender to take the sign down. This was no sooner done than the chanting stopped and a tumultuous cheer arose. Gay Power had struck again in the Big Apple and the victory was sweet. A small struggle over possession of the offending sign and a heated denial by the owner that he had told the bartender to replace the sign as soon as we left were drowned out by a new but equally enthusiastic chant -- "Give Me A G. . ."



Photographs by Peter A. Melillo



## INNOCENT MAN FREED

Michigan City, IN—For 30 years Ralph Logaugh has been in prison for 3 murders he did not commit, even though officials agreed more than 25 years ago he was not guilty.

Lobaugh at first pleaded guilty to the crimes but latter proclaimed his innocence, and, after an investigation, officials agreed he did not commit the murders.

Another man eventually was ex-

ecuted for the slayings, but the state made no effort to release him.

When the investigation cleared him of the crimes, it said: "Ralph Lobaugh is a degenerate and a homosexual, not a fit person to be free on the streets of any city, but not guilty of killing any of these three women."

He was released last month.



# YEADON TO SPEAK AT GPU MEETING

**Milwaukee, WI**—Gay Peoples Unions regular monthly business meeting on September 12, at 8 pm at the Farwell Center will include a special election for President to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Alyn Hess.

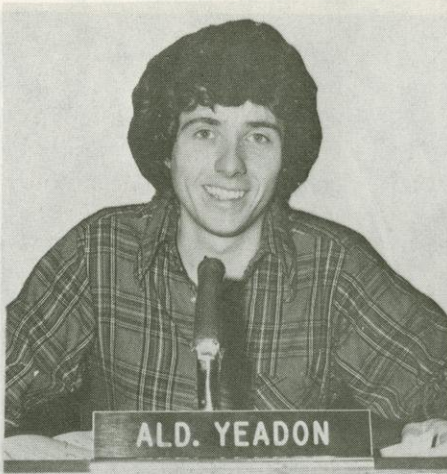
Three people have been nominated: Miriam ben-Shalom, William (Dutch) Bray and Roger Durand.

Jim Yeadon, Madison's openly gay Alderperson, will be the guest speaker at the September 19 meeting.

As a gay activist, Yeadon played a leading role in extending antidiscrimination safeguards for Madison's gay community. He also was a binding force in the May 1 anti-Anita Bryant Bash which attracted over 600 people to the University of Wisconsin's Memorial Union Great Hall in Madison.

GPU's September 26 meeting will be an open rap session. All meetings are at 8 pm at the Farwell Center and open to the public.

GPU is also having their Second



Annual Bike Hike this month. The event, held to raise funds for supporting existing programs at the Farwell Center. Riders may pick up official sponsor forms at Monday night meetings of GPU. Participants will meet at 9:30 pm on the 24th (rain date, Oct. 1) at the Center, for an invigorating 25 mile trip along the beautiful southern branch of the "Milwaukee 76 Bike Trail" along the lakefront.

## UPDATE ON AB323

**Milwaukee, WI**—State Representative Stephen Leopold [D-Mil] gave members of Gay Peoples Union an update on the status of Assembly Bill 323 at the groups August 25 meeting.

Leopold is not only one of the sponsors of the consenting adult bill but floor manager for the measure.

Leopold explained why the bill was "shelved for the summer" and gave GPU members the past history of some of the problems surrounding the legislation.

He emphasized the "tremendous victory we achieved when the bill passed on the first reading." He said the subsequent "language" problems had all been corrected and the bill would be reported out again during the September session.

AB 323 was sent to the Joint Finance Committee at the end of the Spring Session. Radio Station

WRJN (Racine) had raised a side issue on the bill. Don Edmark of the station claimed gay people did not have the endorsements of several state and national groups. At his request House Speaker Edward G. Jackamonis investigated the matter.

Don White of the Speaker's office filed a 21 page report which showed the endorsements endorsed AB 323 "in principal" if not "specifically." Roger Durand of the Wisconsin Alliance for Sexual Privacy (WASP) said he felt the report "cleared the air on that issue."

Leopold urged people to write to their Assemblymen. "If they voted against the bill, ask them why. If they voted for it, write and thank them."

Letters should be sent to the legislators at the State Capitol Building, Madison, WI 53702

The hike offers the shyer or less athletic members of the gay community an opportunity to support and sponsor bicycle riders for a certain amount-per-mile contribution, to help finance much needed services such as the VD Clinic, the hotline, and sex research library. Sponsors are asked to be generous with their pledges so that last years amount (almost \$1000 by eight riders) can be quickly exceeded.

## TARS GUILTY IN BEATING

**Milwaukee, WI**—Two Navy men accused of beating and robbing Earl T. Hoffman, 45, who they said angered them when he made homosexual advances, were sentenced to one year in prison after a jury acquitted them on all but one of four charges in the incident.

After a three day trial, Larry C. Rogers and Ronald Sheldon, both 19, were found guilty of false imprisonment.

When sentencing the men, Circuit Judge Robert W. Landry said, "The brutality of these acts cannot go unpunished."

Landry said there was no justification for what the sailors did and noted that their disgust with homosexuality unfortunately reflected a popular view. He also said there probably would be some people who considered his sentence too light.

Hoffmann testified that the sailors were hitchhiking when he picked them up in his car. They took his wallet containing credit cards and a few dollars, beat him, stripped him of his clothes, bound and gagged him, put him in the trunk of his car and dumped him, semiconscious in a field, where they urinated on him.

The defendants contended that he made homosexual advances. Hoffmann denied that.

The two were acquitted of endangering safety by conduct regardless of life, auto theft and robbery but guilty of false imprisonment.



# ANITA BRYANT UPDATE

**Lakeland, FL**—The Florida Citrus Commission has given its tacit approval to Anita Bryant's anti-gay rights campaign—but she says she will give up the national campaign anyway.

Bryant told television reporters prior to a meeting of the Citrus Commission that she no longer intends to travel the country giving anti-gay speeches.

"We're not carpetbaggers," her husband Bob Green told NBC News. Acting as her manager he said the singer would stick closer to home in the future.

Bryant did not close the door on future anti-gay appearances, but she is known to be weary of demonstrations which meet her wherever she goes.

"Three things count to her," a source close to her said. "Her talent agency, her contract with the Citrus Commission and her contract with First Federal Savings of Miami."

Perhaps such actions taken by Jack Webb, a convention center owner in Joplin, MO, has been a factor in her decision.

Webb refused to rent his facilities to a religious group when he learned they planned to feature Bryant and Charles Colson as its keynote speakers. "I don't want people like that associated with me or any of my businesses," he said. Of Bryant Webb said, "She couldn't make it as Miss America, her career was on the skids. She couldn't peddle records, so she started pushing orange juice. Then she hit the stand against peoples rights, got some national coverage and now has taken to the banquet circuit."

Or actions such as:

Radio station **WGFT**, in Youngstown, Ohio, announced its intentions to delete all Florida Citrus Commission commercials featuring Anita from its **ABC** Network news and sports programming and to refuse any direct advertising from the Citrus Commission. A second **ABC** affiliate, **WILI** in Williamantic, CN,

has joined **WGFT** in this policy.

The Board of Trustees of the **Dade County Coalition For Human Rights** has resolved to initiate a national boycott against the Commission. "We are urging the public not to buy Florida oranges or Florida orange juice—and we ask this in the name of common decency until the Citrus Commission stops their insensitive and discriminatory attitudes against all gay groups."

Bryant still plans to write her book, "Save Our Children: One Woman's Crusade Against the Sin of Homosexuality." The book will be published by Fleming H. Revell Co. Along with recounting the Dade County campaign, the book will have specific guidelines for people

who want to set up a similar organization in their own area.

It should be noted that despite wide coverage from the **Associated Press** wire and TV news people that the Florida Citrus Commission's ad and merchandising committee had voted to retain Bryant as a representative from them. Art Darling, who handles the Commission's PR, says this is categorically untrue. They never "voted" to retain her nor did they "renew her contract." The reason? Anita Bryant's contract is not up for renewal. It runs until August 1978 and is the same contract she has had with them for the last 10 years, with only money increases from \$35,000 to \$100,000 a year being different.

## VD CLINIC EXPANDED

**Milwaukee, WI**—The Venereal Disease Examination Center, in operation since October 1974 as a screening examination, counseling and information center, is expanding its services to include once a week immediate diagnosis and treatment by a physician, beginning September 1. The Clinic will be open 8-11 pm Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays for free VD screening and exams, and Wednesdays for free diagnosis and treatment at the Farwell Center 1568 N Farwell, Milwaukee. Expansion necessitates elimination of the Saturday test day for Thursday.

Outreach programs at the **Club-Milwaukee Baths** and the **Factory/On Broadway Health Club** will not be effected by the day changes.

"Getting treatment at the GPU VD Clinic will mean that we don't have to endure unreasonably long waits at the Milwaukee Health Department's Social Hygiene Clinic," commented Mark Behar, Director of the Clinic. Some people were forced to wait as long as 3 or 4 hours just to see a doctor at the downtown facility. "Now we offer the same examination, immediate diagnosis and treatment that they do, with

shorter waits, and a friendlier, more congenial atmosphere," he concluded.

Medical records required by law will be specially encoded to protect the confidentiality of all clients using the Clinic. Other specialized equipment and supplies have been acquired and a special brochure on venereal diseases in the gay community is being written.

Since the cost of equipment and medications necessary for a treatment facility are greater than that needed for just a diagnostic center, donations are most urgently needed to help finance the expansion and to keep services free. Donations may be sent to the GPU VD Clinic, %The Farwell Center, 1568 North Farwell, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

More information can be obtained by visiting the Farwell Center or by phoning 347-1222 during the Clinic's hours of operation.

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**GPU NEWS**  
**276-0612**

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# GAY TEACHER WINS LAWSUIT

Newark, DE—Richard Aumiller, a gay teacher at the University of Delaware who was fired last year because of his public acknowledgment of his homosexuality, has won his law suit against the school.

Federal Judge Murray Schwartz awarded the former theatre director back pay of \$12,454 and \$15,000 in damages. Expressing the opinion that Aumiller's right of freedom of expression had been violated, the judge assessed \$5,000 of the damage money personally to the university president instrumental in firing him, E. A. Trabant.

His dismissal followed the appearance of three newspaper articles in which he discussed his homosexuality and role as the faculty advisor to the campus gay student group.

Trabant asked Aumiller to keep quiet about being gay, and not use the university as a vehicle for expressing his views. He reminded Aumiller that his position would be up for review at mid-year. The same day of this meeting another article appeared about the campus gay group—and Trabant, at that point, apparently decided not to rehire him.

Aumiller was told that he was being dismissed because of the three articles.

He took his case to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which recommended that he be reinstated. The University Senate also called for his reinstatement. Trabant did not relent and his decision stood.

He then took his case to court. The trial lasted for 5 days during September of 1976, but the decision was not issued until June, 1977.

In his decision, Judge Schwartz stated that Aumiller's statements were not intended to seek converts but rather sought a change in how society treats homosexuals. This was in response to the school's assertions which characterized Aumiller as seeking to turn the campus into a "mecca for homosexuals" and of "making his bedroom activities public information and a point of evangelistic endeavor to recruit more gays to his supposed cause."

Now at Duke University, Aumiller has no desire to return to Delaware. Duke will not make any statement regarding Aumiller's troubles with the University of Delaware, since

the court ordered that the matter is to be erased from all employment records and future employers' consideration.

Delaware will not appeal.

## NGTF CONSIDERS CHICAGO OFFICE

Chicago, IL—The National Gay Task Force (NGTF) announced plans to open an office in Chicago in October, according to Jean O'Leary, national co-executive director.

Plans are to have the branch office staffed by 2 co-field directors, a man and a woman, as well as an executive secretary.

Two fund-raisers have been appointed to launch a drive to raise the necessary \$30,000 to open the branch.

"We want the Midwest to realize our great struggle for gay rights, especially as it affects people in the center of our nation," said Ms. O'Leary.

NGTF had originally divided the U. S. into seven regional areas in order to involve more people on the local level. However, this plan was scrapped in favor of state offices.

There was some concern that a local NGTF office would infringe on the efforts of Chicago gay groups and their projects. NGTF said they were coming in as a "support unit" for these groups and would deal with problems local volunteer groups had not dealt with and could not without a full time staff.

Ginny Vida, media director for NGTF told GPU NEWS that plans to open a regional office in Chicago would depend on how fund-raising for such a project progressed.

Chuck Renslow and Marcus Overton will handle the fund-raising.

Chicago GayLife claims that the search is on for qualified personnel to staff the office.

## NGTF FILES WITH FCC

New York, NY—The National Gay Task Force recently filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission asking the FCC to require broadcasters to interview gay leaders as part of their "Community Ascertainment" process. Specifically, the petition asks that the Commission add "organizations of and for the gay community" to its checklist of 19 groups and institutions which broadcast licensees are expected to consult in ascertaining the needs of the community they are licensed to serve.

Letters to the FCC in support of the petition are urgently needed. The deadline for receipt of comments is September 12.

Send your letters to: Office of

the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M. St., NW Washington, DC 20554.

Your letter should refer to the File Number of the petition: RM-2937.

"The basic premise that a licensee cannot ignore a strongly expressed community problem or need becomes meaningless when that need is voiced by a group which, by definition, need not be consulted because it is not named on the ascertainment checklist," the petition asserts.

GPU PHONE

**271-5273**



# FEEDBACK

Dear Editor:

Wayne Jefferson hasn't been in the civil rights movement long if he believes the story of a gay performing a tearoom penisectomy on a nine-year-old boy. Like ethnic jokes, atrocity stories are universal. The incident always happened in a city or town other than where you are, and never can it be verified because the media are suppressing the story for reason "x." Blacks and Whites, Cats and Prots, Greeks and Turks, Arabs and Jews, Hindus and Muslims, etc., etc.—the list has no end.

If anyone doubts the saying, "the liberation of homosexuals must be the work of homosexuals themselves," let them ask the Blacks. They sat through thousands of biracial councils before discovering that their purpose was to appease, contain, and defuse. Power is never given away—and gays have power as they recently proved in San Francisco.

Peace,  
Douglas Roome  
San Mateo, Ca.

Dear Friends:

We thoroughly enjoyed your August cover—"Language of Oppression." So sly of you to stick the word "gay" in with the other abuse. You may find our editorial of over seven years ago of interest, considering your insight.

Keep up the good work. All good wishes.

Cordially,  
Don Slater  
Homosexual Information Center  
Los Angeles, Ca.

Editor's note:

*Mr. Slater enclosed an editorial from a 1970 issue of Tangents, one of the early homophile publications, which deplores the sloppy use of the word gay. The editorial also complains about those who insist upon capitalizing gay every time it is used. GPU NEWS does not capitalize the word gay because it is not a generic term. We do use it, since it enjoys widespread acceptance.*

To the Editor:

I would like to commend Wayne Jefferson for his article, "Liberals: Where Are You?," in the August issue of GPU News. Like many a good essayist, he opened up for me a view that was there all along, but which I hadn't the perceptiveness to clearly see. Yes indeed, I now fully realize, this is the one cause which our "heroic" liberal/civil rights leaders have, by and large, not had the courage and integrity to champion, nor the wiley sagacity required to defuse this "delicate" issue so that it can find a legitimate place in the arena of underdog causes. The situation for homosexuals seems little different today than it was a few years ago when Del Martin noted that they hadn't even achieved "minority" status.

Surely Mr. Jefferson is quite right in his prognostications of the great good such allies could do for the gay cause. Some years ago (1971), Dennis Altman in his fine book, **Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation**, analyzed the prospects for help from the Black and Women's liberation movements. It's interesting to observe what has since transpired. Though in a 1971 statement Huey Newton welcomed the Gay and Women's movements into the revolutionary ranks, further significant support from that quarter has not been forthcoming. What is noteworthy is that among militant organizations it has been the Women's movement which has proved the most consistent and forthright crusader for gay rights. If anyone has any doubts on that score, just recall Phyllis Schlafly's tiresome tirades against NOW (National Organization for Women) as being just a group of radicals and lesbians.

Donna Martin Milwaukee, Wi.

Dear Editor:

Last night I read your magazine for the first time. It was, I think, very good. Unfortunately, you did seem to skirt some issues which are best dealt with in a direct, head-on course.

Your explanation of the frustration which is doubtlessly felt by the fundamentalists is interesting, but did not go nearly far enough. Is it the fault of homosexuals that the damned earth doesn't stand still and let the sun go round it? . . . But why not call a spade a spade, and recall the multitude of historic facts which make it crystal clear that the Christian Church is never content unless it has someone to kick around, badger, and annihilate. I need cite only the measures taken against the pagans, the Crusades, and the heretic and witch-hunt procedures of the 'Holy' Inquisition. With a record like this, what can one expect?

But while one does expect this from the Christians, it is certainly a surprise coming from Donna Martin ("Is There Anything Right With the Opposition?"). Ms. Martin should consult current U.S. divorce statistics for evidence of "rootlessness" and open marriages, mate-swapping, and so on. And please tell me, where are all of the wonderful achievements of the straight world? . . . One can truly say of Ms. Bryant, for instance, that even her own parents are divorced; and can anyone claim that Ms. Bryant is a great artist? Hardly.

Maybe you should be a wee bit more thorough in your articles; but, nevertheless, I'm glad you're here.

Sincerely,  
Melvin  
Ferrum, Va.

Dear Friends:

I want to thank you for another totally delightful reading in the GPU NEWS. I look forward to each issue, and when I've read it from cover to cover I put it in a loose-leaf notebook for future reference.

As you may have noticed on top of my renewal check, I am married. My wife and I are both bisexual, very happily married, and totally understanding of the needs and desires of one another. For personal reasons we remain in the closet. Again, many thanks.

J.D.R.  
Lake Park, Fl.



# FIGHTING THE DRAGON

[illegible]

HATE  
BIGOTRY  
INTOLERANCE  
OPPRESSION  
IGNORANCE  
FEAR  
SPITE  
INJUSTICE  
PREJUDICE

FIGHTING THE DRAGON

GPU NEWS is a monthly, non-profit news/magazine devoted to the gay liberation movement. Now in its seventh year, each issue contains news, articles, reviews, poetry, fiction, cartoons and classified ads. GPU NEWS has been described as "one of the nation's finest gay liberation publications." Copies are mailed in sealed manila envelopes.


**GPU NEWS**  
 JUNE 1977  
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# NOTES ON THE REVOLUTION

## by william h. du bay

Sir, we have sighted the enemy. And the enemy is us!

—Walt Kelly—

This article is a response to Lee Rice's rather perplexing article in the July GPU NEWS, "Fighting the Dragon." While I appreciate Mr. Rice's close analysis of the terms sexism, heterosexism, and phallism in the first part of his article, he seems less careful about his use of terms when he gets down to the application of these terms to political and moral problems.

I am particularly concerned about his comparison to the situation here with nazi Germany and his suggestion that the only way to attack what he regards as the impenetrable worldview of primitive heterosexism is by "open war." I quote his statement: "Sad as it may be to say, the challenge of nazism could have been met only in the way that it was met—by open war. It is only an apparent paradox that irrational means (war) may sometimes be dictated by rational strategies. So gay liberationists who speak of an open war with Bryant's troops are not wide of the mark. Where all arguments fail, force is the only means left." Later he writes, "...but, where the legal machinery is not available (or only available at great cost of time and energy), other means are within the range of consideration. In this precise case, gay liberation (and women's liberation as well) is a revolutionary doctrine—perhaps more so than marxism."

Were I not concerned about clarity of thinking as we plan our strategies and were it not true that we have so few resources to draw upon I would be less than shocked at the gross political and historical assumptions contained in these statements. Does he really believe that our situation corresponds to the situation of gays in nazi Germany? Does he not know of the many ways Hitler could have been stopped precluding war? And is he using the term open warfare in a completely analogical sense (I believe more gay leaders do) or is he advocating the hoarding of arms and the planning of sabotage and violence?

First of all, comparisons with Germany are odious. Hitler came to power as a response to a crumbling regime that could not cope with the depression. He cut down some six or seven million people besides gays in a great insane and racist orgy of bigotry and violence.

The civil rights movement in Germany was weak and infantile. Not only had they never faced any racial crisis, they had no machinery for facing one.

Our country, on the contrary, happens to be relatively healthy economically and is growing stronger. I am not saying it is the best of all systems, but it happens to be working and it also happens to be the system most supportive of gay rights, at least at this point in history. There is not only a legal tradition going back to the Constitution protecting the rights of all people, but also a traditional sense and feeling of fair play that eventually breaks down the barriers to freedom. Huey Long's statement, "niggers is people, too," was as American a statement as you can find, admitting that as people they also have rights. Finally the progress achieved by tiny, tiny bands of gay rights activists in the courts, assemblies, and legislatures as well as in the media and the schools in the last few years has been remarkable. Never have so few accomplished so much, a tribute to our country's sense of fair play and commitment to human rights.

Was war the only response to Hitler? What if the Pope and the other Christian churches had spoke out strongly and imposed effective sanctions on the regime, such as withdrawing chaplains from the nazi army? What if the U.S. and other countries had earlier abandoned their head-in-the-sand isolationist policies and had imposed severe economic sanctions on Germany? What if the intellectuals of the world had supported their colleagues in Germany and spoken out? What if the gays and Jews in Germany had had leadership and know-how to organize massive passive resistance instead of massive compliance in the hope of preserving what little they had left?

I don't claim to know the answers and maybe no one does. But I do remember the statement of Dante, frequently quoted by John Kennedy, "The deepest places in hell are reserved for those good people who were quiet in a time of crisis."

Rice's suggestion of open warfare smacks of the sloppy rhetoric of the New Left during the 60's, rhetoric which did little to enlighten and resulted only in



spoiling everybody's fire.

The reason I object most strongly to the terminology of war in the gay movement is that war is no longer used for the purposes of claiming land but rather for ideological and psychological purposes. It has become an exercise in manhoodlumism by male heterosexuals who are insecure about their masculinity. I, for one, have no desire to support my masculinity in this fashion and would rather exercise and enjoy it in bed.

When beset with a problem that seems unsurmountable, it is easy to resort to fantasies of violence and force. Most often when acted out these fantasies become self-destructive and senseless. The steady movement of gay rights for the moment seems to have met a stumbling block in the resistance of Christian fundamentalism as expressed by Anita Bryant. What a great mistake it would be, at this point, to stumble into the use of tactics that are both dumb and self-destructive. Violence is the easy way out.

In his article, Lee Rice wrote a lot about Christian fundamentalism, that great boogey-man obstacle to the exercise of our freedoms. He even went so far as to name primitive sexism as the fundamental cornerstone by which the fundamentalist's world is understood. He has been stonewalled and he sees no way of breaching the barriers to tolerance and understanding. Nothing is right with the opposition and Anita stands for everything vile and opposed to human decency and understanding. Down with fundamentalism! Down with Anita!

Such a reaction is very evident in the gay commun-

ity and it is important for us to get a grip on it and understand it. The isolation and rage that so many gays throughout the country—throughout the world—felt in response to her campaign to overthrow the equal rights law protecting gays in Dade County can be understood only by understanding who she is and what she means to us. And in understanding this, we have the clue to her weaknesses and ours, and how the situation can be changed. She—and all like her—are not so very far away from us and we identify with her in many ways.

She is every gay's mother and father, protecting their family from the unfamiliar and the unknown, protecting us from ourselves. She is us in our closet days putting down fags and dykes, spurning gay advances, avoiding gay company—all in order to protect ourselves from suspicion of being gay. Like us she is sensual and sexy, a songstress and ex-beauty contestant, exploiting her body whatever way she can to gain some recognition and identity.

The reason we get so mad at her is that she made the mistake of pointing out to us our greatest shame. By telling us that we had to stay in the closet, she was but reminding us that that is where 99% of us already are. Oh yes, we could all go out and march in protest to her victory in Dade County, but it was in the anonymity of a cast of thousands. How many of us went back to tell our parents and wives and girlfriends and co-workers and bosses that we are gay, never to be afraid again, never to even want to associate with those who would not respect us? How many of us want to tell the whole

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world we are gay? Anita was telling us what we didn't want to hear.

To confuse Christian fundamentalism with an anti-gay reaction is also a great mistake. We have enough problems in securing our own rights without taking on those problems of the Bible-crazed South. But let's look at it for a moment, just to be fair. The anti-gay feeling there, without a doubt, is much more of a social phenomenon than it is a religious one. It is part of the South's macho-heterosexism, for sure, just as slavery and segregation were. But the South has undergone some revolutionary changes in the last few years and seems much more capable of this type of radical and attitudinal change than does the North which is still battling over busses. And maybe it is to Anita's credit that she is at least doing something about the gay issue, rather than politely ignoring it as most Northern liberals are doing. She is giving us the credit of identifying herself as the enemy and saying, "Let's have it out."

And can we be so sure that sexism is such an integral part of Christian fundamentalism? Bible fundamentalism has had a remarkable tradition in this country of sponsoring nearly every major social reform including public education, prison reform, care of the insane, education of blacks, abolition, and finally civil rights. The civil rights movement of the 60's was born and nurtured not in the lecture halls of the North but in Bible-banging southern churches. It should not be necessary to point out that the only Christian tradition to support the formation of a gay church in this country has been Christian fundamentalism. It is the only tradition which has the freedom

for such a thing to happen. Mr. Rice forgot to mention whether or not his attack on Christian fundamentalism included the M.C.C. At least we can credit the Southern Christian churches for taking the bull by the horns and grappling with it. We do not have to look there for an opening in the wall. They have already given it.

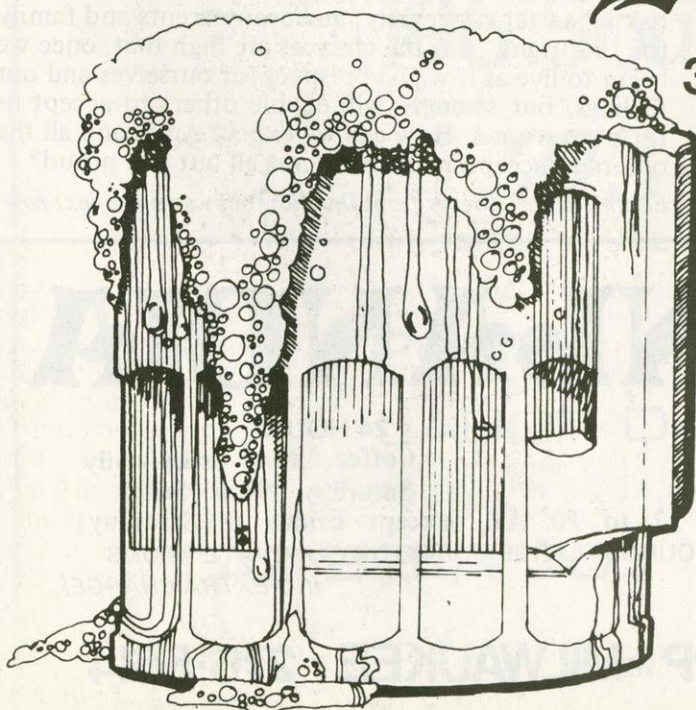
The question of the moment is how to pursue the advantage. The problem is that we have made a great deal of progress and how many people are hesitant, if not actually shocked. The tactic, at this point, is certainly not violence or force. The answer is found in what is sometimes called prejudice reduction.

How do you reduce prejudice in others? During the last few decades there have been several studies on the effectiveness of various techniques of prejudice reduction which were quite handy during the civil rights movement and should be just as valid for gays today. The trouble with these techniques are that 1) the most effective techniques are also the most difficult to implement and 2) the more a situation needs prejudice reduction, the more difficult it is to implement it. Which leads us back to the old saw that freedom is never free, it costs something. As the old Union song said, "Freedom never comes as a bird on the wing, Freedom never comes as a gentle rain, You have to fight for it, Day and Night for it, So pass it on to your brothers, Pass it on."

The most fundamental and easiest form of prejudice reduction is the scientific approach. This is often called the human relations approach. You dig out your Kinsey, and show the research on trans-cultural comparisons, the economic and social costs of oppression,

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the relationship to psychological functioning, and on and on, all buttressed with reams of statistics and studies and figures. This is often very impressive but we have to remember that statistics never prove a thing. In this case, science can neither deny or affirm that gay is "good." All it can say is that gay is. While these studies can and should be used to support our goals, their inherent flaw is not only are they very cerebral and not very likely to change anyone's attitudes, but the methods they rely on, and the philosophy they rely on, are somewhat suspect. Everyone is witnessing what the mechanistic scientific world-view is doing to our environment. Maybe it is no time for us to put our trust in a burning ship, much less jump aboard. Besides, our self-worth has to depend on something much more stable than the faddish dictums of science.

The second approach to prejudice reduction has a great deal more validity and I can vouch for the fact that it has never failed me, either in dealing with members of my own family or speaking before a crowd. The technique is labeled vicarious identification with victims of discrimination. Books which effectively used this technique in civil rights days were W.E.B. DuBois' **Souls of the Black Folk** and Richard Wright's **The Invisible Man**. One gay novel that comes to mind for the same purpose is Curzon's **Something You Do in the Dark**. Jonathan Katz' **Gay American History** is also full of graphic descriptions of gay oppression.

Even more effective are one's own accounts, not just of put-downs experienced at the hands of others, but good descriptions of what gayness is in terms of feelings and attractions and the efforts and pain involved in self-repression. Straight and not so straight people can all identify with feelings of sexual attraction the feeling of noble love, friendship, and the self-sacrifice they generally inspire. People are always amazed to discover what homosexuals feel. What is more important, they are often liberated in reference to their own feelings and experiences to learn how others have coped with theirs.

As a footnote, we have to bring up the subjects of promiscuity and transvestism. While there are relatively a small number of gays involved in these things, (most gays are in their closets raising families, remember?) they are not subjects we should hide or be apologetic about.

Male promiscuity is something women fail to understand and males have learned to repress. But I don't think there is anything wrong in at least suggesting to them that it is possible for promiscuous people to also be psychologically well-adjusted and capable of intimate human relationships. If there is anything valuable to me in a gay life-style it is promiscuity, something that is different but not inferior. I would hate to compromise myself by subscribing to a program of gay rights that is conditioned by the need to "settle down." We have no need to flaunt our differences, but neither should we deny or belittle them.

The most effective way to break down racial prejudice was for people to "engage in activities directed towards superordinate (not specifically interracial) goals in a context supporting the development of interracial friendships." The best examples of this were the activities of an inter-faith interracial youth camp where children and youths of various racial and religious backgrounds participated in the usual camp activities and in which a tone was set favoring equality and interracial activities. Translated into a gay setting, this would entail openly gay people working with others in a situation favoring tolerance and acceptance. This is indeed a heavy order but far from impossible. An example would be coming out at work once your credentials as a friend and worker are established and it is assured you would not lose your job. Once you are out, others would become naturally curious about your gay life-style and feelings which could be expressed not in any formal fashion, but in the course of normal conversation. There are many opportunities to do this in other less threatening situations such as at schools, college, clubs, church, sports, etc. This, of course, entails being out.

Give me a person who can live in freedom and conviction and you don't need the protection of society's laws. We must all become great lovers and willing to risk jobs, status, security, and even parents and family for that right. But the chances are high that, once we begin to live as if we had respect for ourselves and our feelings, our strength will enable others to accept us for what we are. How can we expect Anita and all the others to accept us if we are not all out and proud?

*Editor's note: A reply from Dr. Rice follows on the next page.*



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Mr. DuBay has offered serious and challenging reflections on the present situation in which gay liberation finds itself as an organized movement. In several points his opposition to my own position appears more apparent than real. Perhaps this is due to my own prolixity in expressing this position, or perhaps to his misreading of it; but, for whatever reason, a few points deserve notice.

1. My point regarding Nazi Germany was directed to the question of what **could** be done **after** Hitler had achieved power, whereas DuBay counters with claims about what **should** have been done **before** he reached power. Fire prevention is the best policy; but, when the house is on fire, there's no substitute for the fire brigade.

2. When I spoke of war, it was of doing battle with Bryant's self-righteous forces, not with the U.S. Government. War can be waged without rifles or hand-grenades, and not be metaphorical for all of that.

3. Mr. DuBay is clearly wrong in claiming that American gays are better off than any others (Sweden is only one counterexample.) They are as well off as in many countries, however; but all that this proves is that economic progress constitutes no guarantee of social equality.

4. DuBay is also wrong in claiming my intellectual parentage in the New Left. My politics are slightly to the right of Louis XIV.

5. "She (Anita Bryant) is every gay's mother and father. . ." Maybe yours, baby, but speak for yourself only—I'll take Madame Curie any day—an ounce of science is worth fifty pounds of cheap religious propaganda.

6. I envy DuBay his antepenultimate paragraph, which deals with the "problem" (of which there is none) of gay promiscuity. He has managed to say concisely and clearly within a few lines something about which I've expended many pages (i.e., of other articles), but with less clarity and no concision. The myth that

gays will be better off, more mature, or subject to a manifold of untold blessings through their indiscriminate aping of heterosexual mating patterns is short-sighted and silly. The "gay couple" is a viable and workable lifestyle, but it is only one among many, and in no wise superior to a host of other lifestyles. Perhaps DuBay does not realize it, however; but the very source of the "hard sell" campaign for couplehood within the gay community is usually those very religious groups which he is at such pains to defend from the scourges of my own article.

None of the above are critical points. DuBay's general points are each and every one well taken and I suspect that, where he misunderstands me, it is the fault of my own writing. When gays begin to talk, discuss, openly criticize, and reflect upon the alternatives which are open to us in the face of a common enemy then we are well on the road to full liberation.

Lee C. Rice

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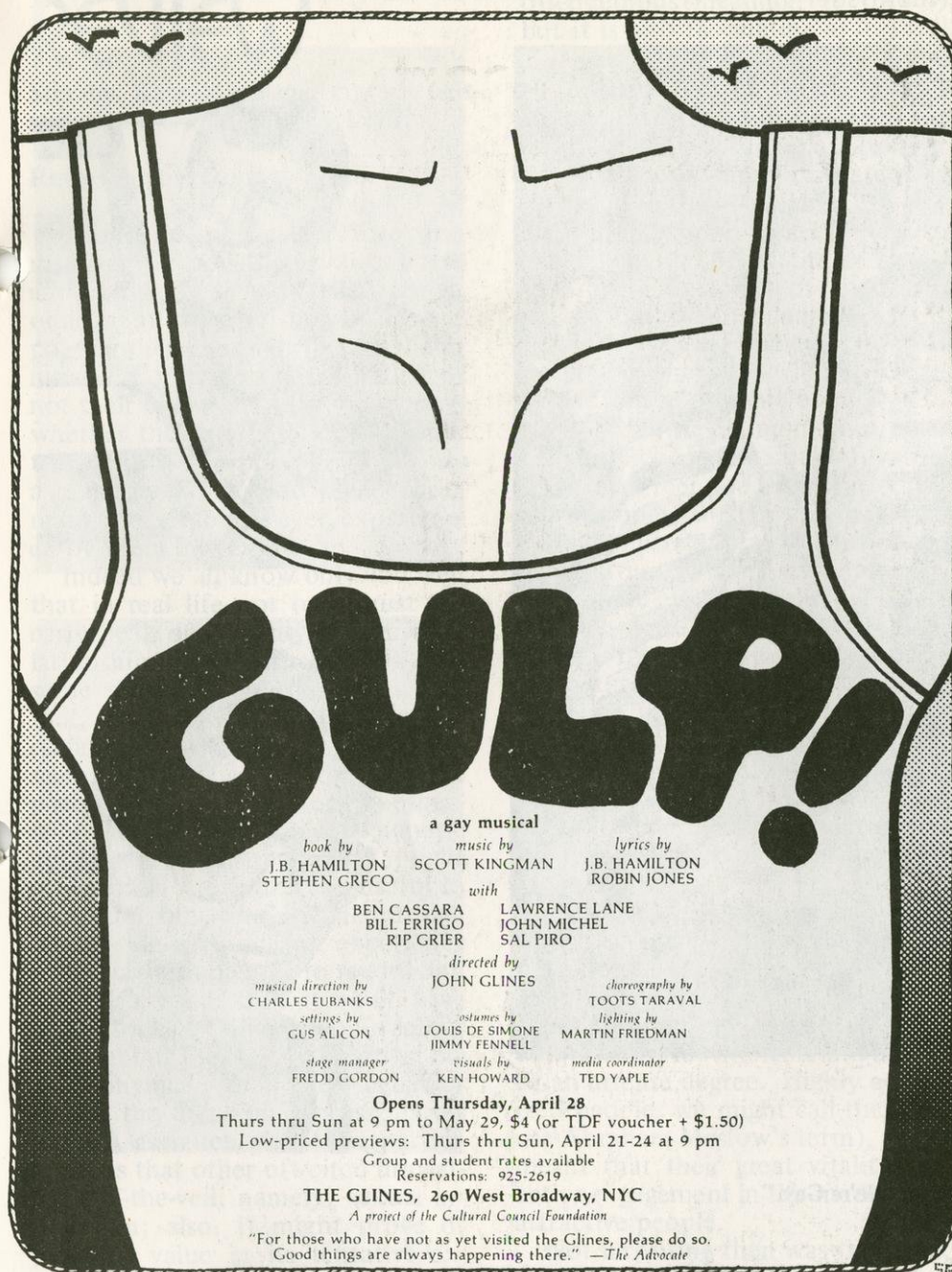


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**Gulp!** a gay musical, book by J.B. Hamilton and Stephen Greco, music by Scott Kingman, lyrics by J.B. Hamilton and Robin Jones. The Glines, 260 West Broadway, New York City. Directed by John Glines, musical direction by Charles Eubanks, Choreography by Toots Taraval, setting by Gus Alcon, costumes by Louis DeSimone and Jimmy Fennell, lighting by Barry Lane. Lawrence Lane as Homer, Ben Cassara as Chris, Sal Piro as Teddy, Roy Doliner as Fatehr Williams, Jimi Elmer as Bertie, Bill Errigo as Manny.

**REVIEWED BY**  
**Peter Pherson**

The Glines, New York's Gay Cultural Center, has a lovely ceiling decorated with plaster appliques and florets. I can tell you this and, if I were pressed, much more—down to the precise number of grape and chestnut clusters. As for what happened on the stage under the ceiling, a gay musical called **Gulp!** I can tell you somewhat less.

But the audience apparently had a wonderful time, calling and hooting to actor friends on stage. The house was filled for this late mid-week performance—a tribute to the gay lip conduit around town, for New York was in the middle of a 105 degree heat wave and barely recovering from a slightly publicized blackout which happened the week before—not the best circumstances in which to conduct even an hour's love affair.

**Gulp's** book by J. B. Hamilton and Stephen Greco, with lyrics by J. B. Hamilton and Robin Jones, places Homer, a lifeguard on Coney Island emphatically not in love with Chris, a plage la habitude. Never mind where they come from. Everything's fair and fast and furious on this comic strip beach. Chris is terrifically unrequited. Homer is terrifically heterosexual. Not original but, you could say, with possibilities. Chris advances with puppy sloppy affection. Homer spurns. They made a cute couple when the director and the script left them alone. Enter Teddy, stock and stocky jewish Brooklyn queen who facilitates under-the-stairs information to advance the plot.

By the way, everyone sings here and in other places.

We learn that Homer is going to have himself killed (at midnight by a hired killer whom Homer has paid for with his Master Charge) during a fireworks celebration sponsored by Macy's or Bamberger's because he is miserable although Chris could cure Homer of his strangely undefined depression if Homer would but let his heart have its way with Chris. We're twenty minutes into the first act. Chris goes for a dip when we learn that he cannot swim. As Hom-



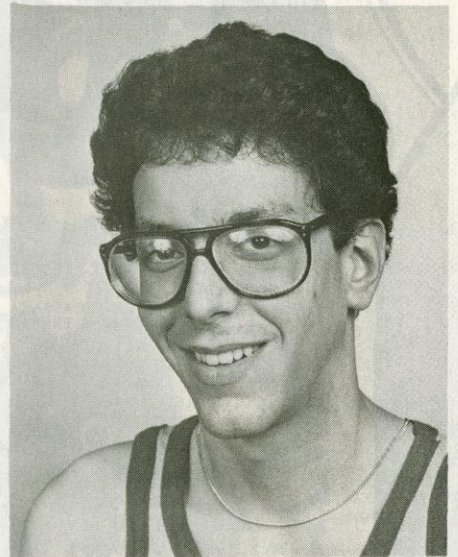
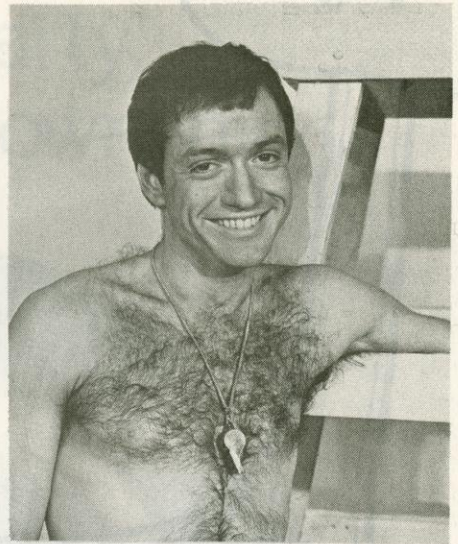


PHOTOS BY KEN HOWARD

Above: Cast of *Gulp!* in musical number "Because We're Gay."

Upper Right: Lawrence Lane as Homer.

Lower Right: Ben Cassara as Chris.



er saves Chris's life, enter, mercifully, Father William (Roy Doliner) with a perfectly executed, perfectly danced (choreography by Toots Taraval), perfectly sung bit of relief called, "Throw Out the Lifelines, Somebody's Drowning." Then Bertie (Jimi Elmer) dashes madly across the beach in search of the source of the screaming and thrashing bodies. Bertie (please try to follow this with me) is a zany, drippy, cheesy journalist perfectly unclear about the events around him yet he

is certain there is a story somewhere in the events. He writes it on the spot.

Bertie later falls in love with Father William (the hired gun), Manny, Teddy's honey, appears with his Aqueduct winnings, hotdogs are eaten, Chris tries to drown himself again only to be saved by Homer's roommate Spike, more songs, slides on the cyclorama and then the lights went out. I believe this was either intermission or recess or Divine Manifest.

The Second Act gives us Homer trying to convince his killer not to do what he was hired for. We leave Chris and Homer on the verge of making it, Bertie and Father William happy, Teddy and Manny happy—everything resolved and happy on stage and off. *Gulp!* takes sharp turns, broad strokes and black and white characters to make a not uncomfortable evening. It is short, the music is familiar and it's promised a long run. If you're in New York this summer, try to see it.



# REVIEW

*Sita* by Kate Millett, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1977.

Reviewed by Donna Martin

"Love and marriage, love and marriage/Go together like a horse and carriage": these words from an oldie point to the most enduring and popular theme in both the novel and movies. For love stories, whether or not their course is smooth or rocky, whether they end badly or happily, temporarily transport their fans into a realm of drama and high excitement only seldom, if ever, experienced by them in real life.

Indeed we all know only too well that in real life not only must the early peak of intensity in a love relationship eventually slide off into some sort of quieter plateau, but that, alas, many love affairs, sooner or later, completely fall apart at the seams. It has long seemed to me that particularly for gays who are especially vulnerable to these traumatic upheavals in their lives, it might prove both interesting and useful to hear from some who've gone through it all. Clearly such an experience would be both painful to record and painful to read. Still, it would have value: for one thing, it would tell us much about the involved parties, for I'm convinced that one's behavior during the break-up process reveals at least as much about the participants as that other oft-cited drawer-back-of-the-veil, namely, sexual interaction; also, it might prove of practical value in its tentative exploration of how people might best behave during this traumatic time so as to do least damage both to themselves and to the memory of their high time together.

It was thus with real interest that I plunged into Kate Millett's latest book, *Sita*, after having been alerted to it by an excerpt in *Christopher Street* magazine. It chronicles the final few months of Kate's relationship to an attractive, captivating, enigmatic woman of Italian/Brazilian extraction who is ten years her senior (she is 50 and Kate 40 at this time). Yes, as the *New York Times* book reviewer noted, this account is

often tedious (meaning, repetitious), but it is also fascinating in its frank exposure of one complex human being, notably Kate Millett: clearly, she stands directly in line with the warts-and-all school of autobiography so shockingly initiated by Rousseau in the late eighteenth century. But of more general interest, it highlights some of the ordinary, together with some of the bleak truths about human nature which, during the peak of a passionate affair are in abeyance, but which, with its diminution, crawl out of their lairs, often with devastating impact.

Simple people, many of us probably often feel, are to be envied for their simple, uncomplicated lives (witness the recurrent romantization of the lives of primitive peoples and the recent efforts by many young people to create an uncluttered life style for themselves in rural settings). But at the same time, many of us are also by now so addicted to stimulation and variety in our lives that we'd exchange the safe, steady lover any day for someone fascinating, complicated, perhaps even a bit kooky—and to hell with the consequences!

One way of viewing the tragedy of Kate and Sita's affair is in fact to see it as flowing from the interaction of two highly individuated people—women who had each cultivated their unique and wide interests and talents to an intense degree. Highly actualized people, we might call them (to use Abraham Maslow's term), and it meant that their great vitality and active engagement in life made them attractive people.

Not surprising then was the quick rapport and excitement generated between them when Kate, out to the West coast for a speaking engagement, was a guest in Sita's home. Kate testifies that it was when the formal Sita gave way to the casual human being that Sita's beauty emerged for her, and this together with her general charm and delicious conversation proved to be powerful an enticement that Kate could barely hold back until their second evening together before making an overt physical gesture (quite mutually entered into by that point). A tremendously exciting and richly satisfying relationship followed, one of mar-

velous spontaneity and romance. But at the same time it was the very complexity and specialization of these two fascinating people, each with her own particular expectations about people and life in general that boded trouble for the future.

It was all so much easier when only one member of a couple was expected/encouraged to seek fulfillment in the vocational/creative sphere. Now many heterosexual couples are facing the often difficult problems attendant on arranging matters so that each has equal opportunity for fulfillment. Well, even though children are not usually a complicating factor, homosexual couples face similar problems: how are the household chores going to be divided? Can a location providing excellent opportunities for one also offer comparable possibilities for the other? Indeed, this latter matter has been of real concern for some couples close to me, the individuals involved all being in quite specialized fields. And for Sita and Kate this problem proved to be probably the bedrock obstacle to the endurance of their relationship.

The sad truth that only gradually emerged during the course of their involvement was that each was strongly rooted to a particular city—separated by the 3,000 mile expanse of the American continent. Sita was firmly entrenched in the academic and community life of Berkeley, in which vicinity also her children lived (a son and daughter by former marriages; also a granddaughter). Kate, on the other hand, though theoretically freer, was nonetheless loath to uproot herself from her adopted city, New York: the habit of New York City, her home for 15 years with all its associations and her small circle of friends, was a strong elastic tentacle always drawing her back; in addition, in trying to make it as an artist (sculptor), she felt there was simply no where else to be:

You stick with town, the Big Apple, where it all happens, the artists and the dealers and the publishers and the machine that rules the earth—or you follow a will-of-the-whisp and decide on sunny California, lie back and settle for nature and landscape and an easier way of life.



It was during their final few months together (the Spring of '75 or '76) when Kate is visiting Sita that she really comes to confront the untenableness of their arrangement. She finds the house they began renting together the year before (and lived in idyllically for a time) now a de facto commune: Sita's children and their hangers-on have moved in, and Sita, ensconced in this domestic cocoon, seems distant to Kate, now merely a boarder of unidentified status. A stranger in the Bay Area, her own reason for being there much jeopardized, Kate in desperation begins a journal (the raw data for this book) in an effort at some kind of control and ordering of her bewildering situation—giving her thus also some reason for being there at all. It is through this journal then that again and again Kate directly confronts not only the divergence in life thrusts of herself and Sita, but also the conflicts within herself of competing impulses.

There is, on the one hand, the lure

of New York City with its familiar landscape and friends and freedom and, importantly, opportunity for artistic achievement—something that's becoming increasingly imperative, she feels, now that she is in her forties and time is becoming a limited resource. But it also means loneliness and uncertainty—and thus the temptation to chuck it all for a settled life with Sita, the one with whom she had long envisioned ending her days.

But to do so, Kate feels, would be sacrificing her integrity as a contributing, creative individual (for she can't envision herself "achieving" in California), and in effect becoming Sita's appendage: the little "wifie" or mistress to this dynamic, productive woman. Kate in fact has a bitter anticipatory taste of this degrading state, (so common to women vis a vis their men) when, early in the visit, Sita suggests that Kate rent a nearby tiny apartment since she's feeling so oppressed by the overcrowded "commune." But deeply hurt by this very

obvious, tangible effort at distancing, Kate digs in her heels and resists exile to such a dismal limbo, knowing that the essence of her existence would consist of waiting and hoping—for some word from the elusive princess in the big house.

But unlike those uncomplicated people we so often envy, Kate is too complex, too intelligent, and too sensitive to others to be able to simply resolve this problem. As a general practical proposition she readily assents to the axiom that "You can't live in two places, of course it's impossible. No one is so vain, so full of hubris, so full of illusion to imagine such a thing. . . The world isn't constructed that way." But more, she can feel with Sita, see her side in this whole complicated matter.

As Kate understands it now, the critical point came when, after Sita had seen her through a really bad period of her life, instead of making a wholehearted commitment, Kate reaffirmed her old pattern of keep-



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ing a few irons in the Eastern fires. It was a concentration of catastrophes that nearly did Kate in: the desertion by Fumio (her legal husband and close friend): the loss of their long-shared loft to some city development project; and the enormous stress of involvement in a harrowing civil rights effort to save the life of a political prisoner in Trinidad. All of this propelled Kate into a period of depression punctuated by suicide attempts and institutional incarcerations, through all of which Sita remained loving and nurturing. And after the onslaughts of this breakdown had receded, she was still there; and they settled into the peace and security of the house in Berkeley. Yet it wasn't enough for Kate, so finding a new loft in New York, she began fixing it up, intending it for her winter domicile.

So now, Kate feels, she has the key to much of Sita's recent coolness. Her "madness", she thinks, must have been hard enough for Sita to "forgive", on top of that, Kate's renewed allegiance to New York was probably the penultimate straw—a gesture of faithlessness which in turn evoked in Sita an erosion of trust and interest. It had first become manifest the previous summer when, on a visit to Sita's family in Italy for two months (generously funded by Kate), Sita virtually ignored Kate, consigning the bewildered guest and abandoned lover to the status of "stranger in a strange land."

It is toward the end of this current visit to Berkeley that Kate is overwhelmed by a gripping intuition of the rationale informing Sita's periods of chilly behavior. By this time, quite absorbed in the duties of a class she is teaching and happily basking in the recent, quirky turn-on of Sita's favor, Kate suddenly realizes that she will soon have to give all this up. Now, surprisingly, it will be a real loss. And now, unequivocally, she knows what Sita must be going through.

"Finally I understand her—'You will leave again in a few months for New York. I will be left alone. Why should I risk it?' I had felt that too, coming here. That I would be gone and without her so soon. Why invest again?"



KATE MILLETT

But it is interesting to come to realize with Kate that this seemingly intractable problem of their differing loyalties to locale is not the whole story. During this final stage of Kate's stay, inexplicably, Sita gradually thaws out—the courtly, loving, delightfully charming woman of their early time together has returned, even to the point of suggesting an overt reaffirmation of commitment between them. Kate is wary—can/should she try trusting again? But more, she comes to see within herself a real reluctance to such a firm avowal of intention.

And here I think Kate touches on a theme of broad relevance—the conflict within many of us between the exciting possibilities of freedom and the tranquil security of a settled relationship. As for Kate, though she knows well its uncertainty, its "bald spots" and "empty places," still her leaning is toward a fairly open relationship. "I can envy the honest solid matrimonial everyday, its commitment to the banal in exchange for security," she says, "But I cannot live it." She admits to being pulled toward both poles, but, finally, is too put off by the stultifying, limiting aspects of "matrimony" to "sign" Sita's proposed pact.

She refers to herself at one point as a "romantic," and thinks back to Christmas when, watching Kate cook dinner, Sita says to her, "Let's always be having an affair. Whenever we meet, however many times a year—let it always be an affair." Kate recalls feeling flattered, excited, ner-

vous, challenged, but concludes, "To go on year after year with no more safety than the hazard of that. Perfect."

It is interesting to note that what also appears to have fed Kate's resolve not to formally bind herself to Sita was her increasing success and joy in work. Paradoxically, while it is her belief that she can't find creative fulfillment on the west coast that largely moves her to opt for part-time life in New York, yet as Kate does find satisfying outlets during the visit, she also finds herself less emotionally enslaved to Sita—and thus, for this additional reason, less tempted to succumb to a contracted security.

Theirs is a good example of the drive for autonomy and self-expression especially felt by self-actualized individuals in any close relationship. But in Kate's case it was heightened, for in the face of Sita's certainties and highly structured life, Kate, with her untidy life of artistic endeavor, always felt herself in the shadow. As she puts it:

For with her I lean. And since she cares less she is always stronger. I depend, give way to her superior forces and personality, her facility in decision, her efficiency, her certainties. I who have no certainties. So it is always an unequal relationship, even when it's happy.

What happened was that Kate was doing some writing, making some headway with her mountain of "aborted" manuscripts, and, by keeping up her journal, giving herself some sense of meaning and control in a situation of devastating pain and puzzlement. Importantly also, she was teaching a women's class which, though she had earlier dreaded it with an almost neurotic anxiety, she now discovered to be generally stimulating and enjoyable. Almost magically, both her morbid preoccupation with and dependence on Sita diminished, accompanied by a refreshing return of zest for people and activities not necessarily revolving around her.

One evening during this period of renewal when they are home together, Kate comes to notice the change in herself. She has a feeling of "containment," elaborating thus:



I feel free of her. The class and reading her story. . . have freed me, left me a space for indifference, for neutrality, disengagement, even for self. . . Inside her hug and feeling it merely as pleasant, as warmth without necessity. Lovely new indifference.

As Kate later sums it all up, "The cure of work, its health."

This new mood should not be taken to mean that everything went swimmingly for Kate thereafter. She was both too emotionally volatile and still far too attached to Sita for her to be able to maintain a smooth, steady course. But when the end came, when Sita in her inimitable fashion, abruptly and completely out of the blue dropped the guillotine blade on their affair, it was this earlier stance of semi-detachment/semi-independence that I feel saved Kate from complete collapse.

There is much both interesting and instructive in this account that I simply couldn't get to: fascinating, though often gloomy thoughts about

love; sad accounts of the games people often stoop to when things are going badly between them; some compelling erotic scenes; and, not to be missed, a superb recreation of an evening at Peg's Disco Bar (lesbian).

I've chosen to focus on those factors in Sita and Kate's relationship which I've seen as having been the fundamental themes building finally to a harsh dissonance in an initially promising affair. In large part this is because I feel that, in varying permutations, their problems are shared by many other couples.

It is only the novice of love and the congenitally naive who think that love is ever enough. Only in the fantasy world of sweet songs, and syrupy novels and movies does this fiction hold.

In the sober world that we inhabit most of the time it is only too true that such unglamorous external factors as plagued Kate and Sita can have profound effects on the course of a love relationship. And of course one should not overlook the peculiarities of personality which the

parties to a relationship bring to it—and which in the case of Kate and Sita had enormous impact on their interaction.

Lastly, there is the additional handicap of the unsanctioned, unformalized nature of all homosexual relationships: there is no initial formalizing ceremony, nor any societal expectations about its conduct—thus their greater fragility.

Because of an allegiance to a position of freedom in their relationship (albeit a somewhat spotty and ambivalent one), Sita and Kate's was probably more potentially unstable than most homosexual couplings. Yet Kate's assessment of its nature has a good deal of relevance for all homosexual relationships: she refers to it as a "love as contingent as this, as voluntary and unsanctioned and insecure."

Sometimes I think homosexual couples who make it for some stretch of time against all those odds are the ones who ought to be receiving awards—rather than the top Rotarian of the Year.

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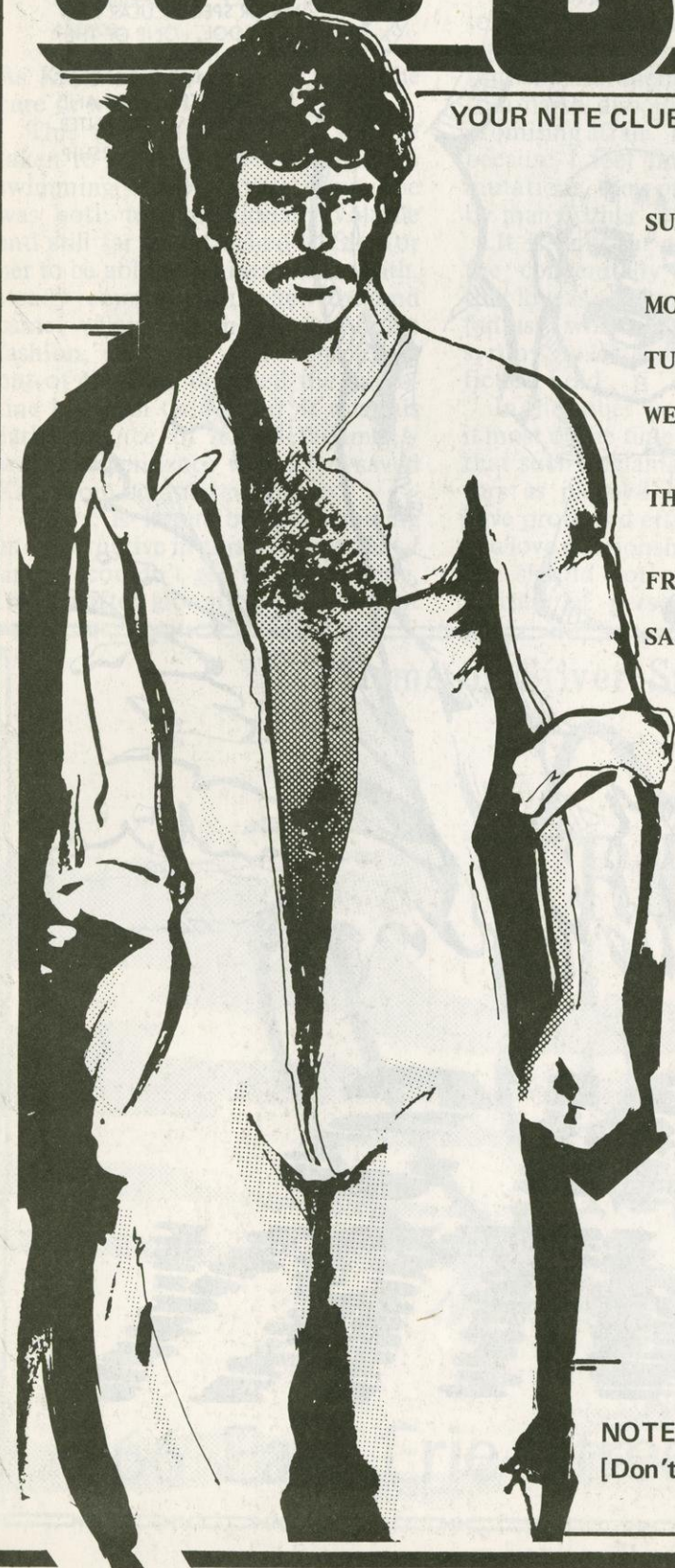
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I am of legal age



## DEJA VU

Red-haired, chunky, and casehardened  
like a handsome sex device,  
you held me in your eyes,  
and I reflected your brown stare  
like a mirror.

But you dropped your eyes  
like pennies  
and sipped Coke—  
now a blind man  
in a gay bar.

(You had been keeping tabs  
on a bar all day, you would say.  
You had taken a bottle of vodka  
under your wing.)

I played a little card game  
—since I had nothing to lose—  
and lit up a conversation  
with a smart, young interior designer.

(His business pardner  
—a rich girl, he said—  
had the ear of the Carters.  
He was going to patch up a few rooms  
in the White House.)

And the game paid off.

You said, "I'm tired of cruisin' you."

So we rounded up the straggles  
of a little conversation,  
and I mercifully killed it  
by asking that question  
sure as fate.

My bunkie till two days ago  
stood next to me  
like a shadow.

I said, "Goodnight,"  
which meant, "Good-by,  
my ole sidekick.

I am leaving you this way,  
though I do not want to,  
though you have sent me.  
I am darning the wound."

And then the great god Eros  
rode herd on the room.

You followed my lead,  
and we danced home  
through the late traffic.  
I fed you ham and cheese,  
and then we turned  
into a fantasy about cowboys.

In the morning  
I faked sleep  
while you collected your clothes  
and stole away.

I did not know what to say.

The dented tube  
with its little sailor's cap  
Lay on one windowsill;  
a glass of thin Coke  
on the other.

A bottle of amyl  
and, near the blue candle,  
a pack of matches  
like teeny phalli—  
these were the old props  
in the old bedtime story  
we told each other  
again last night.

But you forgot that last summer  
we played the same scene  
and that I telephoned you.  
I had to be someone else,  
I guess,  
before you could swallow me twice,  
before you could take me in  
some other place  
some other time.

## ATLAS

The clan slaved  
on my Uncle Virgil's dairy farm.

(Someone snapped  
a shot of me there  
with a roped calf.)

I heard stories  
of how my uncle handcuffed sons  
to a post, bare,  
and whipped them raw  
with a real whip.

I got scent of some whispers, too.  
One of the sons was—  
different.

He lived in the barn.

Once he and I had poked along  
out to the rock quarry  
where we brooded  
and pitched rocks  
into the empty pit  
of a whole day.

He wore jeans,  
and his broad brown chest  
winked and sparked with sweat  
in the hot Texas sun.

Once he lifted a barrel  
like a set of weights  
and proved his easy muscularity.

Later, I would imagine him  
sleeping alone  
in that dark stall.

Butch guys buggered  
in his head.

O Atlas—  
that rusty barrel  
may as well have been  
the world.

## LOVE IN THE BOOKSTORE

1

After dark  
whenever the urge arises,  
like a troubled spirit,  
I visit the bookstore.

I cross into the other realm  
of night.

I step inside a haunted castle,  
where men,  
like zombies,  
walk and wait.

Some carry their eyes  
like eggs.

Some play a secret game  
in corners.

Some swagger  
like a tipped coat-hanger.

And then there are  
the bad, the sad, the sorry,  
and the few

who follow men  
as if they followed love  
to where it leads  
inside a movie stall.

2

One steps  
inside a stall  
where someone slumps  
against the wall—  
his blond hair lurid  
in the blue light,  
his shirt unbuttoned,  
his faded jeans  
unsnapped and promising,  
his tennis shoes  
untied.

They join  
like dogs  
and rut  
until the guy who knocks  
knocks  
and one will drop in  
the quarter.

The kid now holds his sides  
and bumps him  
much the way he bumps and cuffs  
a pin-ball machine.



Your face wallowed  
in my crotch  
like a big pig,  
and I, in turn,  
blew you on  
to a quick fire—  
tongueing each crevice  
like a sore tooth.

We found each other's  
awkward lust  
no less erotic  
than the silent film  
where athletes  
banged.

Then a fierce hunger  
drove us on to mouth  
each other's mouth  
and hold each other there  
like life-buoys.

Above  
the sighs and whispers,  
the murmurs and the moans—  
the radio sang  
its simple carnal song.

If only for a night,  
yes, something else  
could happen, there—  
while all around us  
in their separate stalls  
the strangers stripped.

## THE PARK

Today I played in the park.

I posed by the lake  
and froze  
into a stone statue.

A friend  
tried to gather my legend  
into his car—  
like a flapping sheet  
of plastic.

But I sat in a stranger's car  
to thaw.

I dropped hints  
like ashes,  
but when he looked the other way,  
I stepped from the car  
as from a fire.

Or was he playing dumb?

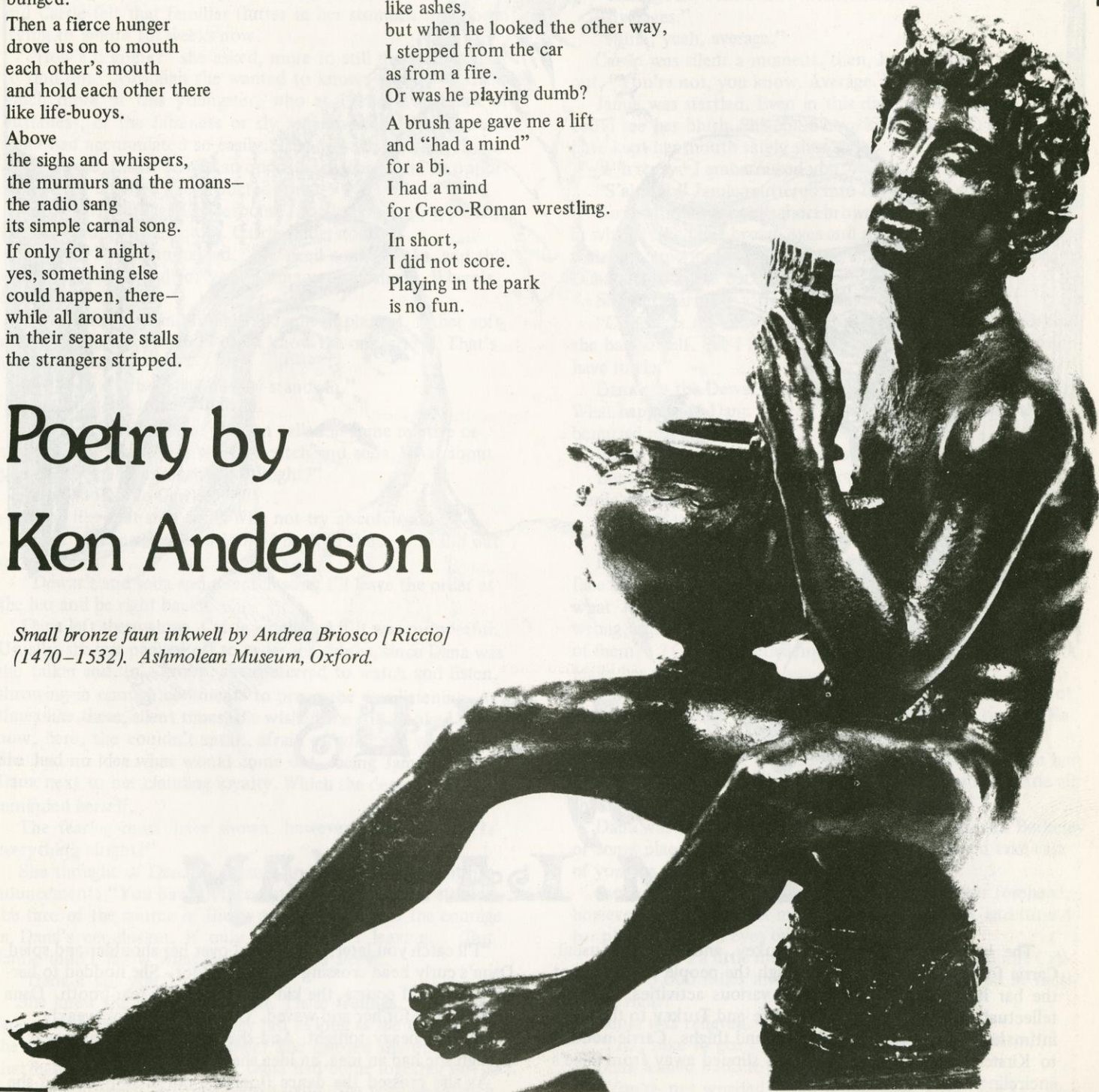
A brush ape gave me a lift  
and "had a mind"  
for a bj.

I had a mind  
for Greco-Roman wrestling.

In short,  
I did not score.  
Playing in the park  
is no fun.

# Poetry by Ken Anderson

*Small bronze faun inkwell by Andrea Briosco [Riccio]  
(1470–1532). Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.*







# TRIANGLES

by

## JAE M. LATHAM

The bar was crowded, and smokey, and loud—the usual. Carrie followed Dana's lead, through the people three deep at the bar itself, people absorbed in various activities, from intellectual conversations about Woolfe and Turkey to the more intimate speech of fondled buttocks and thighs. Carrie nodded to Kirsten and smiled at Joan and slipped away from Ellie's encircling arm.

"I'll catch you later," she tossed over her shoulder and spied Dana's curly head crossing the dance floor. She nodded to herself, then. Of course, the kid would pick the rear booth. Dana looked back for her and waved. Carrie waved back weakly.

She felt heavy tonight. And she wasn't sure what it was, though she had an idea, an idea she didn't want to pursue.

As she crossed the dance floor the music stopped and she



bumped into Marie Mary, who wanted her to come to their table for a drink and meet Susanne, new in town, and who knew Baltimore better than Carrie? Carrie acknowledged Susanne and got away on the wings of another promise. Finally, she reached the booth.

Dana sat down next to the kid, Jamie, flirting and cooing. Sometimes Carrie wondered if Dana had not fallen for the name instead of the person. Dana, seized by some fantasy, would wander through the apartment singing "Jamie—Ja-mie—Ja-mie" while Carrie tried to listen to the stereo or study or work and was otherwise leaving Dana to her own devices.

Jamie, the kid, smiled shyly when Carrie sat across from her, and Carrie felt that familiar flutter in her stomach she'd been trying to ignore for weeks now.

"How's it going?" she asked, more to still the flutters than to find out. Although she wanted to know; wanted to know much more of this youngster, who at 19 bore no mark of bitterness, or the falseness or sly maneuverings that she and Dana had accumulated so easily. That was what bound them, and in Jamie, Carrie sensed an opportunity for more, an opportunity that terrified and attracted her.

Jamie just shrugged in response, not looking up, typically. Her shyness kept her quiet. Carrie understood.

"Well," Dana announced, "we need some drinks, and this coke stuff isn't good for you. Stains your stomach. Where's Sharon?"

"She's not working tonight," Jamie explained, in her soft, almost apologetic voice. "I don't know the one who is. That's why I got a coke."

"Must be Clarisse. She usually stands in."

Dana nodded.

"Yeah, Clarisse. Unless Hanson called in some relative or something. I know you want a scotch and soda. What about you, kid? What are you trying tonight?"

Jamie looked to Carrie.

"You like that sour stuff. Why not try a scotch sour?"

"OK." She nodded and looked back to Dana, who slid out of the booth.

"Dewar's and soda and a scotch sour. I'll leave the order at the bar and be right back."

Dana left them alone. Carrie wondered if it was purposeful. Usually, she was packed off to order the drinks, since Dana was the talker and, in a group, she preferred to watch and listen, throwing in enough comments to prove she was listening. At times like these, silent times, she wished she still smoked. And now, here, she couldn't speak, afraid of what she would say. She had no idea what would come out, facing Jamie with no Dana next to her claiming loyalty. Which she deserved, Carrie reminded herself.

The tearing must have shown, however. Jamie asked, "Is everything alright?"

She thought of Dana's long sulk and her final resultant pronouncement: "You have to face your feelings." Carrie studied the face of the source of them, achingly aware of the courage in Dana's conclusion. If only they weren't leaving. . . But Jamie didn't know what was up Dana's sleeve.

"Dana'll tell you."

She knew she was copping out. These feelings, they could fade quickly enough. Could they last as long as the three years she and Dana had been together? She ignored the difference that hassled her—that she and Dana had come together out of loneliness and need, and now were a habit. She tried to squelch

the awareness that Jamie was still alive with wonder and amazement and a gratefulness for existence. Carrie remembered the feeling; she'd been like that once. Maybe everyone had been. But Carrie wanted to guard it in Jamie, tend it, watch it grow. She shifted in her seat and grabbed for small talk.

"You're out of school now, aren't you?"

Jamie nodded.

"Just finished exams today. That statistics—what a bitch! I'm glad it's over."

"I remember statistics—alpha this and df that."

Jamie tried to smile.

"Yeah, yeah, with a little mean, median and mode thrown in."

"Averages."

"Hunh, yeah, average."

Carrie was silent a moment, then, leaning forward, she spit out, "You're not, you know. Average."

Jamie was startled. Even in this dim, smokey light, Carrie could see her blush. She could have kicked herself; she should have kept her mouth safely shut.

"I'm sorry. I embarrassed you."

"S'alright," Jamie muttered into her glass of coke.

Carrie studied the girl's short brown hair that framed her face in whisps, the large brown eyes and narrow chin, and she felt a wideness growing inside her. She shook her foot and wished Dana would come back.

She did, carrying a tray of drinks.

"Clarisse is the **only** one on tonight and Hanson's working the bar herself. So, I brought the drinks. This way we won't have to tip."

Dana put the Dewar's in front of Carrie and their eyes met. What happened? Dana wanted to know. Nothing, was Carrie's bemused reply.

"Scotch sour for the kid, Harvey Wallbanger for me."

Dana slipped back into the booth and slipped her arm across Jamie's shoulders.

"So you didn't tell her?"

"About your idea? No, I decided to leave that to you."

Dana was pleased, and Carrie watched the pleasure in her face as she turned to Jamie. She knew what was coming, knew what Jamie would say, and hoped against all reason she was wrong, although anything else would be disastrous. The three of them. . . ? God, she yelled, mentally, are you listening to me? Make her say "no".

Carrie didn't know if the Old Man listened to her or not. Usually, she didn't care. But right now she was hoping He might, if He could, step in and influence things her way.

Which is silly, she scolded herself and took a pull on her drink. There were times, still, even at 28, she had to battle all the debris of her background.

Dana was explaining, "...and you could transfer to Berkeley or some place. You won't have to quit school. We'd take care of you, no problem. So, what do you think?"

Jamie didn't answer. A deep frown creased her forehead, however. She opened her mouth then shut it again, and turned her pleading brown eyes on Carrie.

"I think it's a little much to take in all at once, hunh? California is 3,000 miles away and you've always lived in Baltimore, right?"

Jamie was relieved.

"I'd. . . like to go. I just don't know if I can."

Dana leaned back to study the girl.

"You're not worried about money, are you? Don't... .be-



cause we've got more than enough to get there and cover the first couple of months. We'll take care of you."

Carrie shook her head.

"Dana, that's not it, I don't think. Jamie, you correct me if I'm wrong. You and I have been planning this move for a year. We've had time to get used to the idea, get excited about it. Jamie's shocked. I doubt she can imagine herself in California, in a huge school like Berkeley, getting lost in a city she knows nothing about when she knows Baltimore like the back of her hand.

"And it's not that easy a city to leave, not when you've been born here, right, Jamie?"

The brown eyes flickered.

"Yeah, it's. . .home."

Dana released Jamie and hulked over her drink.

"You homebodies. It took me six months to talk this one into going and she'll only promise to stay for two years."

Carrie understood that Dana was hurt, but she knew it would pass. Jamie didn't, however. Carrie winked at her and said to Dana, "You vagabonds don't know how to enjoy a good city when you find one. It's like a fine wine, or a good dope if you prefer. You have to learn how to take it in, how to be warmed and comfortable with it. I'll go to California, sure, Dana. But no matter how much I enjoy it, it'll never be home."

"Alright, alright, I see. I'm asking Jamie to completely uproot herself on a month's notice and it's. . .frightening, I guess."

Dana took another sip of her drink, slowly lowered the glass and asked, quizzically, her face pinched, "But we would give you a home, much more than what you have down in that dingy single room. And we'd take care of you; it would be like family. Isn't that good enough?"

Carrie knew Dana was dreaming, but it did no good to tell her. She had this family construct in her mind, her heart, and wouldn't let go of it. And the wistfulness that shadowed her face when she spoke of it, softening the lines around her eyes and mouth, revealed a vulnerability few ever saw, and fewer recognized. But there was more operating. If Jamie went with them, accepted that role, she would cease to be a threat. Dana was playing her last hand.

Carrie reached across the table, ready now, and tugged Dana's pinky, the finger encircled by the braided gold ring they both wore.

"Hey, listen. Maybe family is too much. Jamie's a kid to us, but she considers herself a woman, with a right to her own home. She's too old for any kind of parents." Carrie paused,

leaked out slowly, "She needs a lover."

The wound opened in Dana's eyes. She quickly finished her drink and stood up.

"I'm, uh, going over to Cicero's to see if I can catch Handy. Look," she searched through her pockets and pulled out the car keys, tossed them onto the table. They rang dully. "I don't know when I'll get back tonight. Maybe I'll stay there tonight. Probably will." Her eyes met Carrie's and fluttered off, like wind-blown birds. "You take the car. Make sure the kid. . ."

She paused, slowed down, and seemed to relax. She smiled softly at Jamie.

"Be sure she's alright. Get her home. . .sometime. I'll call you, Carrie, OK?"

"Do you want me to drop you off at C's?"

Dana shook her head vigorously, setting her curls flying.

"No, I'd rather walk. I's not far, a few blocks. And it's not too late yet, just what? . . .9:30. You two just . . .have a good evening."

She tried to smile again, but it wilted. Quickly, she kissed them each on the forehead, turned and was lost in the crowd on the dancefloor. Carrie sat back, struggling with the waves of sadness and delight that clashed inside her. She looked long at Jamie, at the smooth youthfulness that still formed her face, her hands. She cleared her throat and said softly, "We made this decision without ever asking you. How do you feel about it? We can still catch Dana."

Jamie spoke into her glass.

"You know how I feel." She paused, looked up briefly, and Carrie saw her eyes glinting. She warmed. "I don't want to catch up with Dana."

Carrie reached over and raised Jamie's face, cupping it in each hand.

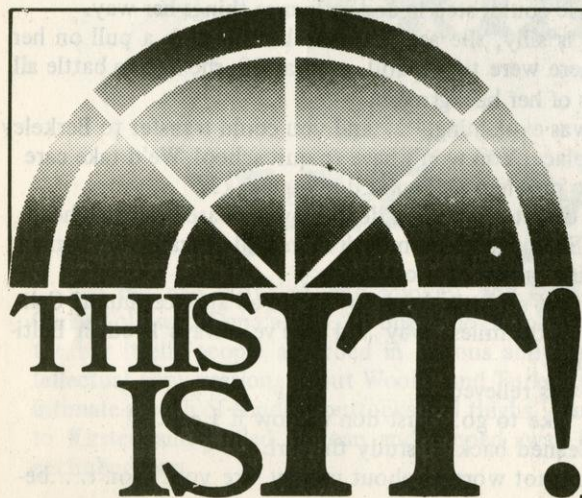
"Don't be misled. At the end of the month, I'll leave with Dana for California. Until then, I can teach you, I can love you, but sweetheart, I will leave you."

She felt the girl's eyes absorbing her, the earthen depth of them taking her in like so much summer rain for her roots. Finally, Jamie answered, "I'll be richer for that."

"We won't have time to spoil. Come on, I have scotch at home."

They left the bar together. Carrie felt the eyes, heard the wordless wonder. No one stopped her, no one called her back. She wore her delight like an embroidered cape.

**Jae Latham lives in Baltimore, Md. She is twenty-six and is presently working on her Masters in clinical psychology. Her poetry has seen print in the *Small Pond Magazine of Literature*.**



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# Bruised Arms and Broken Rhythm

FICTION BY CHIP MOORE

As Johnny got off the bus, it was close to night in the city. Dazed from the half-sleep of the long ride, he shook his head in a confusion as to where he was. But the questioning was only momentary; it really didn't matter.

He was glad the sun was almost down. The day made him paranoid; things were too clear and the streets didn't feel the same. Johnny hated the long wait for night to come.

He checked his tattered suitcase in a cheap locker and walked out to the streets. The cooling pavement felt reassuring beneath his feet. In all the countless cities he'd traveled, the streets were always the same. Johnny never needed a map or word-of-mouth directions to guide his feet. Instinctively he knew where to go.

There were never guaranteed first night scores, but Johnny could always find the parks or cheap hotels if he had the cash. On his long tour of city streets, he sometimes wondered about making a mistake and not knowing where to go. Maybe that's what he was searching for: some brick wall to block his sad progress. He never had any better explanations.

He didn't have to walk far. Johnny found his business companions working a shoe store corner just a few blocks from the bus station. There were only a handful of street-men out; it was still early. Johnny smiled at their ignorance. Rule Number 1: The earlier a street-man went out the better. More time to score; and if one didn't work out exactly right, there was always time for another try.

Johnny had no words for the ones already there. In every city it seemed that street-men tried to ignore each other in silence, but this corner held one boy-child that captured Johnny's immediate attention. Small and lithe with a difference, the boy belonged in some lighted laughing rooms where his long hair could shine. Not waiting on the street in tight-lipped silence with hard dark men that had stood too long like statues. Like Johnny.

But noticing Johnny's stuck eyes, the boy beckoned to him with a strange smile as he moved into the shadows of an alley off the street. Johnny followed, not understanding exactly why. He could maybe tell the boy of all the bad times; maybe warn him off, but he knew deep inside it was impossible. He'd seen too much of himself in this boy.

The boy waited in the darkness stroking his enlarged sex to fuller erection. He laughed; Johnny fought an uncontrollable tremble in his legs.

"You don't know me, man," Johnny grunted in his best street voice.

"Yes. . . I do." The boy grabbed Johnny's crotch, squeezing the responsive flesh with an emphatic firmness. His darting eyes echoed a floating emptiness that begged for fulfillment, and Johnny jerked away from the pulling hand. He fled back to the street with unwanted memories.

He'd seen the fights of the street-men, a couple of bad ones in his time. They never fought over rich tricks or anything like that. Jealously, they fought for each other in a bitter blank ignorance. Johnny thought maybe he understood to some degree their confused ideas of love and/or masculinity, their attraction for each other, and the unnatural blot it carved on their insides.

As he walked to the curb, he tried to shake these thoughts. He almost decided to leave because things were coming too close to home; he felt too sad for such a night, and he didn't want to see the boy again. Johnny pulled up his pants, unconsciously arranging and positioning his body to its best advantage and then looked up at the tall city lights. The cars on the street were a blur of motion and streaked color; and the blur became a voice:

"Johnny. . . you're a liar and a cheat."

The silent accusation shocked him into a confused state that wondered who spoke or if any words had been spoken: at all. Johnny slowly turned from the street to find an answer and felt his feet twisting in clumsiness—a vision of himself falling.

But just up from the shoe store, the car had already slid into the shadows by the curb like a soft whisper that cleared his head. He knew the car was waiting for him, his ears still rang from dizziness.

The car was a medium sized model, a Chevrolet he thought. It was cream-colored and looked cool and inviting to Johnny. He let his hand run along the metal side as he walked to the front door.

The driver didn't look at him as he slipped into the front seat. Immediately Johnny relaxed and pressed his head into the back of the cushioned seat. His eyes closed involuntarily, and he wondered why they never looked at him in the first moments. He couldn't decide if it was because they placed themselves so high above or so far below him.

Here a man was going to pay money for his body and services. Johnny knew that if he was going to pay good money for something that was so available and free in the first place, the least he would do would be to enjoy every minute of it—including the looking from the start.

"Are you all right?" The driver's voice, quite clearly concerned, startled Johnny into shaking his head as if he'd been almost asleep instead of lost in thought.

"Yeah, I'm okay." Johnny studied the driver. "Just a little tired I guess." The man was probably about thirty, but carried that age well. His face was smooth, his hair dark. His clothes were rather plain and Johnny understood there'd be no big money here. Now the man's eyes, like axes, stared right at him.

"I know what you mean. Everybody's always a little tired." The driver hesitated with a small frown. "How much are you?"

Johnny raised his chin and pushed himself back against the door. Money was rarely mentioned so early in the gambit.

"Twenty-five bucks." Johnny wondered how much the boy in the alley would have charged.

"Is that for all night?" The driver leaned forward with his persistence.

"Hey. . . man. . ." Johnny gestured roughly with his hands.

"Okay. . . I was just asking. I understand—we'll see just how it goes, but if you like, you can have breakfast in the morning along with the money." He laughed for the first time as if the spoken words had set him free. The car pulled into the streaming traffic. "My name is Stan."

"... Johnny."

"You know, I've never done this before, so I'm sorry if I've offended you in some way." Stan spoke with a chatty voice usually reserved for friends and colleagues. "I've never fully



understood how it all works." He drove skillfully in the frantic city traffic, and Johnny tried to remember all the curves and turns. "It's sort of scary for me."

"Yeah, I guess. . ." He appreciated Stan's honesty. "I guess it's always scary at first. For us too. I've been lucky; once a guy pulled a knife and I almost panicked. But he just wanted me to touch him with it. Not to cut or hurt him. He got his kicks that way."

"Well, I've run into some kinky numbers at the bars. It's the same everywhere." They laughed together, like at a joke.

Johnny was fully aware of a desire to talk with this man. To really talk to him; about all the reasons that he'd figured out, and all the other things he didn't understand. He even thought of forgetting about the sex and having just one friend for one night, but he needed the money too badly.

Stan was a different sort of trick, that was for sure. Or maybe it was Johnny that had suddenly changed on these streets. Though there was still the sameness; Johnny could feel the man's heat from the few feet that separated them. Sometimes the heat had been so strong that it ate all the words, and Johnny would end up doing it in the car. He was glad he was going to Stan's house.

"I live with a bunch of straight women. They're pretty cool and I hope you don't mind," Stan giggled confidentially as they parked the car. Johnny wanted to tell him that he didn't need to apologize.

"I guess it can be a little weird for you."

Johnny could hear the sound of women's voices laughing as they walked up the stairs to the apartment. He suddenly felt shy and withdrawn at their noise, even though he usually liked to be around women.

Stan practically ran up the steps to laugh and joke in a merry way with his roommates. He introduced Johnny like an old dear friend to each one in the living room, and Johnny only wanted to sink deeper into the shadows of the hall. He felt a need to grab Stan in desperation.

"Where's the bathroom?" he whispered.

"Right here." Stan opened a door. "My room's here." He turned on a light across the hall.

"How convenient." When Johnny finished in the toilet, Stan was waiting in his room. He had lit one candle and Johnny was grateful for the darkness.

"Come on." Stan was sitting on the bed. "Let's smoke a joint." The rich smoke was comfortable in Johnny's lungs; he hadn't smoked any in a long time. "I don't have poppers or anything." Stan was apologizing again.

"That's okay. I don't need anything."

"Would you like your money now?"

"Yeah, that would be cool."

Johnny pocketed the folded bills and took Stan in his arms. He pictured himself some cool romeo making just the right moves. Briefly he raised his head to look at his bare arms that seemed bruised in the flickering shadows of the candle.

They rolled together, awkward at first, but not falling apart. A touching strength enveloped Johnny, and he felt like a kid sexed-up for the first time. Not like the usual quick roll-and-runs of the trade. Together and still in clothes, two lovers so sure of one another; sex was forgotten.

When they broke to undress, Johnny studied Stan's body in the moving light. He seemed smaller without his clothes, his chest and arms narrow in their naked paleness. His body hair was thick and black unlike Johnny's smooth chest. Johnny felt

his own hands grow larger as he squeezed and stroked the warm body beside him.

He dug his fingers deep into Stan, lifting the body close to him like a small child. Breathing his heightened desire into the cup of flesh between shoulder and neck, Johnny could hear Stan's unasked question in the workings of his spread thighs.

With his hand, Johnny explored tight secrets that widened with each bit of added pressure. Stan's ass was as hairy as the rest of his body, and its softness drove Johnny to quicker entry; thrusting deep and hard as a shadow to that bristling mound. He slowed, afraid that he'd caused too much pain; but from somewhere within, he heard his name in a muffled ecstasy that let him know it was all okay.

He continued his pounding motion with the timeless energy of an unrelentless force; matched equally stroke for stroke with the passive, but strong manipulations of the man beneath as they turned from side to side to back to front. Continual struggle; two twisting bodies in a wordless hotdance of love until both were done and drained.

In the natural scope of the relaxing calm that followed, they slid together between the cool sheets and held each other tighter in their one brief moment. The silence of the bed had driven them to closer understanding, and Johnny closed his eyes tightly remembering something about seeing being believing.

They might have reversed their roles; they could have been each other but for little things in their lives. Each one looking from different corners, but for chance; Johnny was almost thirty, too.

Johnny looked at the man in his arms and wondered about ending his street life and staying with Stan. They might be each other's pot at the end of the rainbow; the finish of each other's race. And how a life might be, in love with this man who rolled so sweetly in the night.

But the thought, so tiny and brief, flew leaving an angry Johnny sad with bitter pain. And Stan's eyes beckoned to him as if to call him beautiful, to tell him not to cry despite it all.

Their finished sleep was full, quiet and deep. The two men moved across the bed, touching and curling, using each other as pillows, then rolling to their separate corners and back again; all in sleep. Apart and together, like people on the streets.

When Johnny awoke, at peace, before the night was done; he thought Stan would be disappointed if he left. It had been a good night, and a morning bout followed by a good breakfast would make a perfect end to the night's encounter. He pictured himself and Stan gossiping inanely with the roommates around the breakfast table, then tenderly kissing good-bye at the door.

But Johnny was already on the floor, looking out the window at the night as Stan dreamed on and moved over to share his pillow.

But Johnny was up and putting his pants on; already feeling the sidewalk beneath his feet. No time for more romantic thoughts; night air on his breath.

Stan opened his eyes and Johnny looked directly to see the notions of street life that they held—Johnny was supposed to leave before the night was done. He was supposed to hit the streets again for more action, maybe fighting or stealing.

Stan had nothing to say to him.

Johnny could smell the streets, belonging and walking for the dawn once again. He didn't take long to dress, but at the door, turned to say:

"Hey, man. . . it's all right. How 'bout if I meet you again tomorrow night?"



# HERE & THERE

**Philadelphia, PA**—Madelyn Murray O'Hare, the atheist whose famous court fight led to the prohibition of prayer in public schools, used some strange (for her) references when speaking before a MCC panel.

"Atheists must fight with gays to fight the church when they impose their morality upon us," she said. Then she went on to say that the gay lifestyle was "an insult to the opposite sex." The world famous atheist explained, "For a man to say to a woman, 'I don't need a sexual union with you' is the ultimate insult. Take Adam and Eve. If they had refused to mate, there'd be no human race." Sounds just like Anita.

*The Barb*

**Washington, DC**—Senator William Proxmire has listed the results of his July newsletter poll that included a question on "gay rights."

In what the Wisconsin senator calls a "heavy" response equal rights for gays was defeated by a 60 to 40 percent margin while President Carter's "human rights" policies were supported 62 to 38 percent.

The question was phrased: "People who call themselves 'gay' or homosexual should be accorded the same rights to jobs, housing, and public accommodations as other American minorities."

*Newsletter*

**Los Angeles, CA**—Hang on to those old issues of **Playgirl**, they just might become collector items.

Plagued by decreasing circulation, a loss of two top editors, and a report from Madison Avenue executives that much of the readership is male (and therefore not a good advertising market for women's products), the financially troubled **Playgirl** has been sold to two staff members.

The male skin mag has gone from a circulation of 1.5 million in 1974 to half that number this year.

*BusinessWeek*

**Cleveland, OH**—Dignity/Cleveland is coming out with a cookbook that will include a recipe from the nation's First Lady. **Dignity** sent a letter to Ms. Carter, informing her of the purpose of Dignity—the organization for gay Catholics—and asked for a donation of a recipe. She sent a recipe for Flank Steak, along with her wishes for a successful project.

*Gay Community News*

**Des Moines, IA**—Iowa municipalities and counties cannot pass a local ordinance to control the availability of pornographic material, the Iowa attorney general's office ruled last month.

*Quad City Times*

**Santa Monica, CA**—Sultry 83-year-old-Mae West once again thrilled the big boys when she walked on stage to crown the new Mr. America, probation officer David Johns, 31, of L. A.

"This guy has got it all," Miss West cooed about the former Mr. California whose muscular figure was clad only in a skimpy nylon bathing suit.

"And he's got it all in the right places."

*Quad City Times*

**Sacramento, CA**—Governor Jerry Brown said his approval (signing) of a bill outlawing marriages between homosexuals doesn't harm human rights.

"It only codifies what already is in the law," he said. In denying that the bill was a human rights issue, Brown said he had fought "to keep the government out of the bedroom"—a reference to his support of the state's consenting adults act.

An inadvertent legal change several years ago removed reference to gender from the state's marriage law.

The measure doesn't prevent a minister from performing a marriage for two persons of the same sex, but it prohibits county clerks from granting them a marriage license.

*San Francisco Examiner*

**Louisville, KY**—A Ford Motor Co. factory worker claims the Bible won't allow him to work under a woman supervisor. The fundamentalist cites among his biblical verses 1 Timothy 2:12, in which Paul says, But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp over the man, but to be in silence.

He has gained no support in his position from his union, congressman, or his church. By the way, his name is Garnet Morris Bryant.

*Gay News*

**Philadelphia, PA**—The Reverend Canon Clinton Jones, will receive **Integrity's Outstanding Achievement Award** at the third annual national convention of the Episcopal Church group for gays and their friends, August 25 to 28. An expected 250 delegates from the 30 nation-wide chapters of **Integrity** will take part in workshops and religious services at the University of Pennsylvania's Christian Assoc. and St. Mary's Church on campus.

*News Release*

**Chicago, IL**—The **Gay/Lesbian Pride Planning Committee for 1978** will hold its first meeting September 6 at 7:30 pm at the social hall, 615 W Wellington. Officers and subcommittee co-ordinators for the new year will be elected, as well as decisions on what events to schedule during Pride Week.

*News Release*

**Springfield, IL**—The Illinois lower house squelched a bill congratulating Anita Bryant for her "courageous" campaign against gay rights. It did not even come up for a vote.

Chicago Rep. Robert Mann said of Bryant, "I think somebody should put Spanish fly in her orange juice."

Fellow Democrat James Von Boekman ended the debate declaring: "It's five o'clock and we get into an argument over a bunch of queers. Let's go home!"

*Chicago Tribune*



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# HERE & THERE

**San Francisco, CA**—Mayor Moscone, Sheriff Hongisto, and DA Freitas all won votes of confidence from their electorate when an effort to cut their terms in half was crushed in last months election. A proposition which would have required all three to stand for re-election now was defeated 112,123 to 62,185.

All three have taken strong pro-gay positions. Moscone recently ordered all flags to be flown at half-mast after the murder of Robert Hillsborough, a gay city employee. Hongisto campaigned for the gay rights referendum in Dade County.

John Barbagelata, the anti-gay Supervisor who had pushed for the vote, said he would resign his seat if the proposition lost.

Harvey Milk, an open gay candidate for a seat on the Board said of the election, "[The] victory was partially due to the incredible effort of many gay women and men—working within the system—a voting giant has been awakened."

*B.A.R.*

**Denver, CO**—Have you noticed Coors Beer is now available east of the Mississippi? One reason for the "new" market is that sales are down. Controversy over the brewery's hiring practices (the firm administers a lie detector test to prospective employees and asks, "Are you a homosexual?") and a rumor that the Coors family and Company helped fund Anita Bryant's Save Our Children Foundation has caused west-coast gays to boycott the suds.

And, it has been very effective. New Figures show that for the first time Coors is second to Anheuser-Busch in California.

Coors has taken out full page ads in gay publications denying any connection with Anita Bryant. However the boycott organizers say the company has given funds to the anti-ERA forces and has "supported the kind of organizations" which have traditionally opposed gay rights.

*Gay Community News*

**New York, NY**—Transsexual Dr. Renee Richards has won her legal fight to play in the United States Open Tennis Tournament.

The New York Supreme Court said in a 13 page decision said, "The only justification for using a sex determination test in athletic competition is to prevent fraud. . . men masquerading as women, competing as women"

The committee that runs the Tournament wanted to bar the 42-year-old transsexual from the competition because of her unwillingness to take a sex chromosome test.

Of the decision she said, "I feel ecstatic. I can't believe it. It's really a vindication of everything I've tried to prove in the last year. Whether I win the tournament doesn't mean anything in the long run."

It better not. She's drawn the top seeded player in the first game.

*The Milwaukee Sentinel*

**New York, NY**—The National Gay Task Force's Fund for Human Dignity has been granted tax exempt status. Gifts to the fund, also known as the **Howard Brown Memorial Fund**, are now deductible.

*News Release*

**Denver, CO**—In a case filled with complexities, a lesbian has received custody of her former lover's child.

Donna Levy and Jeanette Hatzopulos lived together for 13 years. During that time they decided that they wanted a child so Hatzopulos picked up a man at a party and conceived a child. After the two women broke up Levy continued to visit the little girl and took her on weekends.

Jeanette committed suicide this summer and her sister took the child. She and her husband refused to even allow Levy to visit the child.

She went to court and was awarded permanent custody of the 7-year-old-girl.

*GayLife*

**New York, NY**—As election time draws near, New York gays have found another friend in the race for mayor.

Mario Cuomo has come out in favor of gays teaching.

Also against capital punishment, Cuomo told Nat Hentoff of the **Village Voice**, "I could win the election just by coming out for capital Punishment. Especially for gays. And I could absolutely clinch it if I came out for capital punishment preceded by torture."

Polls show him running neck-and-neck with Mayor Beame for second place, behind Bella Abzug.

*Gay Community News*

**Reno, NV**—"This is a gay oriented event" proclaimed a sign over the entrance to the Washoe County Fairgrounds as patrons filed in to Reno's second Gay Rodeo.

Despite his tough, range-hardened face that might have come straight out of a Marlboro ad, one contestant said he was "scared to death."

The winner of an All American Cowboy award on the national rodeo circuit added, "If they find out on the rodeo circuit I'm gay, my career will be ruined. It took a lot of courage to be here and I'm still nervous."

The rodeo raised over \$1000 for muscular dystrophy.

*The San Francisco Examiner*

**Indianapolis, IN**—Making improper sexual advances toward a co-worker—such as pinching his or her bottom—is valid grounds for dismissal, the Indiana Court of Appeals has ruled.

*Washington Post*

**San Francisco, CA**—The gays (the Badlands Baddies) came from behind to win the fifth annual gay and cop (The Police Allstars) softball game. Over 8,000 fans attended. Proceeds from the event go to Meals on Wheels, a program that aids senior citizens.

*San Francisco Examiner*



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# HERE & THERE

**London, England**—World skating champion John Curry is appearing in his ice show again after ten days rest from a beating he received on a Kensington street.

The 27 year old Curry (who created an uproar when he disclosed he was gay after winning the Gold Medal in the Olympics) was on his way home alone when the attack occurred.

"The man came up and punched me on the nose. I fell to the ground but I got up again and tried to talk to him."

But the man hit him again and when John fell to the ground, kicked him in the back—the kick that put him out of the show.

Curry did not report the incident to the police.

Plans are underway to bring the show to the states this fall.

*Gay News (London)*

**Boston, MA**—McDonald's is all in a tither about one of their former clowns. Bob Brandon told a gay rights rally that he once played the part of Ronald McDonald. The McDonald's Corporation promptly went to court and got a judge to forbid Brandon to make himself up anything like to television clown. The judge also enjoined him from stating that "Ronald McDonald is gay."

*ABC News*

**Houston, TX**—Dr. J. Pickett and Dale Brown, who claimed they were married as husband and wife in Texas have been arrested by the sheriff and charged with sodomy.

Calling the 25-year-old Pickett the "husband," deputies charged him with two counts of sodomy and placed him in County Jail in lieu of \$6,000 bond. Brown, also 25, was placed in isolation under \$3,000 bond. The sheriff said, "since he thinks he is a woman, we didn't think he should be in the same cell block with men or women."

*The Barb*

**West Bend, WI**—A special prosecutor here to investigate and possibly prosecute the **Citizens for Decency Through Law**, an anti-obscenity group, for alleged violations of the state election campaign law.

The appointment came after the **West Bend News** alleged that the 200 member group violated the law when it sponsored a referendum in April asking West Bend to prohibit the exhibition and sale of hard core pornography.

*The Milwaukee Journal*

**Chesapeake, VA**—Sheriff John Newhart, acquitted of abduction and attempted sodomy charges, said he still is a candidate for reelection and will campaign vigorously.

A Virginia Beach Circuit Court jury found Newhart innocent of the charges, which stemmed from allegations by a 17-year-old youth. (See GPU NEWS June)

*Times - Dispatch*

**New York, NY**—The new executive of the NAACP, Benjamin Hooks, has expressed his support for gay rights. When questioned about the movement on CBS' **Face The Nation**, he said, "The gay rights movement has some strong and striking similarities to the [black] movement."

*CBS News*

**Stafford, VA**—Four men have been arrested and charged with sodomy as the result of a state police crackdown at the Stafford wayside on US 1.

During a one week period police observed from "60 to 70 suspected homosexuals" at the wayside—known as Safford Gayside—but made no arrests because police could not observe activity without being noticed.

The arrests came after an observation booth was constructed inside a men's rest room.

*Times-Dispatch*







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# By Her Own Admission

## A Lesbian Mother's Fight to Keep Her Son

by **Gifford Guy Gibson**  
with the collaboration of  
**Mary Jo Risher**

By Her Own Admission: A Lesbian Mother's Fight to Keep Her Son by Gifford Guy Gibson, Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1977, 276 pages, \$8.95.

# Reviewed by Persia Straub

It was chance that led Clifford Gibson to cover the trial of Mary Jo Risher. Accepting a request to guest edit an issue of a weekly newspaper in Dallas, he came upon the impending Risher case. After doing the pre-trial interview, he decided to cover the trial himself. The legal system seemed satisfied with what transpired in the courts, but Gibson found himself with a tale that would "restore human sensibility, lighten the shadows, and tell the real story. . ."

Gifford Guy Gibson has created a fast-paced, succinctly written, and deeply personal account of the harrowing experiences of the Risher vs. Risher case, the first known jury trial involving the custody rights of a homosexual parent. The trial left in its wake Mary Jo Risher, an anguished, angry, confused mother whose self-esteem had been extensively diminished thanks to the efforts of the persecuting adversary who turned and pulled the raw wool of truth ruthlessly to create the design of his fancy.

Mary Jo Risher came to terms with her sexuality through a long-term encounter with herself; coming to a head when she was a divorced woman of thirty-seven with two children, her experience became complex. For one thing, her adult friends, particularly her family, all presumed that Mary Jo's sexual identity had resolved itself long ago. This new direction threatened them because they discovered she had facets to her person that they were not familiar with. This was complicated further by the fact that her sexual dilemma arose from her need to actualize her homosexuality; all the necessary conditions existed for a traumatic response from those "significant others."

It was reasonable for her family to be "shook"; after all, they had enjoyed reflecting off her for years—her successes had been, in a sense, theirs because she was part of their family life. Suddenly, an important aspect of her person was being revealed which they had no wish to feel responsible for. They felt be-



trayed, for they had developed hidden expectations of her which she could no longer give to them. Cheated and angry, their feelings spilled out in behaviors hurtful to themselves and to Mary Jo, an emotional overflow of reactions too hard for them to articulate. Mary Jo might have suspected that this type of response could result in that her experience as a nurse brought her in contact with many conflict situations; but, being in the heights of elation (it was elating to come to terms with herself after all her years of struggle), she wished to **share** what was to her a great "ah ha" experience. It proved to be Mary Jo's undoing. From the initial reaction of wanting to have her committed; to arranging a good "fuck"; to outright hostility; to the final threat which found the target's core—taking away her children—the family tried various ploys in hopes of returning Mary Jo to "normality." Only, when it was too late (the trial had run its ugly course), did they see the utter destructiveness their behavior had wrought on the life of the person they so narrowly loved.

Not to give Mary Jo's coming out so negative a character, it is important to speak of the fine people she was fortunate enough to come in contact with during this time. There was Lisa—with whom Mary Jo worked out her early ambivalent feelings: at this point, Mary Jo still feared any embodiment of her own homosexuality—but Lisa understood and "hung in" there. It was also Lisa who introduced Mary Jo to her first bar, and it was again with her that Mary Jo came to find a community existed in the mutual struggle to find acceptance and recognition as valuable and worthwhile persons. It was this display of collective individuals moving together that gave Mary Jo the courage to accept and act out her homosexuality.

Then there was Rose Bell—that old nursing school friend she wasn't quite sure about. One well-placed question: "What bars do you frequent, Mary Jo?" and everyone knew

where everyone stood. Rose then undertook to educate Mary Jo to the nuances of gay life and the structure of the gay community.

Nurturance during this initial period is so important, for at first one feels such anomie. It is like being in a new land—the language seems the same, the environment seems the same, but there are undefinable differences, and to put it in Mary Jo's words, she felt "embryonic"—"at sea." How essential to have friends who care about your intellectual/emotional comfort, as well as your sexual ease.

Eventually, through Rose, Mary Jo was to meet Ann, also a lesbian mother. This was to Mary Jo's favor, for she found in Ann a woman who could understand her attachment to her children. Because of Ann, Mary Jo was spared the loneliness that some lesbian mothers experience when their relationships with their children find little room for expression in their homosexual lifestyles. With Ann, Mary Jo's life took on a quiet posture, but her family would

not accept her newly-found identity and way of life—it was not "their" plan for her. This immaturity on the part of her family was to bring a devastating hurt to Mary Jo Risher, the scars of which will probably never be forgotten.

It was Jimmy, Mary Jo's oldest son, who opened the lid of the box called "Family Retaliation." For Mary Jo to have told Jimmy about her lesbianism was pure folly, for Jimmy was manipulative in his behavior to begin with; sooner or later he would use it as a wedge between his already alienated parents to accomplish what he saw as "good" for him. All for a car, Jimmy threatened to leave Ann and Mary Jo's house and go to live with his father. Mary Jo told him to **DO THAT**, if he wished; and he did. Thus, began the unfolding of a drama in which a family worked together in a concerted manner to bring suffering and unhappiness into the life of one of its deviating members. It began with her mother's warning that Mary Jo should give the children to Doug

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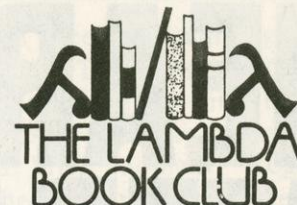
Risher—that Mary Jo, being a homosexual, was not a fit mother. Then came the citation from Doug Risher listing the reasons for the custody action: a homosexual relationship; children should be removed from an immoral and undesirable environment; James, incensed by the relationship, had run away; wild parties; children left unattended; children did work Mother should do; children were beaten.

None of those points on that citation were ever substantiated in the course of the trial. Like most citations, the purpose of this one was to put Mary Jo Risher off balance! Attorney Frank Stenger and Attorney Aglaia Mauzy prepared a competent case of defense against the angry accusations of Douglas Risher, a man who deeply resented the person of Mary Jo Risher, his former wife. Their dealings since the divorce had been none too good, but then she had revealed herself a lesbian! Douglas Risher would get her GOOD for that; he would stop at nothing; Mary Jo's lesbianism challenged his

masculinity and he was angry.

The rest of the account is the bitter, blow-by-blow story of the trial and the homophobic responses to what would have been glossed over had the matter been heterosexual in character. These distortions of truth about her personal life led to the inevitable demeaning of Mary Jo as a human being which culminated in the final decision of the jury (10-2) to grant custody of nine-year-old Richard Risher to his father. After reading *By Her Own Admission*, a friend of mine commented, "Boy, when Mary Jo comes out, she really comes out!" Then she added, "She should have been more careful." Indeed, Mary Jo, I wish for you and your loves that you had been more careful, and that you would have been less wounded by this battle.

I slammed down the book and felt the salt tears of anger and despair course down my cheeks and responded, "God Damn It! It isn't fair!" I was crying out for the Mary Jo Rishers and for myself. I knew that I, too, could lose my children!



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# NEAR FATAL ATTRACTION

BY  
**HURSTY  
RICHEY**



Near Fatal Attraction by Hursty Richey, Ashley Books, Port Washington, New York, 1977, 366 pages, \$8.95.

Reviewed by  
**Jim Jones, M.A.**

Fiction dealing with gay characters has certainly had—and continues to have—its problems in terms of literary values, but the fault lies not with the choice of subject matter as many critics seem to think. We have seen gay characters move from porno novels to minor roles in “straight” works, but their portrayal has generally remained unbalanced and less than accurate. Many books of low quality have been published because it was felt that there exists an audience willing to buy works dealing with homosexuality merely because of its lurid characteristics or emotional appeal. There is, however, another kind of fiction dealing with gay characters and situations, this genre written by gay authors, often for a gay audience. This genre, this sub-group, if you will, is what concerns us most today because it is growing and needs our support and helpful criticism. It, too, has its problems, and one feels that they often stem more from the relative lack of experience at writing and publishing, the lack of acquired skill at this art, than anything else. This is due in large part to the paucity of outlets for gay prose, drama, or poetry.

Hursty Richey's first novel, *Near-Fatal Attraction*, is not another work by a second-rate author who decided to write about gay people. It is a serious attempt to write fiction in which the homosexuality of the participants plays a crucial role.

A problem of many first-time novelists is that of form, of structuring what they have to say, and Richey has made a good choice here in telling his story by means of letters between the two main participants, Roger Stockwell and Tom Peddigrew. As boys, these two, now adult men, were in the same Boy Scout troop in their small West Virginian town and were leaders of rival patrols. Several members of the troop died in what were said to be accidents while on camping trips or at meetings. Roger has written a series of articles about this troop and this is one of his reasons for writing



Tom, whom he has not seen or talked to since high school. This, however, is not his only reason. Ever since their days together as Boy Scouts, Roger has been attracted to Tom and he has been unable to get over his feelings for him. He has, essentially, remained in his relationships with men at that emotional stage.

Richey said of this work, "I've tried to write a kind of neurotic 20th Century man's adventure of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn." It is neurotic indeed. Through Tom's letters the reader discovers how much Roger has repressed about what really went on during the camping trips. The boys would play a game, invented by Tom, in which one patrol would be the hunters and the other the prey. When the prey was captured, the hunter would have sex with him. Every time the boys were left alone, which was conveniently (and unbelievably) almost every time they got together, they "played the game." It was this game that resulted in the "accidental" deaths of several of the scouts.

As they exchange more letters, Roger attempts to deal with his sexual feelings for Tom by going on a camping trip with him, exactly like they did when they were young. Even though the setting is as it was then and they do have sex (which they did not at that time), Roger does not achieve the pleasure he had so long anticipated. Eventually, he does find it in the person of Tom's young son, Allen, who embodies for Roger everything Tom was at that age. With Allen's help, Roger at last breaks through his psychological block, begins to deal with his homosexual feelings, and starts to grow.

The first half of the book is rather slow going. Richey provides a great deal of narration of past events in Tom's letters and this receives no balance in Roger's letters which are full of his neurotic feelings for Tom, not the Tom he is writing, but the boy of years ago. Tom, too, has his problems. He sees everyone as a sexual conquest and welcomes the re-

newed contact with Roger because Roger is the only person Tom wanted and never got. Up to the middle of the book, one has the impression that this is going to be a character study of two neurotics and one merely would like to find out if they are going to get together and then be done with them.

Thankfully, the action picks up speed at this point and the story line changes to become a murder mystery. The plot now hinges on finding out who killed these boys while they were playing the game. Roger believes, and through him the reader is led to believe, that Tom killed them, but the plot is given an inventive twist at the end through the discovery of an old tape-recording of their last meeting at which two troop members were killed. Now that he knows Tom is not a murderer, Roger feels free to try to form a relationship with him, but, at the end of the book, Tom dies. Certainly this is best for Roger who now is free to grow up emotionally, having rid himself of the years of repression he imposed upon himself because of his homosexuality.

Richey has some important things to say about homosexuality and he portrays it well as an instrument of love and of oppression. "The game" is an obvious euphemism for being in the closet but it is more than that here; it represents the use of sex as a tool of power, and it kills. The long-

awaited weekend camping trip of Roger and Tom fails for Roger because he saw Tom only in sexual terms, as an object to be consumed. For a brief moment, Roger approached the rapturous feeling he sought when he wanted to comfort Tom and in so doing express a gesture of love. For Roger, that, and not the sex they did have, was the highpoint of their time together. In the course of the book, Roger grows because he stops repressing his sexual desires and comes to understand and deal with them so that, by the end, he feels ready to begin a mature relationship with another man.

Unfortunately, this very valuable character portrayal is placed in a book which is seriously flawed. Although one remains unsure of the identity of the real murderer until the tape is played, the plot twists and clues are too obvious, the red herrings too red. So many of the developments are too pat, too convenient (especially the troop leader's constantly being called away to fight a fire, thus leaving the boys alone). Richey has a good idea, but his writing contains very little art to camouflage the plot line or sustain the story.

This novel is published by Ashley Books, a press which has said it will be devoted to publishing works with gay themes and works by gay authors. We hope for more—and better—from them.

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# REVIEW

**Transvestites and Transsexuals** by Deborah Heller Feinbloom. Delta Books, New York, 1977. pp 303, paperback, \$3.95.

Reviewed by Sheila Sullivan

"For the nonspecialist, this is the best book there is on transvestism and transsexualism:..." Thus spake John Money. You can't get a better recommendation.

**Transvestites and Transsexuals** is a sociological study, setting it apart from other books on this topic: Instead of the usual mechanics of gender dysphoria, the how comes and what thens, this book introduces us to the group dynamics of transvestites and transsexuals.

Sociologist Deborah Feinbloom writes in the first person of her seven month observation of an eastern chapter of the **Foundation for Personality Expression**, the national organization of heterosexual male transvestites founded by Dr. Virginia Charles Prince. Feinbloom goes into detail about the meeting place and activities of the FPE group and levels a description of heterosexual cross-dressers closer to my experiences than any other I have come across. Group interaction and attitudes were documented, as well as unpopular theories as to why wives and girl-

friends of transvestites stick around.

I was most interested in the author's observations of the method in which the FPE transvestite retains his very straight heterosexual male identity. This is one area I have always found fascinating in its incongruity and one I have never seen dealt with. Feinbloom notes that "the average FPE member is no more tolerant or understanding of other forms of sexual expression than his "straight counterpart" and that **even while dressed** will expound his upright male citizen image of war veteran, breadwinner, church-goer, sports enthusiast. The FPE contingent needs to feel that feminists, gays, sado-masochists and fetishists are sick, while they themselves are merely expressing their "other side"

—certainly not for any nasty sexual reasons. (Fortunately, Feinbloom notes that not all heterosexual transvestites hold such positions.) I was amazed that this fact was not challenged in the "Letters and Comments from Transvestites" at the end of the book. Also noted was the way in which these men speak of themselves as two different people, another peculiarity of some heterosexual cross-dressers: "If a new person is present, John will be introduced as such, with a comment that Joanna is 'in the suitcase.'" This is apparently another vehicle for keeping their image of themselves separate from their actions.

In later chapters, the author tells us how she became involved with transsexuals and, as director, opened

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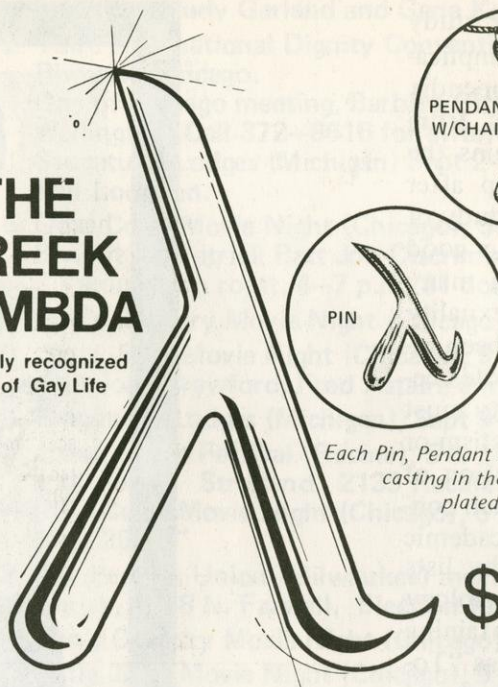
the Gender Identity Service in Boston in 1972. Here has been the center of her contact with transsexuals. Again and again, we are introduced to her close friend "Phil/Helen" who has gone from heterosexual transvestite to post operative transsexual. Sixteen letters written by "Phil/Helen" to Feinbloom are reprinted and Helen has a lot of intelligent and sensible insights into her situation. These letters were one of the high points of the book. Another chapter deals with a meeting of pre- and post-operative transsexuals, and I was heartened to see some ink given the female-to-males and their sorely overlooked predicaments. It is all too easy to expound on the male-to-female surgery, which can be undetectable by a gynecologist, and disregard the female-to-male, who is left without even the proper equipment to use the men's room.

The only uncomfortable sections in Feinbloom's work were the long lectures in which she "justified" herself. There were several accounts of Deborah Feinbloom Private Citizen coming into conflict with Deborah Feinbloom Sociologist, and I found these "apologies" somewhat amusing. A young male-to-female transsexual and her vocal disenchantment with the mental health profession seemed to have struck a sensitive note with Feinbloom, who found it necessary to rationalize procedures of her clinic. Possibly such avowals are informative to the "nonspecialist", but anyone having contact with victims of gender conflict is aware of the need for stringent reins in dispensing surgery to anyone requesting it.

Far more intriguing would have been an elaboration of her personal reactions as a woman in the company of transvestites/transsexuals, as she only mentioned in passing moments when she wished her hairstyle was more elegant or her dress a bit more stylish. Perhaps she felt additional comment on these feelings would have brought up her Private Citizen versus Sociologist conflict once more.

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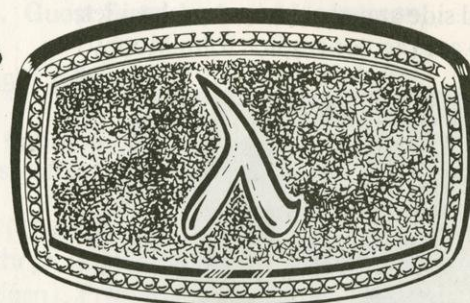
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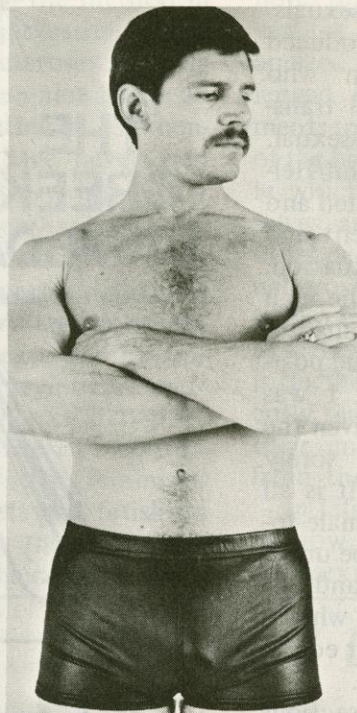
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Feinbloom wraps up her study with "Appendix A: Ethical Implications of Fieldwork," and "Appendix B: Letters and Comments from Transvestites," which contains the reactions of the FPE group after they had read Feinbloom's study of them. Finally she gives us a good bibliography, though listing many publications on homosexuality which I felt should not have been included. Though the author notes beforehand that "homosexuality must not be confused with transvestism or transsexualism," her integration of these subjects perpetrates such confusion. Directed to the academic reader, a second bibliography lists publications on "General Sociology and Social Psychology," containing some surprising titles such as "Toward a Sociology of Telephones and Telephoners" and "Becoming a Marijuana User."

All in all, she did a good job. No doubt this book is a valuable addition to the present publications on the subject. Feinbloom gives us the good side and the bad. And besides, who am I to contradict John Money?

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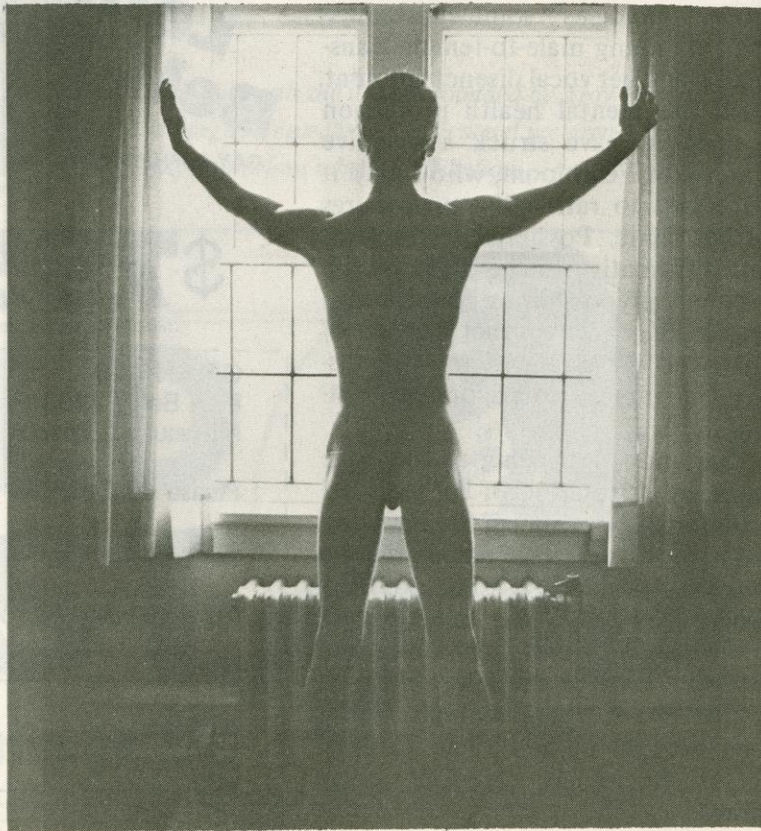


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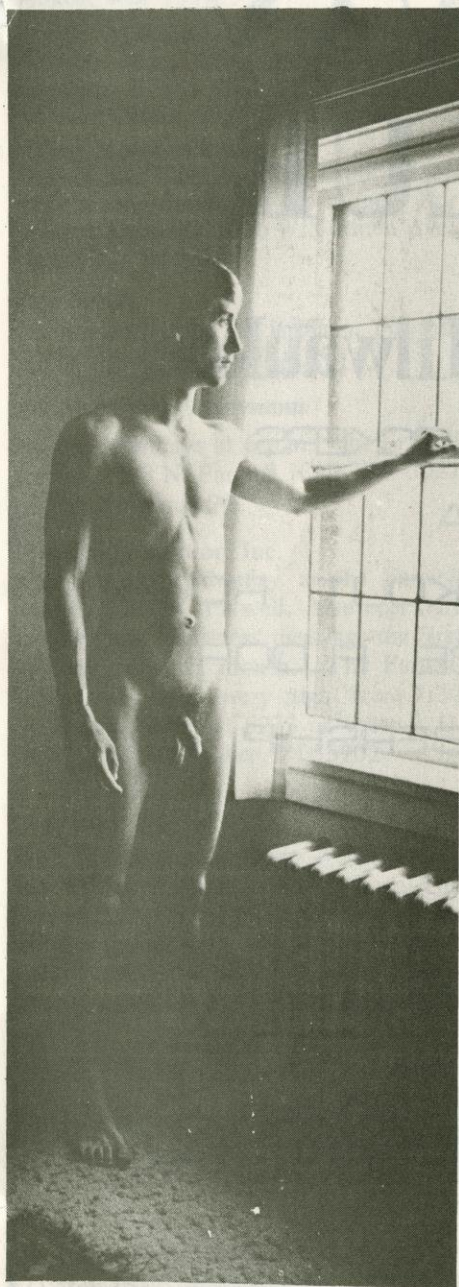
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# CALENDAR

Any person, group or business who wishes to have a free announcement of an upcoming event should send copy before the 25th of any month for the next issue.



Photos pages 46 and 47  
by Patrick Batt

- SEPT 1 Little Jim's Movie Night (Chicago), 9 p.m., "For Me and My Gal," with Judy Garland and Gene Kelly.
- SEPT 2 Third International Dignity Convention, Sept. 2-5, Hotel Bismark, Chicago.  
One of Chicago meeting, Barbara Gittings, speaker, 615 West Wellington, Call 372-8616 for information.  
Saugatuck Lodges (Michigan) Sept 2-3, Grand Opening for Fall Location.
- SEPT 5 Gold Coast Movie Night (Chicago), 5 & 10 p.m., "Duel." Benefit for Patrick Batt Job Discrimination Case. Wreck Room. Cookout/corn roast. 4-7 p.m. \$1 donation. Art Works for sale.
- SEPT 7 Man's Country Movie Night (Chicago), "Mother Jugs & Speed"
- SEPT 8 Little Jim's Movie Night (Chicago), 9 p.m., "Dancing Lady," with Joan Crawford, Fred Astaire and Clark Gable.
- SEPT 9 Saugatuck Lodges (Michigan), Sept 9-10, Film Festival.
- SEPT 11 Jodee's Film Festival (Racine), 5 & 10 p.m., "Hello Dolly," with Barbra Streisand. 2139 Racine Street.  
Gold Coast Movie Night (Chicago), 5 & 10 p.m., "Death Race 2000."
- SEPT 12 Gay Peoples Union (Milwaukee) meeting, 8 p.m., The Farwell Center, 1568 N. Farwell. Election for President.
- SEPT 14 Man's Country Movie Night (Chicago), "The Big Bus."
- SEPT 15 Little Jim's Movie Night (Chicago), 9 p.m., "Ziegfield Girl," With Judy Garland, Tony Martin, Hedy Lamar and Lana Turner.
- SEPT 18 Jodee's Film Festival (Racine), 5 & 10 p.m., "Bullit," with Steve McQueen. 2139 Racine Street.  
Benefit for Patrick Batt Job Discrimination Case. Circus Disco—Presenting Wanda Lust from Chicago. 10 p.m., \$1.50 donation.
- SEPT 19 Gay Peoples Union (Milwaukee) meeting, 8 p.m., The Farwell Center, 1568 N. Farwell. Guest Speaker, gay Alderperson, Jim Yeadon of Madison.
- SEPT 21 Man's Country Movie Night (Chicago), "Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother."
- SEPT 22 Red Baron (Milwaukee) Fabulous Fifties Party, 9 p.m., Dance Contest (\$100 first prize), Fonzi Lookalike Contest, free food.  
Little Jim's Movie Night (Chicago), 9 p.m., "Two Sisters From Boston," with Kathryn Grayson & Jimmy Durante
- SEPT 23 Saugatuck Lodges (Michigan), Free Buffet.
- SEPT 24 Second Annual Farwell Center Bike Hike (Milwaukee), 10 a.m., 1568 N. Farwell. Money raised for Farwell Center activities. (Rain date, October 1.)  
Saugatuck Lodges (Michigan), Free Buffet.
- SEPT 25 Jodee's Film Festival (Racine), 5 & 10 p.m., "The Gay Deceivers." 2139 Racine Street.  
Gold Coast Movie Night (Chicago) 5 & 10 p.m., "The Incredible Shrinking Man."  
Benefit for Patrick Batt Job Discrimination Case. Manhole (Green Bay) Full production of Let My People Come 8 p.m. \$2.50.
- SEPT 26 Gay Peoples Union (Milwaukee) meeting, 8 p.m., The Farwell Center, 1568 N. Farwell.
- SEPT 28 Man's Country Movie Night (Chicago), "Survive."
- SEPT 29 Little Jim's Movie Night (Chicago), 9 p.m., "Show Business," with Eddie Cantor and Joan Davis.  
Benefit for Patrick Batt Job Discrimination Case. Gold Coast—(Chicago) \$1.00 donation
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### ANNOUNCES

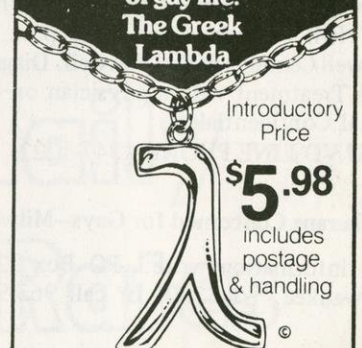
Benefits for the Patrick Batt Job Discrimination Case

- September 5 Wreck Room—A cookout/corn roast.  
4-7 p.m. \$1 donation.  
Art Works for sale.
- September 18 Circus Disco—Presenting Wanda Lust  
from Chicago. 10 p.m., \$1.50 donation
- September 25 Manhole (Green Bay) Full Production  
of Let My People Come. 8 p.m. \$2.50  
donation.
- September 29 Gold Coast (Chicago) Benefit Night.  
\$1.00 donation.
- October 8 The Factory/On Broadway—Full pro-  
duction of Let My People Come with  
added acts and attractions. 8:30 p.m.  
\$3.50

*See page four for news article*

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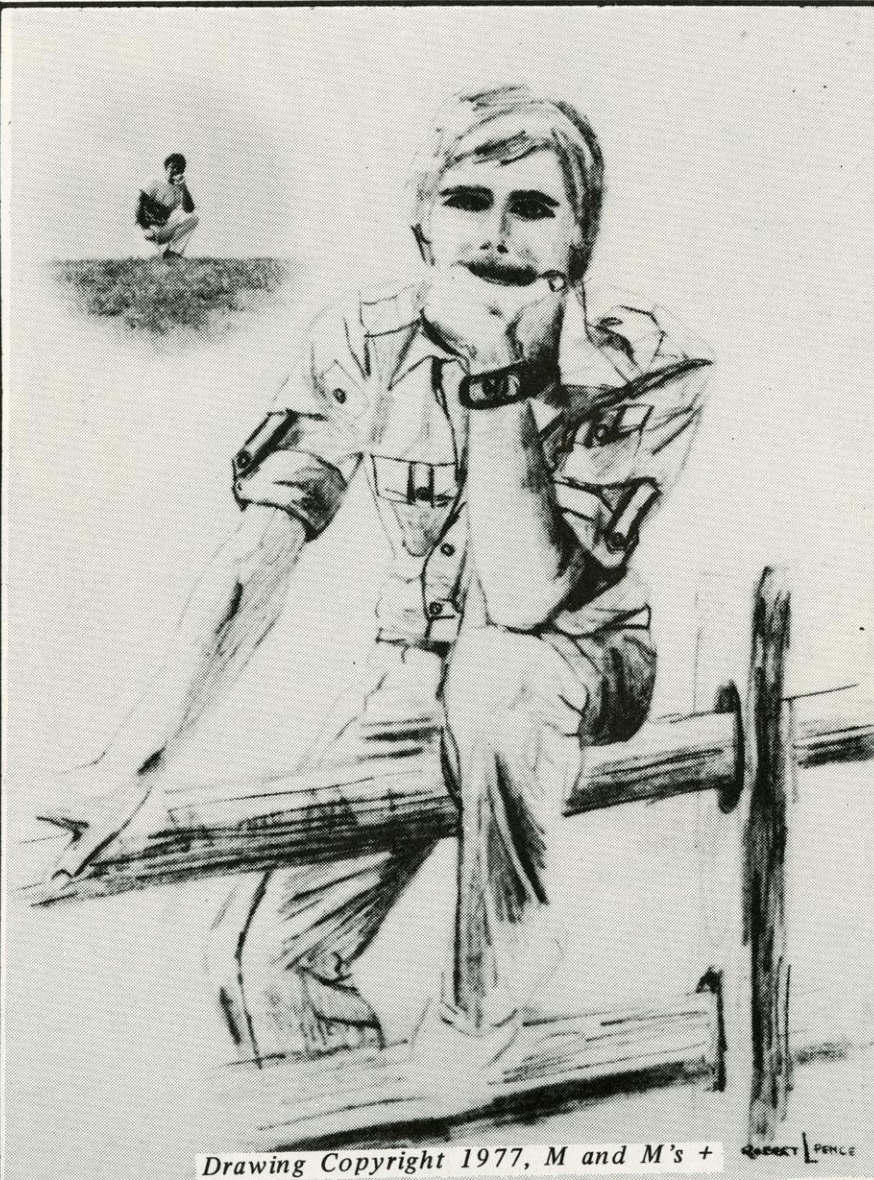
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