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GRASS ROOTS ACTION

by wayne jefferson

REVIEW: LESBIAN IMAGES

by donna martin

HONORABLE DISCHARGE FOR SGT.

Langley Air Force Base, Va.—On March 6 Air Force T. Sgt Leonard Matlovich, a race relations instructor here, gave his supervising officer a letter declaring his homosexuality and asking to stay in the service. Matlovich has a twelve year unblemished record in the air force, having served three tours in Vietnam. He has a string of medals including the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

On May 20 his commanding officer, Lt. Col. Charles Ritchie sent him a letter citing air force regulations against homosexuals and stating that he was taking action to give him a general discharge. Matlovich immediately asked for a hearing before a discharge board.

Matlovich argued that the effort to discharge him violated his constitutional rights of privacy and equal protection. He also argued that the air force regulation barring homosexuals allows for exception.

The regulation states:

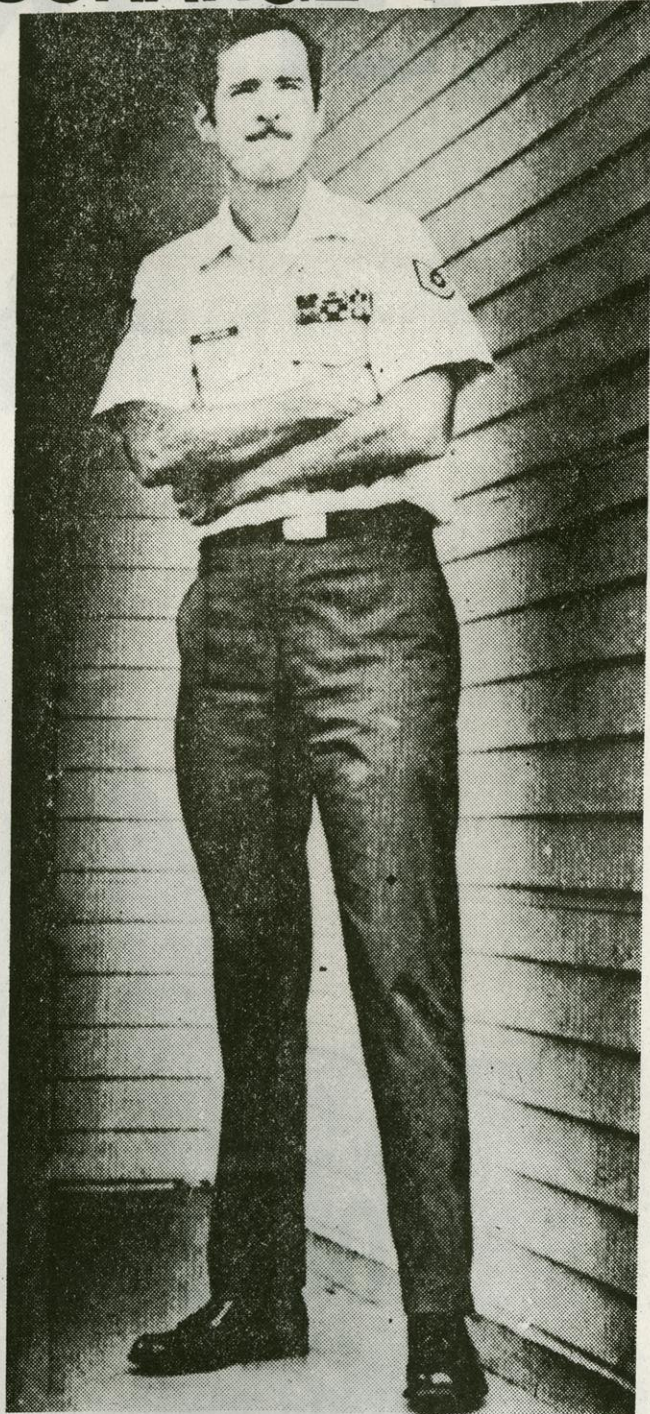
"Homosexuality is not tolerated in the Air Force. Participation in a homosexual act is considered serious misbehavior.

It is the general policy to discharge members of the Air Force who fall within purview of this section. Exceptions to permit retention may be authorized only where the most unusual circumstances exist and provided the airman's ability to perform his military service has not been compromised."

The air force lawyers argued that keeping Matlovich in the service would be giving him licence to violate military law and air force regulations, particularly those against sodomy.

After a four day hearing, two lieutenant colonels and one major deliberated 4½ hours before recommending a general discharge, one step above an undesirable discharge.

In late September Matlovich's superiors ignored the recommendation and began to process for an honorable discharge which would



—AP Wirephoto

leave him with all of his veteran's benefits but separate him from the service against his wishes.

They carefully explained that their action was because of his outstanding record in the service.

Matlovich has now appealed to Air Force Secretary John L. McLucas who could halt discharge proceedings, allowing him to remain

in the service.

Failing this Matlovich has vowed to take his case to the courts, even to the U.S. Supreme Court.

There are as many as 100,000 to 200,000 homosexual servicemen and women says Matlovich and it is for them as well as for his own peace of mind that he is fighting to stay in the service as an open gay.

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2nd LESBIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE

by Donna Martin

Chicago, Ill.—Sponsored by the **Womanpress**, the Second Annual Lesbian Writers Conference was held at the First Unitarian Church the weekend of Sept. 19–21. The drawing card for many was the opening talk presented by Barbara Grier, better known as Gene Damon, editor of **The Ladder** in its final years before its much-regretted demise in 1972.

In pre-liberation days, most lesbians associated with **The Ladder** or **Daughters of Bilitis (DOB)**, with a few notable exceptions (Del Martin, Phillis Lyon, Barbara Gittings), felt the necessity of hiding their true identity from an unbelievably intolerant, oppressive society. Thus most of the contributors to **The Ladder** used pseudonyms, and these public names sometimes concealed well-known people. For example, Barbara said that Lorraine Hansberry wrote some articles in 1958, the year before she received the New York Drama Critics award for her play, **Raisin in the Sun**. As for her own use of a pseudonym, she said that by the time it was no longer necessary it would have been too confusing to shed it, but that she felt it had become an albatross about her neck.

A central theme of Barbara Grier's talk was the great cloud of ignorance that separates lesbians from their history. Far too many lesbians even today come out convinced they are the only ones in the world having these "strange" attractions to other women. Moreover, a large number of lesbians are still nervous and closety about their sexual orientation. There is a great need therefore for the unearthing and advertising of those lesbians who throughout history have led rich and significant lives. It would do much toward fostering a positive sense of identity if there was more opportunity for lesbians to identify with other worthwhile women.

Barbara Grier also spoke about women's presses, stressing that a number have already gone under, and of those remaining, most are in financial trouble. But few though they are, they are in great need of material. She urged lesbians to delve within themselves and write—and not just "coming-out" stories (an all too common temptation for lesbian writers).

As was the case last year, the format of the rest of the weekend was a wide variety of workshops. Besides the writing workshops (article writing, poetry, fiction, song writing), there were ones on the nuts and bolts of getting material into print: a small press workshop; one dealing with the matter of doing one's own publishing; and others on layout and design, and distribution.

HUD FINDS FOR GAYS

Macon, Ga.—U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Region IV out of Atlanta) has decided on behalf of well-known gay couple Dr. Louie Crew and Mr. Ernest Clay. The two filed with HUD in August 1974 after a Macon realtor, Baxter Evans & Co., reneged on a security deposit to provide a lease on the same terms provided for all other apartment occupants. Between the time of the deposit and the time of occupancy the realtor had learned that the couple is gay and racially integrated.

When the couple showed up to move in, they were told they could not rent on any terms. After HUD made a call on their behalf, the realtor backed down to the point of offering them a lease with additional clauses added, stipulating that they could never have been arrested or convicted of any crimes. These clauses HUD later discovered were not a part of the leases signed by other tenants before or after the episode. Crew and Clay refused to occupy on these threatening terms

The weekend concluded on Sunday afternoon with women reading to each other from their work. As astonishing variety of prose, fiction, and poetry was offered to an appreciative audience, witness once again to the great range of talent and interest among lesbian women.

A final note about this conference. Last year's featured speaker, Valerie Taylor (author of a number of lesbian novels) was present again this year and contributed with her experience and expertise to a number of workshops. She has just retired and will presently be moving to a small town in upstate New York. Her presence will be sorely missed at future lesbian writers conferences. Good luck and much happiness in the coming years, Valerie!

and filed complaint.

During the year-long investigation, **The Macon Herald** ran a front page article attacking the couple for their work in founding **Integrity**, the national organization of gay Episcopalians. In an effort to "justify" their "criminal clause", Baxter and Evans filed a copy of this article with HUD, not knowing that the couple had informed HUD investigators of their sexual orientation at the beginning. Since the two have never been convicted of the felony they commit regularly in their home, technically the realtor's claim amounts to a defamation of character said Crew.

HUD's efforts at conciliation failed on August 6 when Crew met with a HUD conciliator and three attorneys for the realtor. The conciliation agreement worked out by HUD would have required the realtor to report regularly to HUD of its compliance with the Civil Rights Acts and to make a modest payment to the couple for expenses in the case.

The realtor refused these terms, leaving Crew and Clay with only recourse to the courts with HUD's findings in their favor.

Counsel in Macon has advised them that the pattern in Georgia has been for juries to find in favor of those discriminated against, but then to award damages of less than \$25. Lawyers cannot afford to accept such cases.

Meanwhile the two remain at Fort Valley, Ga. where Dr. Crew is an associate professor of English at Fort Valley State College.

Dr. Crew recently edited special gay issues of **College English** and **Margins**. He has been a Fulbright grantee and an NEH fellow at Berkeley. His new book, **The Gay Academic** has just been accepted by ETC Publications. His work has also appeared in GPU NEWS.

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Yours in Liberation,
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MCC TO D.C. IN '76

Los Angeles, Ca.—“Affirmation '76” a year-long program culminating in Washington, D.C., August 10-15, 1976, in the seventh general conference of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, was announced by the Rev. Troy D. Perry, founder of the 89 congregation church group. (MCC)

“Over a thousand of us will be going to Washington to affirm our rights as gay people to ‘life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,’ ” Perry said. “‘Affirmation '76’ will show that even as other groups have organized to gain their rights, gay people are called now, as the Bible tells us, ‘to proclaim liberation to all the lands.’ By affirming ourselves as liberated gay people and as Christians with a story to tell to the nations, we affirm the American Revolution in its Bicentennial year,” he said.

To help prepare for the 1976 General Conference MCC is opening a Washington office, October 1, at 110 Maryland Ave. N.E. The Rev.

Roy Birchard, 32, former pastor of MCC New York and a recent member of MCC's board of elders has been appointed coordinator.

“We see this Washington office as being able to tie loose ends together and provide us with information for MCC members about laws and purposed legislation and the whole spread of issues related to our life style,” Perry said. “We want our representatives in Congress to know that gay people really are interested in how we are represented, and you can just bet some of us are going to go visit them when we get there next August.”

“You can be sure we're inviting President Ford and Henry Kissinger,” he said laughing.

MCC has just completed its sixth general conference, held in Dallas last August. (See GPU NEWS Sept. 1975) Principal speakers for the six day conference were Massachusetts representative Elaine Noble and theologian Norman Pittenger.

HILTON MAKES AMENDS

Fort Worth, Tx.—Harold Wright, local gay activist, was recently reinstated to his front office job at the Fort Worth Hilton Inn after he was earlier terminated because he is gay.

Wright was fired last August 15 on a businessman's complaint that Wright and the businessman's 18 year old son, also a Hilton employee, were in a homosexual relationship.

Wright stated their relationship never carried onto their job and did not affect their job performance.

Wright later filed suit through a Fort Worth gay civil rights organization. He also filed a complaint with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) alleging his firing constituted discrimination in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

After almost a year of litigation, an out of court settlement was reached. In it, the company agreed to the following: To reinstate Wright to his job, to pay his back wages and attorney's fees, to issue a letter to him apologizing for any discrimination against him and stating that the company does not discriminate against gays in any way, and to not discriminate in the future against Wright or any other gay person because of sexual preference.

No further retaliatory action will be taken against him as long as his job performance is satisfactory. They further agreed that no mention of this incident or the fact that he is gay will be contained in his personnel record or repeated to any prospective future employer.



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EDITORIAL

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FEEDBACK

Friends:

Today I received my first issue of GPU NEWS and I just couldn't put it down. I want to commend you on such a fine, straight-forward approach to homosexuality.

I would also like to know how we could establish a Gay Peoples Union or a like organization here in East Texas.

There are many gays here in this area; many have had problems and there's no one to help. Please let me know how we could get something like GPU started here.

Again, your paper is great! I wish I had known about it earlier.

Sincerely,

David L. Morris
Gilmer, Texas

Editor's note: Material is on its way about how to start a group. Also read "Grass Roots" in this issue.

Our entire staff is unpaid and such "good vibes" give us a real boost! By the way, we have back issues available.

Dear GPU NEWS:

I've been wanting to write to you for a long time to tell you how much I enjoy reading your publication. With every issue you seem to be getting better!

I particularly enjoy your feature articles about various aspects of gay life and gay liberation. They are inspiring to say the least.

I read several gay publications, but yours has just the right mix.

John C.

Chicago, Il.



Zodiacal sign of Libra.

If you were born between September 25 and October 24, your zodiac sign is Libra. Seven is your lucky number and Libra is the sign of equilibrium, denoting a balance between the spiritual or internal ego and the worldly or external ego. Libra also denotes harmony, of which there is lots at This is It!

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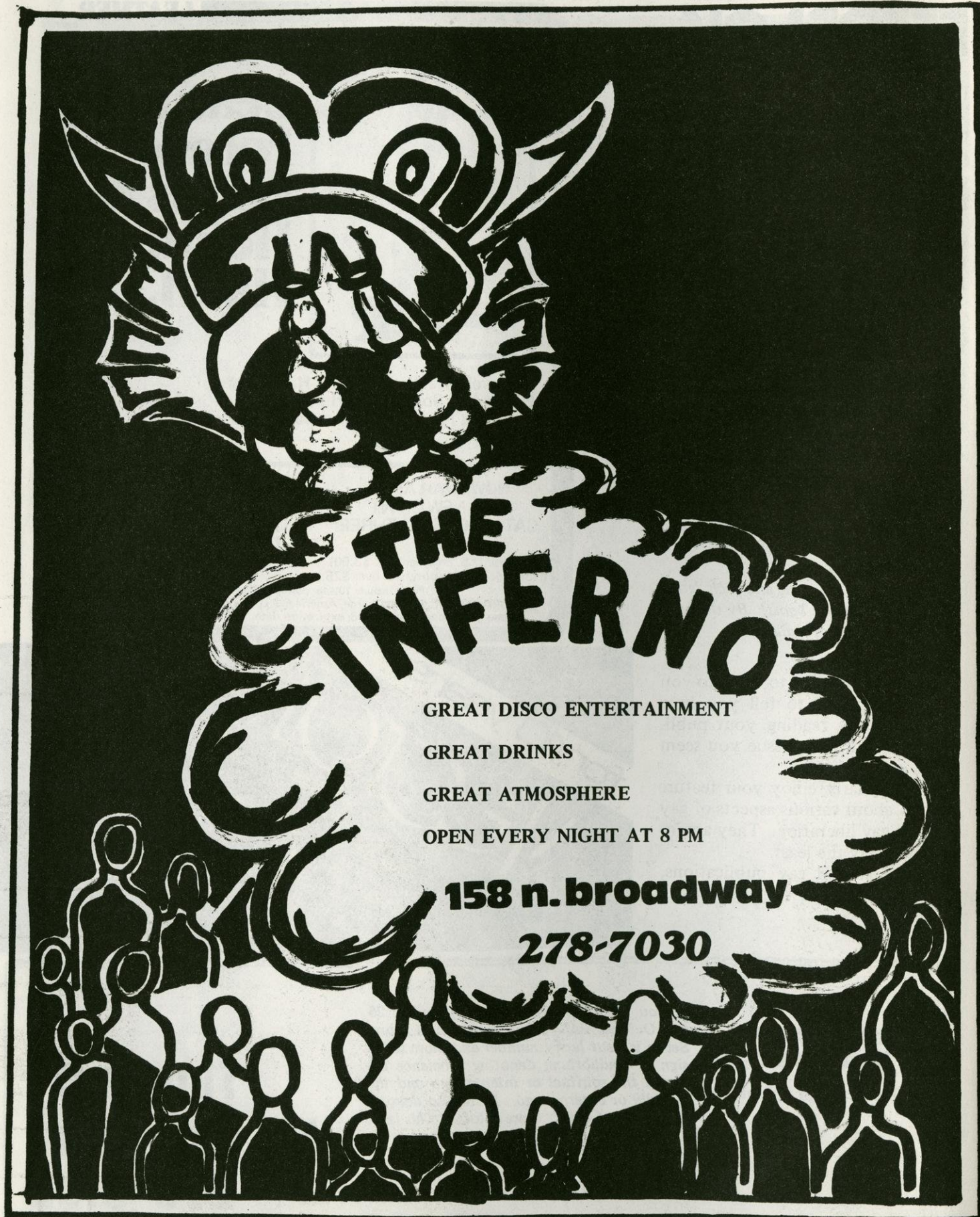
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ACROSS

- 1) From ---rags to riches
- 5) Attire
- 9) Place to sit
- 12) Beg
- 13) ---Richard's almanac
- 14) --- carte
- 15) Home of GPU NEWS
- 17) Ghost: greek
- 18) Comparative ending suffix
- 19) --- Room Bar
- 21) Citizens Band: abbr.
- 23) Routes
- 25) Uncle --- rice
- 26) Space capsules
- 28) --- the city by bus.
- 30) Hawaiian frigate bird
- 33) Indian
- 34) --- Big Boy
- 35) Daughters of the American Revolution: abbr.
- 36) ---boo fishing pole
- 37) Giants, bibl.
- 38) --- off
- 39) Electrical units
- 41) Stewart for short
- 44) Girl in West Side Story
- 46) Article
- 47) Samoan mollusk
- 48) --- University
- 55) Depot: abbr.
- 56) Iraq: var.
- 57) ventilates
- 58) Sun
- 59) Dill herb
- 60) Single thing

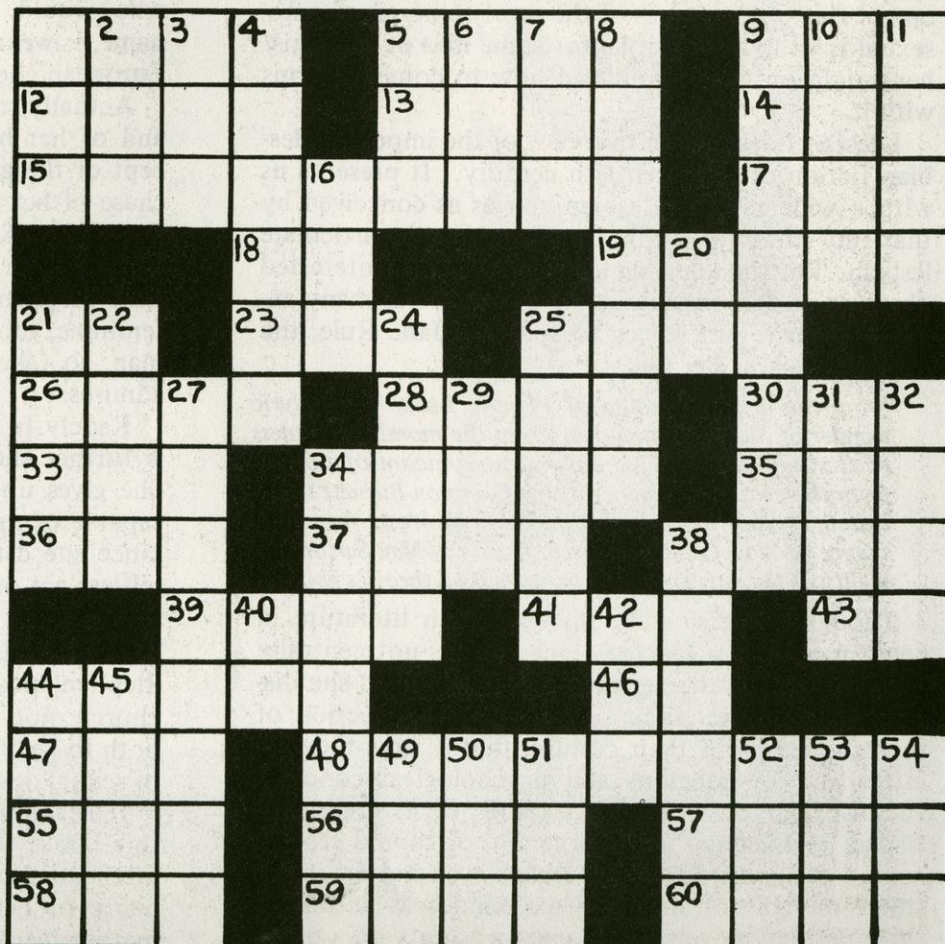
- 16) --- Center
- 20) Registered nurse: abbr.
- 21) Bath chain
- 22) Greek letter
- 24) Male nicknames
- 25) Milwaukee ---
- 27) Lincoln --- Drive
- 29) Mouth
- 31) Not cold
- 32) Vessels
- 34) --- Italian cuisine

- 38) --- Park
- 40) Short greeting
- 42) Marble
- 44) Church gathering
- 45) Pertaining to
- 49) Alder Tree: Scot
- 50) Scottish explorer
- 51) Queen's Knight: abbr.
- 52) Rin --- ---
- 53) Three
- 54) Superlative suffix

Solution on page 29

DOWN

- 1) Rev. per min: abbr.
- 2) Muhammad ---
- 3) Gelatin
- 4) Wood cutters
- 5) Gay Peoples Union: abbr.
- 6) All systems go
- 7) Fish eggs
- 8) Milwaukee ---
- 9) Where Milwaukee is located
- 10) Fish sauce
- 11) Lake ---



LESBIAN IMAGES

REVIEWED BY donna martin

Lesbian Images, by Jane Rule, New York, Doubleday, 1975. \$8.95.

As characteristic of human beings as any of their other identifying qualities is that they are creatures of the crowd. They need to live with others and they need others to validate their life style and behavior. How to survive and thrive is thus a painful problem for someone who varies markedly from the norm, and especially when such variance engenders much negative reaction on the part of the majority. One way is to seek out others like one's self to form a ghetto of like-minded people within that larger, enveloping, disapproving society. This has been a reasonably satisfactory compromise for religious and racial minorities throughout history.

But until the recent gay liberation movement, the barriers to community for homosexuals have been enormous. Then and even today another frequently pursued path to some degree of psychological sanity has been to look for models in literature. Thus, often one of the first impulses of the newly emerging homosexual is to look to books for some idea of what his/her condition is all about and how to come to terms with it.

Lesbian Images is an overview of the important lesbian fiction of the twentieth century. It presents us with a wide range of lesbian images as conceived by that tiny minority within the minority—the articulate lesbian. For the questing lesbian, as for the interested observer, it demonstrates that there are “as many answers as there are voices to speak.” Jane Rule, the author states in the preface:

From the ugly masochism of Violette Leduc to the lyric wonder of Margaret Anderson, from the moral earnestness of Gertrude Stein to the ambivalent cynicism of Colette, from the neutered sexuality of Ivy Compton-Burnett to the blatant sexual hunger of Vita Sackville-West, from the silence of Willa Cather to the confession of May Sarton, the reality of lesbian experience transcends all theories about it.

Though professionally involved with literature in her capacity as a teacher, Jane Rule is not centrally concerned with the technique of the works she discusses. Her chief focus is “with the interaction of those writers with their culture, that is, how they are influenced by religious and psychological concepts and by their own personal experience in presenting lesbian characters.” That the author should see the need for this direction is perhaps even better understood in light of her own experience as author of three lesbian novels. She cites a variety of critical

judgements of her books which demonstrate that both overt and covert disapproval of homosexuality resulted in confused critical standards together with significant deception about their subject matter. (Typical just ten years ago were such phrases as “the moral suicide of homosexuality” and “the disaster of lesbian love”).

Ms. Rule begins with Radclyffe Hall (1886-1943), the woman whose book, **The Well of Loneliness** (1928) remains the lesbian bible, whose image of the lesbian therein has influenced millions of readers. This in spite of the fact that it limits itself to the stereotype of the lesbian as pseudo-male. Sadly, many young women have attempted to emulate the heroine, Stephen Gordon, as Del Martin confesses of herself in **Lesbian/Woman**. Even where imitation is rejected, the shock about one's identity as discovered in the novel can be traumatic. As Ms. Rule recalls, “But in **The Well of Loneliness**, I suddenly discovered that I was a freak, a genetic monster, a member of the third sex, who would eventually call myself by a masculine name. . . wear a necktie, and live in the exile of some European ghetto.”

Actually, much of Radclyffe Hall's view of herself and of her heroine, derives from the traditional concept of the great hiatus that separates the sexes. Because of her intelligence and desire for independence, Radclyffe (Stephen) can only envision herself as a freak, a man in a woman's body. In moments of despair Stephen craves normal womanhood (clinging, feminine, subservient), but more usually, longs to be a man, to take her place among those of the sex she admires.

Radclyffe Hall's traditional, indeed reactionary bias is further shown in the ending devised for Stephen. She gives up Mary, the woman she loves, to a man, capable of providing the protection and social acceptance she can never offer. It is surely true that this selfless act of altruism was calculated to elicit reader sympathy as well as deepen the tragedy of lesbianism. But it is also true that in giving up her beloved, Stephen poses no threat to anyone, neither the church nor the patriarchal society which conspire both to keep women down and suppress any expression of sexual deviancy.

It is Jane Rule's final judgment, on the evidence of this book, that Radclyffe Hall was emotionally and intellectually far more of a traditional woman than many of her literary contemporaries: she gave ultimate respect to the very institutions which oppressed



Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein as photographed by Cecil Beaton, London 1932

her. Yet in her personal life, she lived remarkably freely: her masculine attire and moral earnestness earned her the indifference or dislike of many, including the sexually ambivalent, but snobbish Bloomsbury group; and she was blessed with the faithful love of two fine women (along with countless side affairs). It's ironic that while Radclyffe Hall's own life was a far cry from the tragedy of Stephen, yet it is her fictional heroine that has impressed and depressed thousands of lesbians, rather than the far more inspiring example of Radclyffe herself.

Another well known lesbian who did not identify herself with women is Gertrude Stein. She patterned her long relationship with Alice B. Toklas on middle-class marriage, and when, in mid-life, she cut off most of her hair, came to look much like some stolid Roman citizen. Yet she was anything but a crusader for understanding of her lesbian life style. The greater part of her literary output was notorious for its obscuring of meaning. Her only frankly lesbian book, *Q.E.D.* (originally entitled, *Things as They Are*) was not published until 1950, after her death.

Remarkable for its flat style and clarity, it is, in Ms. Rule's opinion, the only book about lesbian relationships in which the characters are confronted with the raw war between desire and morality. The story is that of a threesome of women and the intricate psychological interplay that their interaction involves. It is in fact based on Gertrude Stein's own initiation into the love of women and, importantly, into the pain of feeling which this involved for her. It occurred when she was in medical school at Johns Hopkins and dragged on for a long time after she left.

Basically, it is the story of Adele (Stein) who is much attracted to Helen, but is both too lethargic and too morally cautious for a long time to respond to Helen's overtures. After she finally takes the plunge into passion she finds that they are temperamentally ill-suited, but, worse, that Helen has long been in a sexual and financially dependent relationship with Mabel. At the end of the novel, Adele realizes that there can be no resolution; she is now a wiser but

sadder woman for whom opening the portals to feeling has also meant opening them to pain.

Though this summary makes *Q.E.D.* sound like a formula potboiler, it is in fact a fascinating account of how ostensibly civilized women can deceive themselves and others when self-interest is paramount (be it passion or power), but also how they manage to cope with strong impulses and to behave, on the surface, as reasonably decent people—an interesting contrast to the contemporary standard of "letting it all hang out."

A fascinating riddle for many people is that great American writer, Willa Cather (1876-1947). Throughout her life it is evident that while men were often great friends, they were of no erotic interest to her. Excusing herself from marriage on the grounds that she was married to her art, she nevertheless maintained longstanding, close relationships with two women. For nine years she shared a bedroom with the beautiful Pittsburgh socialite, Isabel McClung, in the home of her father, Judge McClung. When Willa finally moved to New York to take a better job, she lived with Edith Lewis, a relationship which lasted until Willa's death in 1947.

Yet there is no hint of her erotic preference for women in her much acclaimed fiction. Moreover, she purposely destroyed data about her intimate life, burning all her letters to Isabel which were returned to her after Isabel's death in 1938. This conspiracy of silence was obviously designed to protect herself, those she loved, and very likely also her literary creations from the distortions and negative judgments of a disapproving public.

Look at the resistance even today toward public acknowledgement of the homosexuality of Walt Whitman and Michelangelo. People feel that they would somehow have to reassess their former enthusiasm about these great artists if it is proved that they were indeed sexually "abnormal": these bright cultural heroes might turn out to be badly tarnished after all.

An interesting contemporary writer, much concerned with this issue of public exposure of her private

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self, is May Sarton. In her autobiographical *Journal of a Solitude* she points out, "The danger is that if you are placed in a sexual context people will read your work from a distorting angle of vision." To be a woman writer is a hard handicap; to be revealed as a lesbian one is to court the danger of being written off entirely. Yet in this diary of a year of her life Ms. Sarton does admit to having loved women. She says that she probably couldn't have "leveled" had her parents still been alive, and also admits to feeling somewhat protected because most of her novels are restricted to heterosexual relations. But she is also atune to what she sees as a changing climate—one which permits a closer approximation of the public and private self in a way not possible before.

The most autobiographical of Sarton's novels, *Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing*, is a fascinating portrait of an ageing poetess. Being interviewed by two young people she says at one point, "Women have moved and shaken me, but I have been nourished by men." Indeed, it was a different woman who inspired each of her books. For Ms. Sarton the fact that traditionally the Muse is female means that if the poet happens to be a woman, lesbian attachments are essential to her art—a quaint, charming defense, though essentially dishonest.

Her other recourse is to hark back to the Freudian model which posits mutually exclusive categories of impulses and abilities as either feminine or masculine. Thus she can say, "I would predicate that in all great works of genius masculine and feminine elements in the personality find expression, whether this androgynous nature is played out sexually or not." She recognizes no masculine or feminine traits, only human ones, and believes that homosexuality has little to do with some innate feminine or masculine disposition.

That there are alternatives for the lesbian other than pseudo-masculinity, total abnegation of one's private life, or fanciful rationalization is seen in the life of Margaret Anderson (1893-1973). Coming to Chicago as a young woman from a midwestern, middle-class background, she was founder and editor of the best literary magazine of its time, *The Little*

Review (1914- 1929). Though usually operating on a shoestring, she attracted the best American writers, and also, eventually, Ezra Pound and James Joyce from overseas (the latter's masterpiece, *Ulysses*, was serialized in *The Little Review*).

But though Margaret Anderson's public image was is a great appreciator of and prospector for all that is inest and most sensitive in the arts, probably her greatest talent was for friendship. The three volumes of her autobiography contain both a literary and musical history of an exciting period, but also moving accounts of the important relationships in her life together with thought-provoking insights into the requirements for a good relationship.

From early on Margaret so thoroughly put convention behind her that she seems never to have been constrained by the conflicts of so many other lesbians. A beautiful woman, she fended off numbers of men, and stated proudly, "I am no man's wife, no men's delightful mistress, and I will never, never, never be a mother."

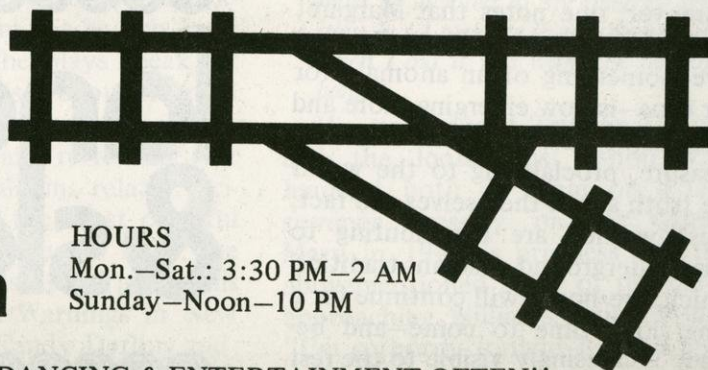
The first of those she called "all my lovely companions" was Jane Heap, a strikingly handsome woman and marvelous conversationalist who became a co-editor of and contributor to *The Little Review*. They lived together for nine years but finally separated because Margaret could no longer put up with Jane's moodiness and possessiveness.

The central relationship of Margaret's life was with Georgette Leblanc, twenty years her senior, a singer, and former wife of Maeterlinck. Their twenty-one years together (until Georgette's death from cancer) is wonderful testimony to the potential for human felicity. Georgette gave Margaret the freedom she needed and seems to have been a remarkably saintly person, never given to fits of bad temper or jealousy. After Margaret gave up *The Little Review* they went to live in Europe and set about to live a life poor in material things, but rich in friends, music, literature and their study of Gurdjieff.

After Georgette's death, Margaret was persuaded to return to America because there was the threat that Americans in occupied France might be put in con-

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centration camps. On the returning ship she met Dorothy Caruso, widow of the singer, who with her children was likewise fleeing the war. A relationship between them ensued, the two of them living happily together until Dorothy died in 1955, also of cancer. Margaret then returned to France and the house she and Georgette had lived in, sharing it with an old friend of both of them, Monique. She ended the final volume of her autobiography with this summary: "The blessings I have wanted were love and music, books and great ideas and beauty of environment. I have had them all, and to a degree beyond my asking, even beyond my imagining."

This introduction to **Lesbian Images** is of necessity limited. Jane Rule includes discussions of a good many other lesbian writers, some of whom, like Willa Cather, were so secretive that few suspected and no one was offended. In exposing and explaining these women, Ms. Rule has performed important services. She has helped contribute toward the creation of the lesbian heritage, so important for a group largely deleted from the traditional repositories of culture. Also she has demonstrated just how multifaceted is the lesbian experience—and thus how unrealistic and potentially harmful it is to try to imprison the lesbian in some nice, narrow social and/or psychological stereotype.

Further evidence to support the thesis of lesbian variety comes in Ms. Rule's final chapters where she touches on the richness of post-liberation fiction and non-fiction. Moreover, one notes that Margaret Anderson's variety of joy in life and love—something of an anomaly for her time—is now emerging more and more as liberated lesbians are, with pleasure, proclaiming to the world the truth about themselves. In fact, these women are contributing to this underground lesbian tradition which, we hope, will continue for a long, long time to come—and become increasingly visible to the rest of society.

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REVIEW

Memoirs by Tennessee Williams
to be published by Doubleday, New
York. Publication date, Nov. 12.

Reviewed by Vito Russo



Tennessee Williams

At long last! The book that some of us have been waiting for; Tennessee Williams has written his memoirs and the word is that he's finally torn the closet door off its hinges. I mention this first because that's what the book is about first. Williams has put down on paper not an analysis of his plays in relation to his life but a series of vignettes having very little to do with the exploration of drama. As he says early in the book, "The plays speak for themselves." This is about the man who wrote them.

With unusual and refreshing (for him) candor, Williams relates incidents in one of the most colorful lives ever led. Begun in 1972, the year Williams was appearing in his own *Small Craft Warnings* in New York City with Candy Darling and Peg Murray, the book returns

occasionally from remembrances of things past to progress reports on that and other productions, notably his last play, *Out Cry* for which the run of *Small Craft Warnings* was to be bait for a New York theatre. In this book Williams finally and totally emerges from the closet. He discusses with ease, wit and perception, his love for other men, telling tales of cruising with actors from his plays after performances, falling in love with his lover of sixteen years, Frankie Merlo and sadly and valiantly recording how when Frankie died of cancer in 1962, the light went out of his life. It is a gentle and raucous book, funny and sad, true and illusory. The book is made up of the "events" of his life; the things he remembers. He has recorded the people and the incidents which stand out in his mind and exposed for us more than he has ever revealed in his plays. The ambiguity is gone and what remains is the sound of truth.

The book is relatively short and very easy to read, being essentially a series of mini-stories concerning the likes of Gore Vidal, Carson McCullers, Truman Capote, Maureen Stapleton and Laurette Taylor. Just the folks. And what folks. Williams takes advantage of those like Vidal who have already come out and tells some really funny and biting stories concerning the romances and intrigues of his life. So much about the romances, in fact, that at one point, after a story of how he cruised a sailor all night in a bar, he is compelled to comment:

I am sorry that so much of this "thing" must be devoted to my amatory activities, but I was late in coming out, and when I did it was with one hell of a bang.

His story about Truman Capote and the loquacious bishop who haunted both of them on a late summer crossing on the *Queen Mary* in 1947 is priceless and the abovementioned story of the sailor approaching Williams saying loudly "I'm so horny tonight I could fuck

(Continued on page 36)

GRASS ROOTS ACTION

by wayne jefferson

"On they go; an invincible army, though not a victorious one. . ."

(E.M. Forster, "What I Believe")

And a great calm has settled over the scene? After the militant Sixties—that honeymoon flush of "liberation"—a bird's eye view reveals two camps, at this point-in-time. In this corner we have "gay lib"—which often seems like a closed system, a busy but segregated little cadre of folks living in the enclave of a ghetto, taking in each other's emotional laundry. They seem far removed from the society at large, which they touch only through the groupy parades and lectures distasteful to some, even some of us. Gay lib—who needs it? Well, then in the other corner we have Straight Society herself—massive, monolithic, and—yes, Virginia—still utterly unaware of the "invisible minority" lurking in her clean midst.

Remember when, for us, "gayness" consisted only of the glanced-at article or talk-show, ineffective against the ignorance-plus-misinformation; the fag joke at the office water-cooler; perhaps a local rumor smouldering; nothing more, no daily awareness? Well, it's *still* like that Out There. And so the two camps sit assunder, the enclave and the wasteland, in a "double life" unhealthy for everyone.

And yet, since 1969 gay lib has done so much—legally, politically, socially, personally. It **must** keep on consolidating past gains, breaking groundwork for new ones, and building bulwarks against possible future backlash. But how?

A closer look reveals a host of things that each **individual** can do, **anywhere, every day!** You don't have to belong to, or even work through a gay-lib group—and even if you do, you can do these other things on your own, "self-deputized", not on parade or in committee. You certainly don't have to be an ideologue or "radical" or "liberationist" politically; even those gays who disagree with the up-front, high-profile types can work quietly at their own level. Most important, you don't have to be openly gay, "out" in the sense of being publicly up-front. A little look reveals behind-the-scenes work you can do, or "covers" you can use as "silent partners" to assist the over-worked movement leaders. (Of course you can't be closeted through guilt or shame, just prudence or preference.) You don't have to live in an urban neighborhood—in fact, the nearer you are to suburbia



the better, since that's where the action presently isn't, where the grass should take root. Finally, you don't have to wait for some grand occasion; these are things you can do continually, every day.

This grass-roots action involves every area—social services, libraries and the media, religion, politics, education, events, personal life—but before getting into them, a note on the rationale behind all this, the "why." It assumes that: (1) "liberation" needs not only law-changes, etc., but also attitude changes among non-gays; that (2) homophobia ("queer-fear") is very real, but that change there is very possible through education; but that (3) liberalization of attitude on the gay issue will **not** come spontaneously, like the groundswell-change on the issues of abortion and the Vietnamese war, but must be the work of gays themselves; but that (4) while the formal work of organized gay groups is necessary, it is insufficient; we also need "deputies" or individual person-to-person, gay/straight interchange; and that (5) social change is slow, goes in stages invisible at first, and that sometimes it's all we can do—but enough—to not erase all oppression overnight, but simply keep up the banner of "gay presence" everywhere, not victorious but invincible—unconquerable. (Which is anyway better than "the love that dares not speak its name.")

ILL-ADVISED?

But, again, "what can one man do, my friend," as Johnny Cash croons in the Standard Oil ads on TV. An army of individual pioneers-for-change—this notion may seem useless. It may also seem risky. But as for being useless, the ideas below are simply the same kinds of things which have taken gay liberation the great distance it has come today. There's no mystery or magic here (though there is ingenuity at times). Also, in behavioral terms, there's no instant positive feedback or reward; one simply has to realize that because of our actions today, things tomorrow will go easier (even though we won't know of it, usually) for a scared teenager, a confused husband, wife or parent, an inept employer or co-worker, an uninformed voter, a student who needs to know, a well-intentioned church member—gay and straight both, and to name but a few. As the overworked director of a national gay student group said, "There is a point after which one fails to believe that stapling, folding, addressing and mailing is doing anyone any good." The same for leafletting, letter writing, listening? But then she was reminded by another of how much already has been accomplished.

Then there's the matter of risk. We see how much has been done by George Raya, the gay lobbyist in California; the individual who singlehandedly forced legal changes in Minnesota's twin cities; those who start up gay-lib groups in the hinterlands. "If you don't do it yourself, it won't get done." Right, but the above people could afford to be publicly visible, you say. In the first place, much can be done behind the scenes, semi-anonymously or face-to-face unidentified. (If you have to sign a letter anonymously, by the way, make that a "political" action itself—point out the reasons you have to stay anonymous for now. This will prove your point even better.) Also, while "guilt by association" is still alive and well, there are various "covers" which can be used, some often true reasons themselves of course—such as concern for a family member; educational or professional need-to-know interest; simple trendy curiosity. By the way, this also goes for the few truly "liberal" non-gay co-workers for the cause. But of course the best defense here is probably one of attitude, a calm new role-model for others which signals that you simply **assume** that these issues exist and are right and proper to be discussed without uneasiness. If you project this new stance others will more often than not pick up this new calm you telegraph to them and thus will be strengthened in dealing with the issue.

It goes without saying, of course, that one should be well prepared with factual data, plus rebuttals to standard anti-queer arguments. Also, one might well tune one's attitude harsh and militant if needed, but more important, mild and empathetic and in-touch as

much as possible, for the best two way dialog, communication, "good vibes" about the thing.

Here, then, are some suggestions as to how "each one can teach one"; how every person can replace the invisibility of homosexuality with more public awareness of the gay dimension. Gays exist everywhere, are no threat, are unjustly oppressed. This is the issue. Note that we can call attention to this in two ways. There's the passive (or "watchdog") approach, in which we respond directly to an evident and glaring mistreatment, blatant bigotry or omission (like the Jewish Anti-Defamation League operates). But there's also the active (or "Inspector") approach, in which one searches and screens, checks out, monitors how institutions are doing, whether they are fair, efficient, sufficient in dealing with us (like the anti-smoking group which recently took the initiative to check out the policies and practices of local hospitals). Let's do some of these things. They're necessary, effective, possible to do. And (since, to be honest, a prime motivation of people is "self interest" and "the pleasure principle"), they're also enjoyable to do, a definite step in one's own personal growth, too.

1) **LIBRARIES.** To start with, this is easier, and more fun. Time was when card catalogues under "Homosexuality" read either "see under Deviations & Perversions" or else did not exist at all. Great way for a gay student to start the day! No more of this now—well, not usually. But, many times, holdings are still either (A) insufficient, or (B) out-of-date. Especially in smaller town libraries. (Though, a person I was in touch with, felt need to actively inspect the libraries in his Detroit area.)

Why this neglect? Malignant hostility? "Practical" fears? Simple benign unawareness, oversight? Budget problems these days? This last is no argument, as a balanced core-set of readings costs very little. It's complete with Peter Fisher's *The Gay Mystique*, Martin & Lyon's *Lesbian/Woman*, Dr. George Weinberg's *Society and the Healthy Homosexual* and the Gay Activists Alliance pamphlet **20 Questions about Homosexuality**. And there you have it. All in paperback, too. If the librarian doubts whether these are vital, refer her to *Library Journal* of Feb. 15, 1972, which explains all the rationale behind the A.L.A.'s Task Force on Gay Liberation. Get her a copy of their *Gay Bibliography* also. And rap with her. And don't stereotype her—far from all being bun-haired spinsters severely saying "shush!" librarians have a long standing and enviable record for stubbornly defending the community's right to read, to read on **all** sides of controversial topics.

2) **COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES.** Until Jimmy and Johnny can dance together at the church social with their onlooking parents smiling, not reviling. . . A Gay Community Services Center would, or will, be nice, valuable indeed. But as of now—and

even then—check out how your community handles the gay dimension. Ring up the local “hotline”, investigate counseling services, “posing” as a gay person with a question. Was the counselor cool? Did they direct you to a gay group as followup?

3) MEDIA. For years, even the *New York Times* did not even print “that word,” let alone gay news. Even recently, the *Toronto Star* allegedly refused ads for legit gay-lib publications, while continuing to accept lurid, sex-rated heterosexual semi-porn blurbs.

Monitor the radio, TV, newspaper, magazines—local and national. Slurs and abuses (fag and dyke jokes and remarks) are easy to watchdog for and to zap. Neglect of coverage (a media blackout) is subtler, but even more important to inspect for. A friend sent announcements of organized gay events to many area college newspapers, along with a copy of the National Gay Task Force’s potent statement to the media, which says in effect: no more invisibility! no more fag and dyke jokes! don’t be cowed by feedback from bigots! let gays speak for themselves! and gay news is news too! Hopefully this raised consciousness among the budding young back-area journalists—for tomorrow if not for today. At least they’ve now heard of the issue—and with helpful empathy rather than militant confrontation—an issue perhaps neglected still in their journalism classes? Another fine tactic is to phone into a talk show and somehow get discussion going there on gay issues.

4) RELIGION. One sometimes wonders here—why even bother? A Detroit gay group wrote 120 churches offering speakers, got only 10 replies, 8 of which ranged from monumental non-concern to the standard fire-and-brimstone.

Which is of course exactly the answer to “why bother.” New gay scholarship seems to be affirming that the church has been, and is, the greatest single foe to gay liberation.

Get ahold of pro-gay (or at least anti-homophobic) material, as from the Council on Religion and the Homosexual. Even better, get your own denomination’s stand on the issue as well as the gay caucus within your church (there exist almost a dozen; see the current *Gayellow Pages*). Serve these to your pastor, after rapping. Raise the issue under whatever guise you choose, if only “interest in this new emerging issue.”

Again, the goal is not to convert the Bible thumping fundamentalists, but to neutralize their devilish effect on those minds, innocent of oppression, which can still be saved. “Quis custodiet custodies ipses” is a good old Latin phrase for the ongoing job “who will censor the censors”? For who will minister to the ministers? Clearly it’s a job of proselytizing missionary work in the name of the religion of liberation, to save the poor souls of the heathen church-people from the old devil of phobias.

5) LEGAL – POLITICAL – GOVERNMENTAL.

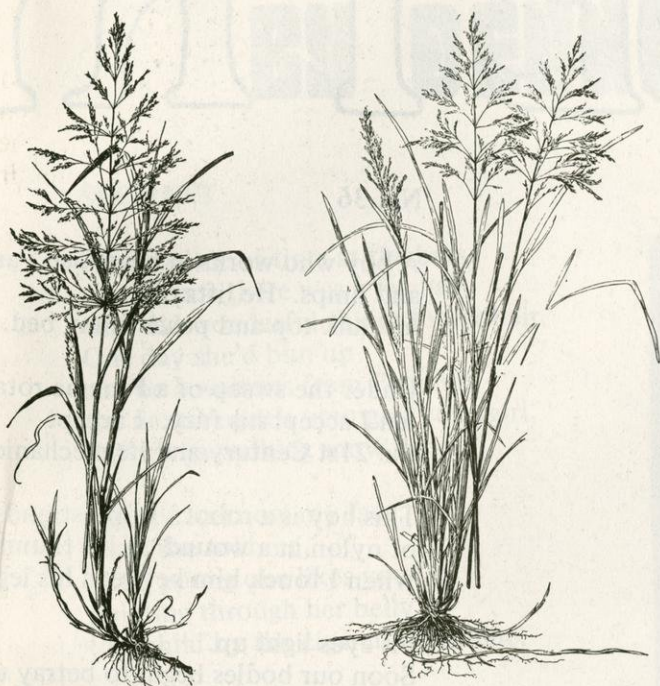
About 8 states have erased anti-gay sex laws. About 17 cities have written in gay civil-rights protection. There are more all the time—but only through grassroots efforts, not groundswell-liberalism. And there are recalls. When the issue comes up, the same tired old objections usually arise—protection of minors, a threat on the job, and the like. Know them all, and also the standard effective zippy rebuttals to this ignorance-plus-bigotry. If sex-law or civil-rights legislation is pending in your area, move! Not out of the state, but write your elected officials. A good ploy here is to couch your letters not simply in support of gay rights, but in support of everyone affected (all “consenting adults in private”). Also, you might write in favor of prohibiting relations characterized by force, fraud, or with minors, and public indecency-and-annoyance. That is, merely being against the prohibiting of gay sex, too often suggests only that you favor that behavior.

Has anyone written one letter on H.R. 166, Bella Abzug’s bill that sat uneasily in Washington for a spell? Has anyone heard of it? Does it make any difference? One faction at a gay conference intoned, “we believe neither in obeying existing laws, nor working for new ones.” Aha, how romantic—and how out-of-touch. Decriminalization of gays is vital, just as vital as the 1973 de-classification of homosexuality as a psychological sickness, since both the “Sick” and “Criminal” labels are still clubs used to beat gays with, also are roadblocks to further reforms—as in employment, etc. Furthermore, these institutional changes then alter the all-important attitude of the non-gay down the street—Mr. T.C. Mits and Mrs. Grundy—who hire for jobs, rent apartments, and the like.

Get in touch with local offices of national figures. Work for a candidate and educate him. Find out your party’s stand on gay rights and then supply them with copies of gay reform-proposals to ponder on; tomorrow, if not today, the justice of these may well have “seeped in” and people will then be better prepared to vote intelligently because of seeds down today. There was gay presence at the 1972 Democratic national convention at Miami. It has been lacking at some later events.

This even takes in the old New Left and fellow-radical groups—if you think it’s worth the time. The Vietnam Veterans Against the War wrote excellently against male chauvinism, white racism, elitist-classism, but guess what they omitted to discuss? Right, “heterosexism.” They were sent pungent material concerning the oppression of gays in the military—right out of the library books mentioned above, by the way.

6) EDUCATION. More social scientists than gay-lib people, actually, have said that it’s an immense



hidden scandal in the moral life of the nation that each and every secondary school does not have regular education on the gay dimension—including the essential gay-straight encounter via panel or forum. Until this Utopian stage, other things can be done. Academic freedom (and responsibility) demands that “all sides be considered.” Education-for-public-citizenship needs concern with emerging sensitive social issues. With these good rationales, you can request that gay speakers visit virtually any course. For almost any course is valid here—literature, history, social issues, journalism, sex education and “life adjustment,” psychology, librarianship. Think about it. Anyway, getting a “mini-unit” within existing courses thus, is probably both more possible, and more effective, than trying for some full-fledged Gay Studies course right off anyhow.

You can also check out the textbooks used for bias or omissions—if not yet Dick and John in the reading primers, at least fair awareness in the new “minority studies” stuff. Writers here now understand that “minority” means more than Blacks, and women, and other ethics, includes also the handicapped, the aged, and so forth—though not often the (you guessed) “the invisible minority.” Which is another symptom of gay oppression of course. Teach the teachers thus, send them copies of vivid “gay testimonies.”

7) **TIMED EVENTS.** Occurring all the time are conferences on such relevant topics as “the minority experience,” “sexuality today,” “alternative lifestyles,” “values in change,” and the like. But will the gay dimension appear? Watch and inquire. Whether by letter or phone call or (better) office visit, alert them—both firmly, and gently—to what may be

either simple oversight or complex shying-away, but maybe incompetence and a lost educational opportunity for all. And clue the local gay group into what’s going on or not.

8) **THE GAYWORLD: GROUPS, AND COMMUNITY.** A vitally-scarce “natural resource” in the Movement is the small handful of openly-gay people who are both competent and committed enough to go out and rap with non-gays in the speaking-presentations which are so vital to grass-roots change. Here’s where all can help. Much behind-the-scenes work exists to be done. Your aid here can release these others to continue their up-front action—invincible. Time, money, energy, imagination, all are needed.

Visit your group. Alert it to local causes needing attention. Send in clippings for their files; request literature for distribution. Help spread their publications into local sales outlets. Get older, well-off (but psychologically-closeted?) gays to help out financially.

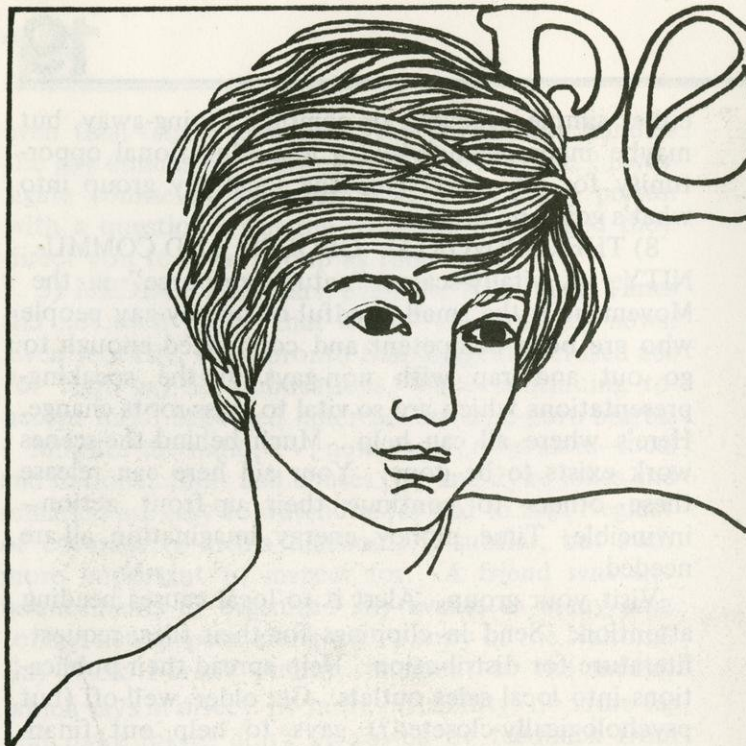
And in the gay community, think “gay community.” Help to bring out (again, psychologically) homosexuals—younger, or of any age—who really are “gay” in their identity, but who are not yet so. Use your contacts to help gays find jobs. Patronize gay businesses. Write to gay prisoners. Of, if you’re in the boondocks, think about starting your own gay group. If 50,000 people live within an hour’s drive, it can be done.

That we find it hard to do all this, only indicates oppression. Some feel that there is and can be no such animal as a gay “community” because it’s only transient erotic attraction which makes us relate. On the other hand, oppression has driven deep psychic wedges between gays of all ages, races, classes, and of both genders.

9) **PERSONAL LIFE — STYLE.** Perhaps as important as anything. Here, take a half-way stance. If you don’t choose to be openly-gay (and it’s not a matter of possibility, but of individual choice), still, don’t lie. Be quietly honest and yourself without being pushy and militant—or skulkily closety, either. For example, there’s the old watercooler question of “well, what did you do this weekend?” If it’s not cool to say “my lover John and I went to the theater,” at least it stinks of hypocrisy to say “my girlfriend Jane and I,” and it’s both possible and better to say “my friend John and I.” People will understand as much as they either can, or have to, but one thing is even clearer than queer-fear, and that’s that people respect genuine, calm-strong integrity above all else. “Have to hand it to that guy”—who is thus probably strong enough to survive if society doesn’t hand it to him.

(Continued on page 27)

POETRY



No. 36

A boy who works in a railroad yard
and limps. He lifts off
his tank top and poses in my bed.

Under the sweep of a Panama rotary
fan I accept his fury. I accept
the 21st Century and its mechanics.

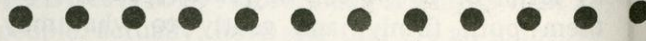
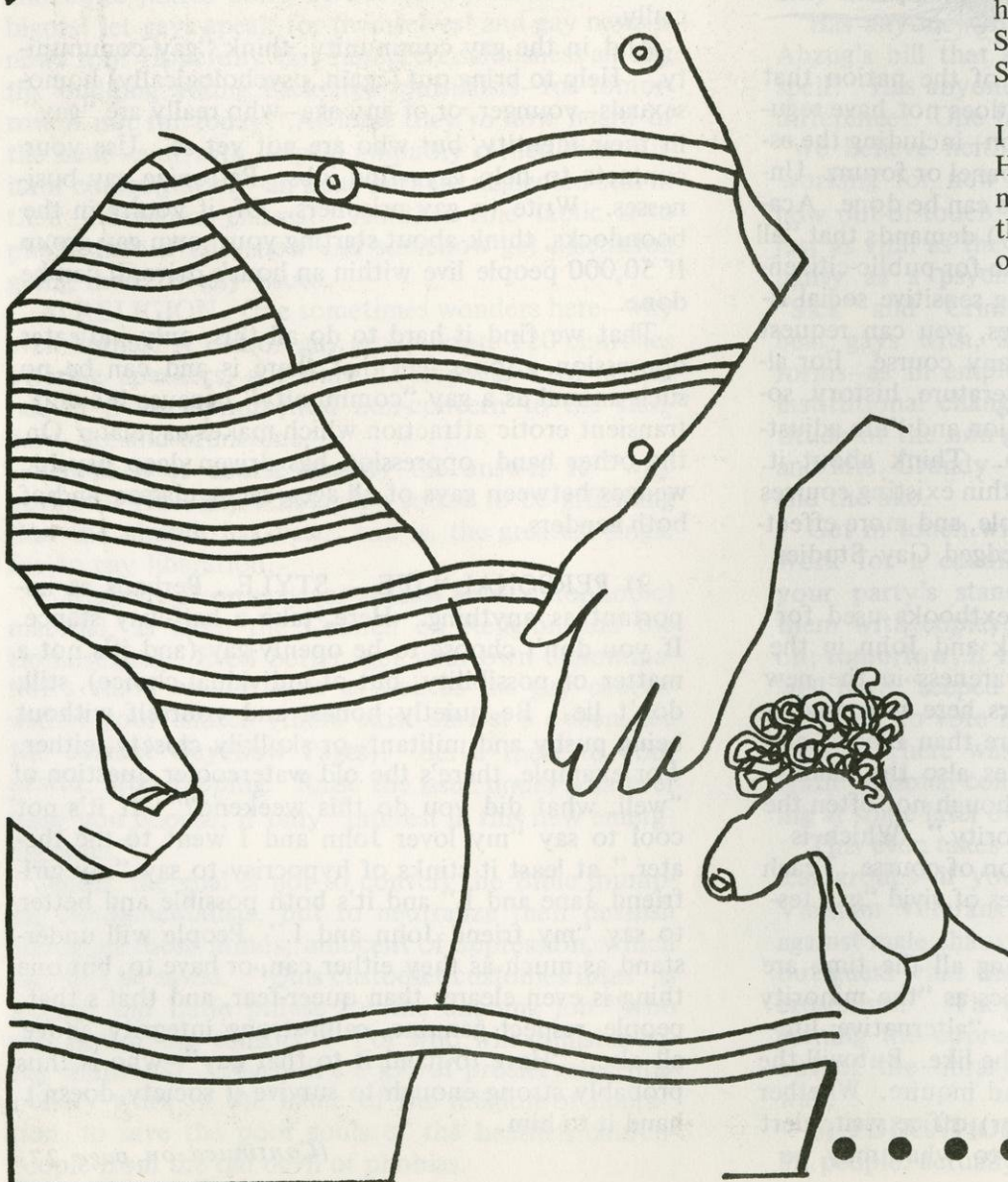
This boy is a robot. I find strands
of nylon in a wound on his thumb.
When I touch him between his legs

his eyes light up.
Soon our bodies begin to betray us.
Smoke shoots out of our navels.

I call to him, "Casey, over here!"
He staggers into my arms. We eat more
mescaline. He laughs too hard at
the pale backbone of my jokes. I hold
onto his haircut for dear life.

KEVIN

Kevin, should anyone ever
hurt you I will ruin them.
I don't know you,
just see you with Carol when
she visits my brother.
You're beautiful.
I can tell you are calm;
dumb, but lovely.
Come into my room without a shirt.
I will take each nipple and your lips
in my mouth, clean clean flowers.
You are wasting your youth
on her. She can't love you.
You and I are gods.
Our kisses, like The Illuminations,
must be formed.



BY DENNIS COOPER

SEGMENT

I spent a lot of time at the bars.
At this one there was a fag hag
who did wonderful things to her hair.
One day she'd bun up
and be a waitress from Phoenix,
the next Vogue's youngest covergirl,
the next a walking snow cone.

She got to know my face.
Once she told me,
"The young one likes you"
pointing through her belly
to a child by the cigarette machine.

He and I got married.
We adopted three kids, all boys,
before he was seventeen.
When he got to be eighteen
he got a little old so we split up.
He poisoned the kids
and hung himself in jail.
And I found my blond,
Evan over there.
No, that's a true story.
No, really.

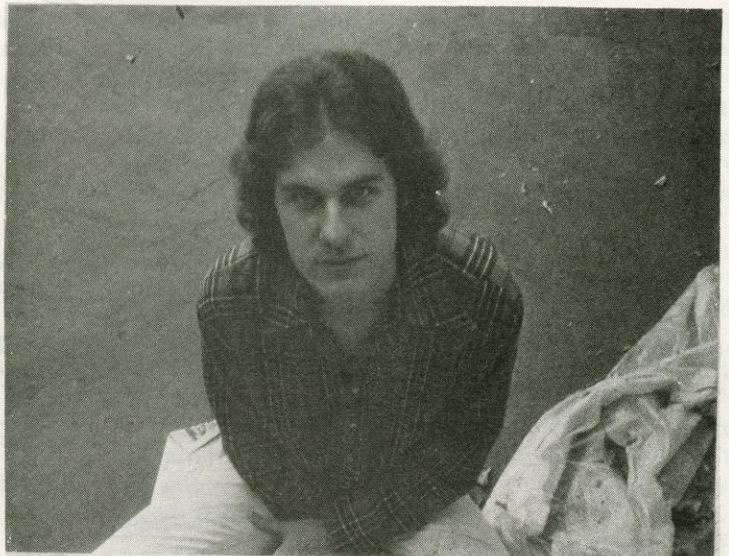
Evan, tell him.

E. . .Evan, tell him how we met.

If I can get two words out
of him it's a good day.

Duh. God, I don't believe you.
Christ, if I wasn't so hung up on you.

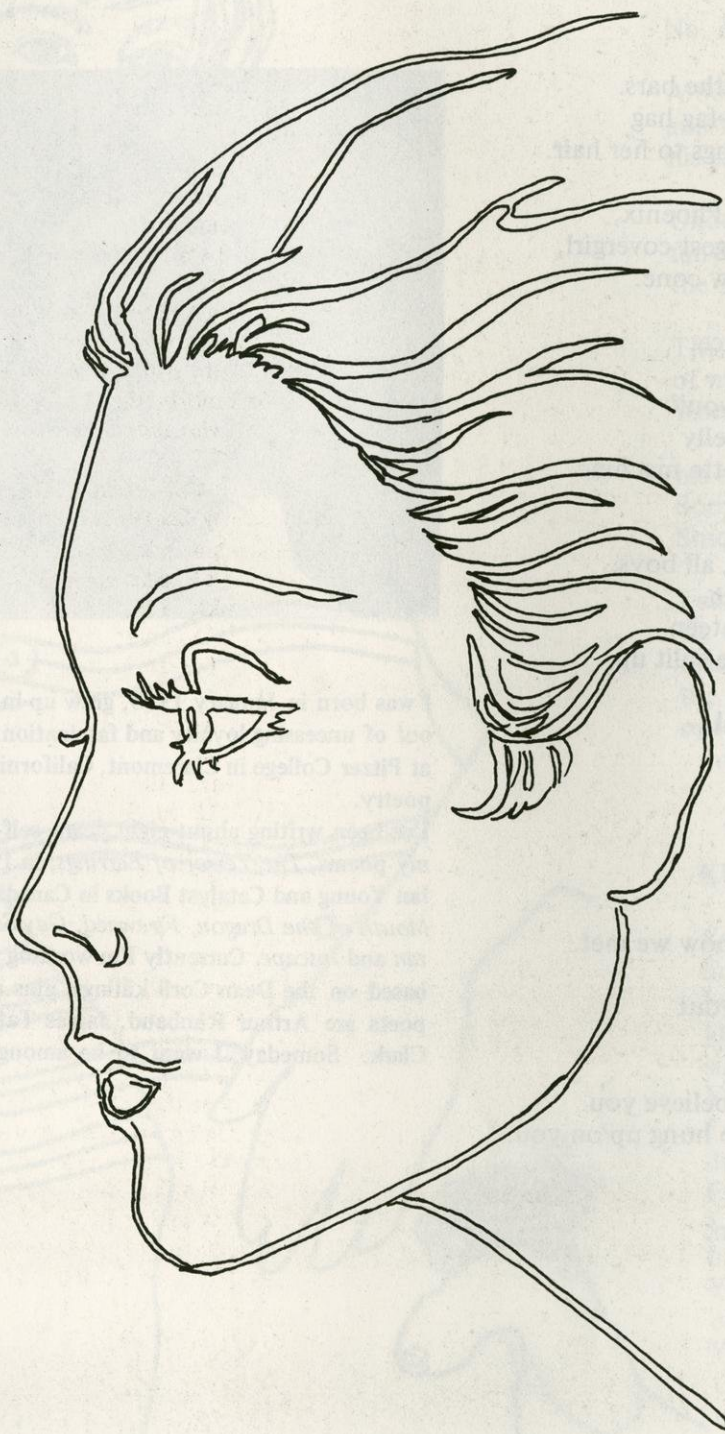
He's the most perfect
person I've ever known.
He's great.
But he's got
a brain
the size
of an
ant.



I was born in January 1953, grew up in the L.A. area and remain out of unceasing loyalty and fascination. Currently I'm a student at Pitzer College in Claremont, California, and working fiercely at poetry.

I've been writing about eight years, self-published a chap book of my poems, *The Terror of Earrings*, in 1973 with much help from Ian Young and Catalyst Books in Canada. I've published poems in *Mouth of the Dragon*, *Fireweed*, *Gay Sunshine*, *Wine Rings*, *Suntan* and *Inscape*. Currently I'm working on a musical comedy play based on the Dean Corll killings, plus many poems. My favorite poets are Arthur Rimbaud, James Tate, Patti Smith, and Tom Clark. Someday, I want to be among them.

Dennis Cooper



LIBBY

BY CLAUDIA KETTIERI

She worked at the White Bird Diner. It was a typical run-down all night place where the specialty was home baked cakes made on the premises which were so good you completely overlooked the dirt and grease surrounding you.

I stopped in the White Bird Diner every night on my way home from work. I was working the 4-12 shift back in those days and I'd pull off for a light meal and coffee before going home and sleeping.

She always had a smile on her face—it wasn't what you'd call a pretty face, but she did have beautiful, almond-shaped dark brown eyes. But her nose was a little too long and distracted from those eyes and she always managed to have a small but noticeable pimple or two, though she couldn't have been a day less than 27.

But the thing I loved about Libby was her willing ear. Somehow she always reminded me more of a sympathetic local bartender than a late night diner waitress. I guess it was the way she'd pour me a cup of coffee and then lean on the counter and say, "Well Tony, how'd it go tonight?"

At that hour, on weekday nights, I was usually the only patron so I'd relate to her the ups and downs of being a male emergency room nurse on the "Squad Shift," as we called it. The name derived from the fact that more people tend to call their local emergency police squad during those hours and more emergency squads tend to have more people on duty during those hours and more of those squads like to deliver more of those people to our doors during those hours. Hence, at any given time between 4 p.m. and midnight, one would probably find at least one emergency squad team in our small, but efficient emergency room.

And, it was usually the "squad" people who gave me the hardest time. I often thought of writing a story about some of those people and calling it "Macho Squad." It was their constant comments and ridicule which really got to me some nights and I'd go into long dissertations on prejudices and injustice in the diner, with Libby listening quietly and intently.

Sometimes she'd listen to my gory details of bloody bodies and mangled limbs. She'd gasp and cringe but she always let me get it out of my system and I always managed to feel better.

One night I was particularly upset. I was really shook as I walked into the White Bird. "Hey, Tony, you okay?", she called to me as I inserted 55¢ into the cigarette machine.

I pulled the Kent lever and picked my pack out of the tray before I said to her, "Man, what a night. It was incredible. . ."

"Coffee?" she interrupted.

I nodded yes as I lit a cigarette and offered one to Libby.

"Thanks," she said.

"This was one of those nights when you're glad you really know your stuff, but you wish you never had to use it."

"Really bad ones, huh?"

"Just unbelievable."

"You want somethin' to eat while you tell me about it?"

"Hamburger and fries," I said.

Libby walked to the griddle and put a hamburger on. She

dropped the frier into the grease and returned to the counter.

"Tell me about it," she said, showing real interest and sympathy.

"I got in at about ten of four. I made really good time getting to work for a change and I figured that meant it was going to be a good night. Ha, ha. I'm not there two minutes when I hear that the Usted Squad is on its way with someone in cardiac arrest.

"Now you know who's on the Usted Squad. That asshole who cracks on me every time he shows his ugly face in our doors. But I still was convinced it was gonna be a good day, so I figured maybe this was his bowling night or something.

"But who should come rushing in leading the stretcher, old Barnaby."

Libby, still listening intently walked back to the grill and flipped my hamburger over. She shook the fries in the boiling oil and came back to the counter. "More coffee?" she asked, seeing that I had drained my cup.

"Thanks," I said before continuing: "Right away, he has to say, 'Well look here. If it isn't Nancy Nurse. . .'. I really lost my patience. I mean, he was bringing in a dying woman! So I snapped at him, 'Shut the fuck up.'"

Libby winced at the profanity. She always did and it always surprised me.

"We saved the woman, and by the time we were done with her, the Usted Squad was gone, so I figured maybe it was gonna be a good night after all.

Libby brought my hamburger and fries to the counter and slid the ketchup and salt over to me. She took another one of my cigarettes and sat on the stool behind the counter.

In between bites I continued: "Everything was quiet, a few minor scratches, scrapes, sprains, so I went on my dinner break a little early. I no sooner sat down to eat than we get a call that the Usted Squad is on its way again, but this time with auto crash victims. I gobbled my food down and got back upstairs just as they were bringing the people in. One was D.O.A. but the other one was still alive, if you could call her that. There was blood everywhere and her right arm was completely severed. Her face was a mess. She'll be in there about a year if she's lucky and makes it. Man it really gets to ya." My food had lost its appeal and I pushed it away. Libby didn't move. She just sat there listening.

"Anyway, we just about got the mess cleaned up from that, when this hysterical woman can be heard screaming in the entrance way. The guard is screaming too and I ran as fast as possible down the corridor.

"Old Harry fell apart again and I was really pissed until I saw he was calling for me to hurry with just cause. The hysterical woman was holding a child who was covered with blood and completely unconscious.

"Between the two of us, we got them down into the emergency room. We calmed her enough to get her to sign the release and then started working up the kid. She's 10 and must've been a pretty little thing.

"We finally got the mother tranquilized and she told us the kid—her name's Melissa," I shuddered when I said the name, even though a couple of hours had passed since the scene took place.

"Anyway, she was watching TV when her father came home. He wanted to watch something else on TV and Melissa started crying. He must've been pretty drunk to slam a little kid like that around so both arms, one of her legs, her jaw and three of her ribs broke. And she had to get 15 stitches on that pretty little face."

I looked up and there were tears in Libby's eyes. It was the first time I had ever seen her react and I said to her, "Hey, if this is upsetting you, I'll stop. . ."

"No, no," she said, blinking back the tears. She reached over and took another cigarette from the counter. "I'm just a little funny about kids, that's all. Go on. Don't mind me. It does a person good to get a little shook now and then. Makes us all a bit more in tune with the world, you know?"

I did know what she meant, so I continued: "She finally regained consciousness about a half hour before I left and she was resting comfortably when I signed out. But I'll tell you, that sweet little girl sure went through hell."

I paused and Libby asked, "What'll happen now?"

"To her? She'll probably be in the hospital for a few weeks. Meantime, we notified the police. They hauled in the parents for child abuse. They'll have to go to court and the judge'll decide what's to be done. Most of these kids go right back home. The parents always make promises and there's really no where to put all the kids. . ."

"I know, I know," Libby said, standing up. "You want some more coffee?"

I looked at her, feeling better and said, "Yeah, thanks."

"You think she'll be okay?"

"I'm sure of it. She has a lot of injuries but she seemed to be okay otherwise. Yeah, I'm sure she'll be okay. She'll have some scar on her face, though. It's really a shame."

Libby must've spent the rest of the night thinking about that poor little kid and the next morning, on her way home from the White Bird, she stopped off and bought Melissa a little stuffed animal. Then she went over to the hospital. I have no idea how she got in to see the kid, must've said she was a close relative or something, but she went up there and gave Melissa that animal.

Melissa was in traction and really weak but she was so thrilled with the present. She told everybody about it. And she was one of those really great kids that everybody adored. She was just so cute. By the time I got to work the next night everybody was buzzing around about it. Seems they found out Libby wasn't really related and they were all trying to figure out who she was.

I suspected Libby from the description but I didn't say anything.

That night at the diner I asked her, "You do anything special today?"

She grinned back at me and said, "Like what?"

"Like maybe going and making a cute little girl very happy?"

"How'd you know it was me?" She was blushing but obviously pleased.

"I just suspected. Why'd you go?"

Libby wrinkled her forehead and said, "I don't know. I think your story just got to me. I can't say why, it just did. So, she liked the animal?"

"Liked it," I said, as Libby poured me a cup of hot coffee, "She loved it! She didn't stop talking about it all day."

"Oh, I'm so glad. She was just so frail and pretty. I wish there was more I could do for her."

Libby turned and said abruptly, "Hamburger?"

"Yeah," I said.

"So how was your night, tonight?" Libby asked, her back still to me. I told her about all the events of the night.

Our relationship continued the same, though I was aware of the fact that Libby went to see Melissa almost every day. Sometimes she mentioned her visits but she never went into any great detail about them and I was in a period of severe depression about my status in the world. At that time I was really going through an identity crisis. I was constantly conscious of the stigma attached to me as a male nurse and continually in touch, almost to the point of obsession, with the general prejudice of the people I came into contact with.

About five weeks later, I heard that Melissa was scheduled to be discharged. I thought I'd like to see her before she left the hospital, so on my early break I wandered up to pediatrics. Melissa was wheeling herself around slowly in a wheelchair. I asked her how she was feeling and she said, "I'm going home tomorrow." There was excitement in her voice but also a twinge of what I thought, at the time, was fear.

We went into her room and she showed me all the stuffed animals and toys Libby had brought her. She told me all about Libby, "She's such a nice lady. I wish, I wish. . ." Melissa's voice trailed off and she began crying.

"Hey, Melissa," I said. "What's the matter?"

But, she clammed up and wouldn't talk to me anymore. My 15 minutes were up anyway so I left, wishing Melissa good luck.

After work, I drove to the White Bird. Libby was standing with her back to the counter in the empty diner. I walked in and sat down. "Hi, Libby. What's up?"

She turned and I could see her eyes were all red and puffy from crying. I was really shocked. It was the first time I'd ever seen her unhappy. "Hey, what's wrong?" I asked, offering her a cigarette.

She took one and, after lighting it said, "If it's okay, I'd rather not talk about it. You want the usual?"

"Sure," I said. I didn't talk much that night, since Libby seemed to want it that way.

The next night, as I entered the empty White Bird Diner, I could almost sense that something was changed. Libby stood behind the counter smiling, but her smile was different. I could tell she was upset but that she still didn't want to talk about it.

"How was your night?" she asked, pouring a cup of hot coffee and then taking a cigarette.

"Pretty good, for a change. It was very quiet. . ." My voice trailed off as I heard the door open behind me. Rarely, does anyone come into the White Bird on a Wednesday night at 12:30.

A tall, balding, surly man came in and sat at the opposite end of the counter.

"Can I help you?" Libby asked, carrying a napkin and silverware to the counter where he sat.

"Well, well, well, it isn't Lesbo Libby!" His voice was loud and his eyes glared at her.

Libby stopped dead in her tracks and stared at him, her mouth slightly open in horror. I turned and stared at him in astonishment.

She laid the silverware on the counter and said, "Coffee?"

She was clearly trying to ignore the comment and pretend it hadn't been made.

"What's the matter, doesn't your friend over there know what you are? Or maybe you're AC-DC, is that it?"

I shot a look at him, not knowing what he was talking about, just as Libby shouted, "Shut up! Just shut up!"

"Oh, now Libby, Lesbo Libby, don't tell me you're uptight. Could it be you ain't proud of your..."

I interrupted with, "What's going on here?"

"Don't tell me you ain't heard. This here lesbo tried to steal my kid from me. Claims she and her lesbo friend—she your husband or your wife, honey?—can take better care of my little girl'n me..."

"Libby..." I began, but Libby cut me off.

"This is Melissa's father," she said. "I don't know how he found out or what he found out about me but obviously he has received some information about my personal life which he chooses to throw around needlessly." Her whole body began shaking and I walked around the counter and held her up. I helped her over to a booth. Melissa's father sat at the counter and began stirring his coffee, noisily scraping his cup.

"I'm sorry," Libby began after a moment or two.

"There's no need..."

"I'm not apologizing for my sexual preferences. I'm apologizing for your being here and going through this. And I guess I'm also apologizing for him and everyone like him..."

"What's this all about, though?" I asked, still confused by the whole thing.

"What you two doin' back there? Hey buddy if you're tryin' to make it with her, she goes for girls, man. She's a les..."

"Shut the fuck up you moron. And get the fuck out of here. The coffee's on the house..." I don't know how I mustered up so much violence and strength in my voice, but it shook him enough that he dropped some coins loudly on the counter and stomped out. As he swung through the door he called, "Nice meetin' ya, Lesbo Libby..."

"Oh my God," Libby began crying over and over as he screeched his car out of the parking lot.

"You feel like talking about it?" I asked.

"I guess so," she said, wiping her eyes and nose on a napkin. "You know, I've been living here for about four years now. I moved into an apartment on Crescent Street with a woman I had fallen in love with. We never bothered anyone. Nobody knew who we were or what we were. Not that we were ashamed of our love, but just because, well, we figured it would be better that way."

"Anyway, I started going to see that little girl Melissa and I really fell in love with her. You know, when you're, when you're homosexual there's no prospect of having children. And I really have a soft spot for kids."

"So I fell for her. 'Bout a week ago, I went over to the Bureau of Children's Services to find out what was gonna happen to Melissa when she was discharged from the hospital."

"They were very curt, but they told me that they'd had some serious talks with both of her parents who promised never to abuse her again. The woman I spoke with said she had some serious reservations but she explained that there simply were no foster homes available to place Melissa in. She gave me one of those song and dance routines about how it's so difficult to find foster parents and on and on until I told her I would be willing to let Melissa stay with me until she would be absolutely certain Melissa's parents were sincere."

"Old Miss Grant was pretty shocked but very responsive."

She asked me to fill out about 25 pages of forms. I had to give references and employers and explain how I could possibly work and care for Melissa at the same time.

"I called my roommate and she came down and agreed to take partial responsibility for Melissa. She'd come up to the hospital with me a couple of times and she loves Melissa as much as I do."

"Anyway, the people at the agency told us it was highly irregular, but they would seriously consider us. Of course, they explained that a full character check would have to be made, but there was more than enough time."

"My God, that is really beautiful," I knew my words interrupting the story sounded trite but I just had to say something to let her know how I felt.

"Yeah, except it backfired. You see, they called my parents who felt it was their duty to expose the filthy and disgusting life of their daughter."

"So they found out."

"By then Melissa was scheduled to be discharged from the hospital so they sent her home to him and his wife." She nodded her head at the doorway through which Melissa's father had disappeared and a look of disgust came over her face.

"But can't you do something to contest..."

"It's useless." She pulled a folded letter from her uniform pocket. "I'll let you read how they feel..."

After careful consideration and a thorough character investigation, we feel it would be in the best interests of Melissa to return her to her natural parents.

We have found that children placed in homes with "alternate life styles" tend to have a greater difficulty in adjusting to society.

We thank you for your concern and interests in this matter and assure you that every possible step will be taken to guarantee Melissa a bright and happy future."

The letter slipped from my hands and she sobbed aloud. There was nothing I could say. I sat opposite her, holding her hands across the table, hoping I was offering her something in the way she always gave me so much sympathy and compassion.

After twenty minutes, Libby pulled herself together and squeezed my hands. "Thanks," she said, smiling feebly. She stood up and walked behind the counter. She began rubbing the formica violently.

"Is there anything I can..."

"Leave. Please. I'd like to be alone for awhile."

I walked through the door feeling powerless and empty. I glanced back at the counter and Libby as the door swung shut. She smiled at me.

The next night as I pulled my car into the White Bird Diner parking lot I knew Libby wouldn't be there. Instead a young, sassy, skinny blonde girl stood behind the counter.

"Where's Libby?" I asked her.

The young woman sassed, "Owner found out she was a," her voice lowered to a whisper even though no one else was in the diner and she cupped her hand around her mouth as she leaned forward, "a lesbo!"

She stepped back, expecting me to register shock.

Instead I looked her square in her make-up cluttered face and said, "And the most beautiful woman in my life."

It was the least I could do for Libby. I stood up and left the diner. I've never gone back. I haven't seen Libby again either, but I know she's okay. Beautiful people are never defeated, just set back sometimes.

HERE&THERE

New York, N.Y.—John Kriza, 56, former star of the American Ballet Theatre drowned in the Gulf of Mexico on August 18. Kriza created the original roles in **Billy The Kid, Fancy Free, Interplay and Fall River Legend**. He was also noted for his classical roles in **Giselle, Swan Lake and Les Sylphide**.

—*Gay Scene*

Brockton, Mass.—A Massachusetts court has ruled that only women can be arrested as prostitutes. A district court in Brockton acquitted 31-year old married man on charges of accepting money for sex. The court ruled that prostitution laws pertain only to females.

—*Big Mama Rag*

New York, N.Y.—Gay groups across the country are being asked by the National Gay Task Force (NGTF) to co-operate in a new "gay media alert network." The network will be "used to consolidate and speed informational exchanges within the gay community on broadcast problems."

Interested groups should write to Loretta Lotman, Media Director, NGTF, 80 Fifth Ave, Rm. 506, New York, N.Y. 10011.

—*Press Release*

London, England—Guardsman Peter Powers thought it would be advantageous to dress in drag when he and his girlfriend, Carole Rodgers, decided to go begging for money.

And when a Spanish waiter, Jose Roman, picked the two up in his car and began getting too friendly with Powers, he was shocked when the latter hit him with his handbag. For the handbag was weighted with 1½ lbs of lead.

Powers and Rodgers pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey to robbing Mr. Roman and taking his car without consent.

—*Gay News*

Colorado Springs, Co.—Lambda Services Bureau, Inc. reports that it has received approval of its tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. Lambda provides a peer-counseling and referral service for gay men and women in the Colorado Springs area. Lambda may be reached by telephone at either: (303) 633-0862 or (303) 475-8409.

—*The Advocate*

San Francisco, Ca.—A "Bill of Rights for Patrons and Employees of Gay Establishments" has been issued by Bay Area Gay Liberation (BAGL). According to BAGL, the purpose of the "Bill of Rights" is to "initiate discussion within the gay community of the role of gay establishments and their responsibilities.

For further information write: Box 171, 1800 Market St., San Francisco, Ca. 94102.

—*Gay Community News*

Chicago, Ill.—A biography of Pearl Hart, famed Chicago lawyer and social activist who died this year (and who represented many gay clients and organizations), is being written by author Janet Stevenson, who has several published biographies to her credit.

—*The Chicago Gay Crusader*

Montreal—An anonymous donor at Sir George Williams University here has set up what is believed to be the first collect scholarship fund exclusively for homosexuals. The \$200 annual grant will be awarded to a male or female homosexual showing academic distinction in his or her junior year.

Financial aid officer Freda Haffey says that to qualify for the award, applicants simply fill out a form, which must be signed by the student's parents as well, certifying that the candidate is a homosexual. "After all," Mr. Haffey says, "we can't have tests."

—*Lesbian Connection*

Toronto, Ont.—After having refused ads for several gay publications including **The Body Politic, The Toronto Star** has now published their criteria for such advertising. Here is an excerpt from their "Standards of Advertising Acceptability":

"The word 'Homosexual' is to be spelled out in full. The word 'gay' is not acceptable except as it may appear in the name of an organization; similarly, the word 'straight' is not acceptable.

Public events, such as a dance or open forum to discuss homosexuality are acceptable.

Advertising on behalf of homosexual organizations where the purpose of the advertising is to recruit or convert, for example, promoting circulation subscriptions to periodicals which they may publish, is not acceptable."

—*The Body Politic*

Australia—Four young people have been granted \$A6,610 by the Australian government to make a videotape which will "present a positive homosexual identity and confront the traditional stereotypes."

—*Gay News*

Denmark—A Danish parliamentary commission has recommended that the age of consent be lowered to 14—for both heterosexuals and homosexuals.

Minister of Justice Orla Moeller says he will not submit a Bill at present, because there is more important legislation to be passed.

—*Gay News*

Moscow, Id.—The city council appointed an openly gay person to the city's Fair Housing Commission here on August 18.

Appointed to the slot was Gilbert "Gib" E. Preston, acting president of the North West Gay People's Alliance.

—*The Advocate*

GRASS ROOTS from page 19

Let's do it. This grass roots action in neither too risky nor ineffective, and is personally fulfilling as well as socially useful. It's other things, too. It's classic "guerrilla warfare"—flexible in approach, also seeking support among the people themselves. It's also (and this sounds schmaltzy) right in the noble American grain or tradition of dissent, the rugged individualist, plurality and diversity beyond the melting pot. Of course, it's also—to be more down to earth—a very natural thing, as logical as stopping to remove broken glass from the street, to fix a broken porch step or railing, to alert others to a live electric wire being down. It's lighting a simmering pilot light of awareness today, so that one has a head start on coming easier to a full rolling boil to handle problems tomorrow. Whatever your example—it's integrity, uniting thought and action, it's quietly living liberation.



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HERE&THERE

London, England—In a recent interview, rock star David Bowie said, "I suppose I do fancy blokes quite a bit." He added that he would never have met his wife, Angela, if they both hadn't been involved with the same man.

—*Gay Scene*

USA—Devine, transvestite star of the movie, **Pink Flamingos**, has recorded the title song from her new movie, **Female Troubles**. She plays a dual role in the new movie; an auto mechanic and a woman.

Pink Flamingos was made for \$10,000, and has grossed two million dollars to date. **Female Troubles** cost \$30,000 and was released recently. It stars Devine, the 325 pound transvestite star, playing two roles, the lead character and her illicit lover.

—*Image*

Washington, D.C.—Hearings on the National Gay Rights Bill have still not begun in the House of Representatives. The bill remains stuck in the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the Judiciary Committee. Gay people are strongly urged to write to Congressman Don Edwards of California, chairperson of the Subcommittee, to put pressure on him to get hearings on HR5452 going.

—*Gay Community News*

Los Angeles, CA.—Over the strenuous objections of Chief Edward Davis, the city Civil Service Commission ruled Friday that he must accept homosexual police officers—but said that they should be discreet homosexuals.

The commission voted unanimously to approve new standards for police employment, eliminating homosexuality alone as a ground for rejection of applicants or dismissal of officers already on the force.

—*The Milwaukee Journal*

Chicago, IL.—A Bill designed to amend Chicago's Civil Rights ordinances to prohibit discrimination because of sexual orientation in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations will have open hearings in November. If you have encountered discrimination in work, housing, or public accommodations because you are gay or if you have been harassed by police, you are urged to call 929-HELP who will put you in touch with the Gay Rights Task Force.

—*Gay Horizons Newsletter*

Lawrenceville, GA.—When scientists introduced four female gorillas into a cage containing 2 males in the hope that they would breed, Calabar, one of the males, roughed up the females to let them know who was boss. The females figured out what was going on and a few weeks later three of them cornered Calabar and beat the shit out of him. He was removed from the compound before he could be further damaged.

—*Lesbian Connection*

New York, N.Y.—Arno Press has announced a \$500 prize for the best parody short story on the theme of Homosexual Death by Car. The contest was inspired by protests against a pattern of needless tragic endings as seen in four recent young people's books dealing with the gay theme.

The winning spoof will be published by Arno and distributed free at the 1976 conference of the American Library Association.

Manuscripts should be sent either directly to Arno Press or to Barbara Gittings, P.O. Box 2383, Philadelphia, PA. 19103. Ms Gittings is the coordinator of the association's Task Force on Gay Liberation and has just published a new edition of TFGL's Gay Bibliography. Send .25¢ for a copy.

—*The Chicago Gay Crusader*

Oneonta, N.Y.—The Quaker Friends Committee for Gay Concerns now publishes a regular newsletter. To receive it, write to: Arthur Gross, Newsletter Editor, The Friends Committee for Gay Concerns, P.O. Box 541, Oneonta, N.Y. 13820.

—*Renaissance of Madison*

Baltimore, MD—Dr. Harry Benjamin, one of the first experts on transsexualism recently celebrated his 90th birthday. With much opposition from within the medical profession, the doctor devised, in collaboration with sympathetic psychiatrists and surgeons, methods of treatment of transsexualism beginning with psychiatric evaluation and going on to hormone injections and sex change surgery.

Benjamin is also active in legal rights for transsexuals, concerning patients' new sexual identity on legal documents.

—*Image*

Brussels, Belgium—Evangelist Billy Graham, who has often condemned gays from the pulpit, has moderated his tone slightly—very slightly.

Speaking here on one of his "Crusades" Graham said that gays are people whom God can "love if they repent of their sins." Repenting, to Graham, means renouncing the gay life style.

—*San Francisco Sentinel*

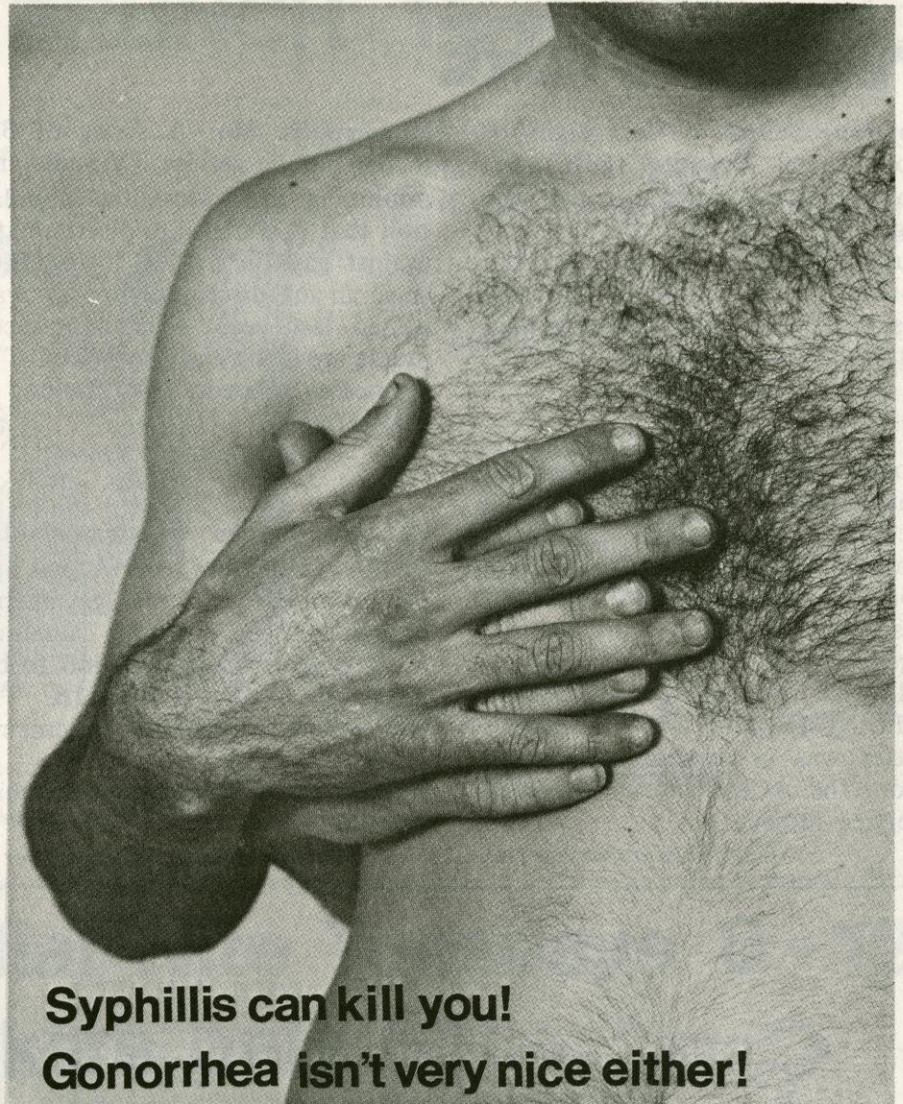
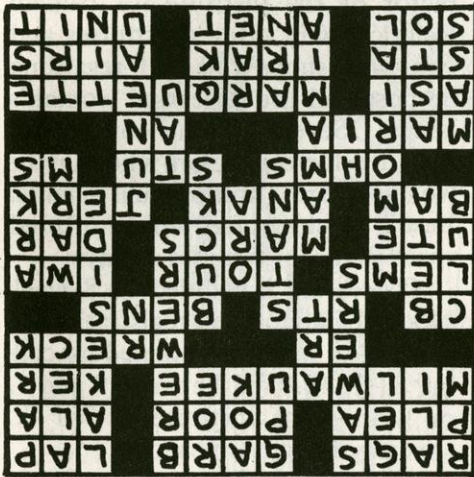
Normal, IL.—Gay People's Alliance of Normal, Illinois has announced that tentative plans have been made for a Gay Sexuality Convention at Southern Illinois University.

The conference is scheduled to be held next April.

More information about the convention, plus advance registration may be obtained from Gay People's Alliance, Jackie Willie coordinator, 225 North University, Normal, IL. 61761.

—*Chicago Gay Life*

SOLUTION
TO
CROSSWORDS
PAGE 9



Syphilis can kill you!
Gonorrhea isn't very nice either!

The incidence of VD, both syphilis and gonorrhea, is very high in Milwaukee. The largest increase in incidence for VD has been in the gay community during the last year.

Symptoms such as dripping or sores are not always present. There is only one way that you can be sure you do not have VD and that is by having a blood test and culture taken.

The tests are simple and painless and they are free. You owe it to yourself and to your sex partners to

take the few minutes necessary for these tests.

The GPU VD Examination Center is operated by concerned gays, so that you can be assured of absolutely no hassle and complete confidentiality. The Center is located at 1568 N. Farwell and free examinations and tests are given every Friday and Saturday nights from 8 to 12 p.m. Remember that you cannot be sure that you are "clean" unless you have been tested. Help us help you!

GPU Examination Center for VD
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(This ad prepared and donated by GPU NEWS)



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And then, in addition to our full menu, we offer a \$2.49 Meat Rack Special on Thursday.

HERE&HERE

London, England—Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) has elected Glenys Parry to chair the organization for the coming year. Parry is the first woman to hold the position and has indicated that she wishes to be called Chairwoman rather than Chairperson.

—*Gay News*

Boston, Mass.—Sen. Ted Kennedy has written a letter to the Acting Secretary of the Army on behalf of Barbara Randolph and Debbie Watson. The two women were recently discharged from the Army Security agency at Ft. Devens because they admitted that they were gay. (See GPU NEWS, June 1975) Kennedy's letter was in response to charges from the ACLU and the Legal-in-Service Project.

—*Gay Community News*

Minneapolis, Mn.—A series of 30 second public service TV spots are reminding the Twin Cities population that it is illegal to discriminate against gays in rentals, hiring, etc. since an anti-discrimination law was passed last year. The announcements are being given by WCCO-TV Minnesota's largest TV station, a CBS affiliate.

—*Pacific Coast Times*

Chicago, Il.—The American Public Health Association (APHA) has approved the request that gay members be allowed to form a caucus at the Association's convention to be held here beginning Nov. 16. The gay caucus will hold an organizing meeting on the first day of the convention.

—*One of Chicago Newsletter*

Chicago, Il.—Robert D'Appley, Director of the Institute for Human Relations will offer six courses and two workshops this fall regarding homosexual life styles and women's issues. Several of the courses are designed for counselors who may be working with homosexual clients. New 8 week courses will be offered specifically for families of gays.

Classes are scheduled in 8 week blocks. Catalog and registration information may be obtained by calling 312-248-8588 between 9 and 5, or writing the Institute at 561 W. Diversey Pkwy., Chicago.

—*Press Release*

Provincetown, Mass.—Transvestites from all over the country will meet at the Gifford House in Provincetown for a week long "TV Fair." The events, billed as "one glorious week 'en femme'" will take place from October 24 to Nov. 2.

—*Gay Community News*

San Diego, Ca.—A new Southern California Caucus of the Gay Nurses Alliance (GNA) is forming here. Interested persons should write to GNA, P.O. Box 17593, San Diego, Ca. 92117.

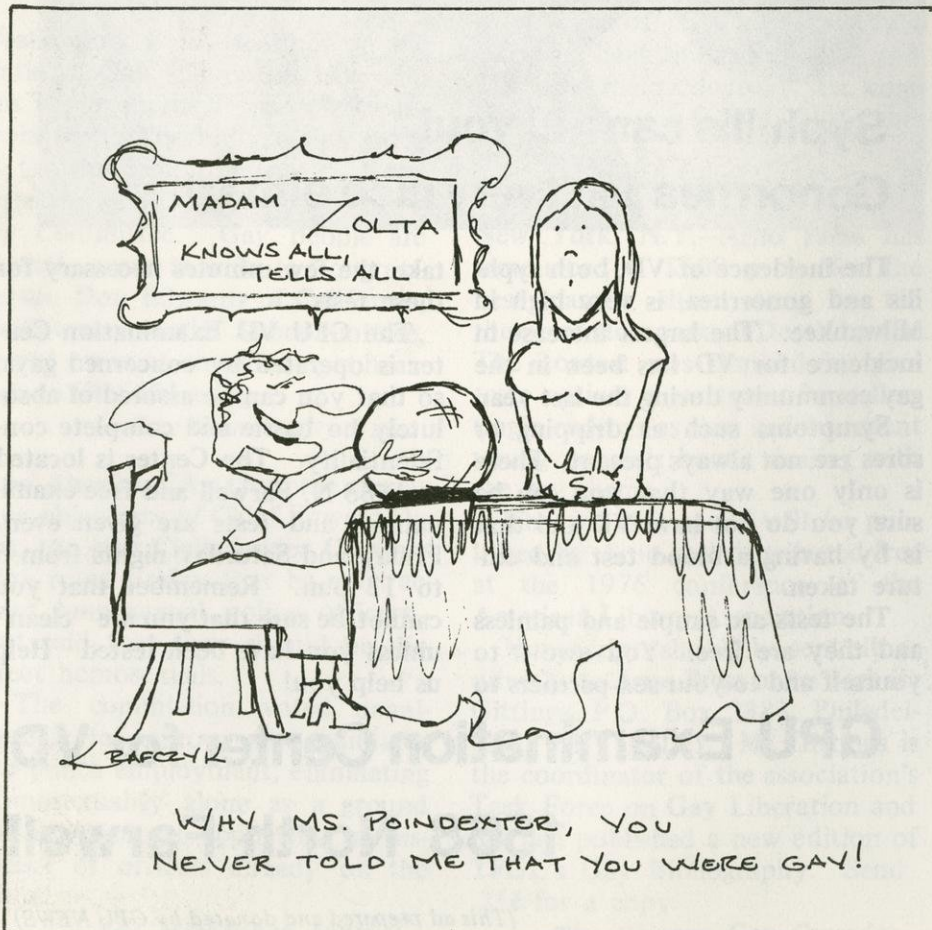
—*Pacific Coast Times*

Laguna Beach, Ca.—Christine Jorgensen, whose sex change 23 years ago made history, has just completed a Scandinavian cookbook and is gathering material for a novel about the Danish underground in World War II.

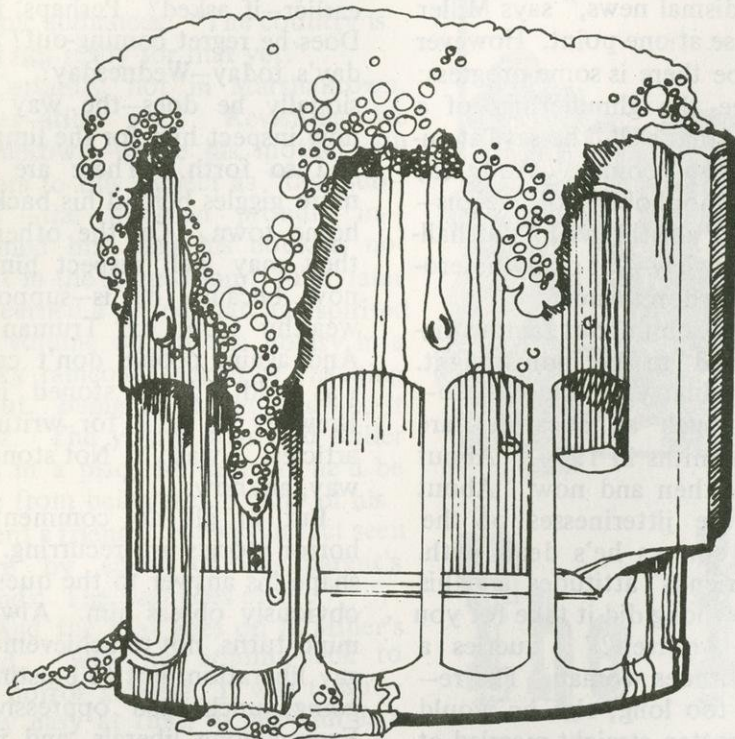
—*Milwaukee Journal*

Sacramento, Ca.—Democratic State Assemblyman Edwin L. Z'Berg, 49, died here on August 25. Z'Berg was an early supporter of the recently passed Brown/Moscone Bill which legalized consensual sex between adults in private. Z'Berg had often publicly supported gay rights.

—*Entertainment West*



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MERLE MILLER VISITS WHITEWATER

No posters advertised the event. "When the gay kids at Whitewater tried to meet last year," explained the campus ministry facilitator, "people simply tore down the posters as fast as they were put up." So it was by grapevine that word was spread that Merle Miller, author of **Plain Speaking** and on campus to lecture on that best selling biography of Harry Truman, would that afternoon meet informally at the religious center to discuss his 1971 book **On Being Different**. Its subtitle is *What it Means to be a Homosexual*; and Miller, a long-time journalist and liberal, was one of the earlier people to move up-front, to come out publicly (in his case, in the pages of the staid **New York Times**).

In he strode, into the same room where a year ago, about a dozen gay students had met for about four sessions or so—and then had faded away. He is spiffier, nattier than one might have expected—and though fiftyish, yet not pallid or fuddy-duddy. And gutsy too, as well as quietly energetic. His first comment to those assembled (members of a Sexual Attitudes class, plus a few assorted other folks) is a question. What do "the people at Whitewater" think about the Sgt. Matlovich affair? The question sort of ends right there then, since there seems to be no gay presence at this school of 8,500, at least not in this room now. He moves on; the session quickly becomes an easy rap session, ranging lightly over topic after topic.

But in his replies, a constant thread begins to emerge. It almost runs something like this: (1) "Liberals" are not; they're not really liberal on gay matters—still, yet. (2) The rest of the country (such as his home town, Marshalltown Iowa) is not like urbane New York City. (3) Even New York City is not, really, like New York City supposedly is. "It's no Athens." "I bring

you only dismal news," says Miller after a pause at one point. However—(4) maybe there is some progress: "I just see the glimmerings of a movement, that's all," he says at another sum-up point. And, (5) though homophobia still reigns—evidently we all still live in Marshalltown, in his view—yet many heterosexuals "just don't care."

We gossip a bit about famous figures reputed to be non-straight. About psychiatry: hold-out homophobes such as Socarides are "like blacksmiths in 1934." About civil rights then and now. About attitudes—the jitterinesses of the talk-show emcees he's dealt with. And his friends' attitudes and his own. "How long did it take for you to accept yourself?" queries a Sexual Attitudes woman. The response is—too long; else he would not have gotten straight-married at age 26, fresh from having helped win the Second World War (Miller retains an ironic attitude about conventional role-playing). He's still good friends with his wife, shocking as this indeed is to her friends. On the issue of gays being publicly-open: yes, it's important—very important. Gore Vidal says he's bisexual and that's all right, that's cool, that's chic. But, if a famous conductor could or would only state that publicly, that would help too. Every bit helps. Actors tell Miller they don't come out for fear they would then be less convincing in love scenes for the Marshalltown public. Miller doesn't buy that.

As to his own public coming-out: "there was nothing idealistic about it," he was simply "outraged" at a homophobic article in **Harper's**, and his (liberal) friends' approval of it. So he wrote his own article; which was less courageous than accidental, he says. The way he's telling all this, it seems as if he somewhat drifted out sideways into openness. Would he have written it

earlier—if asked? Perhaps, indeed. Does he regret coming-out? "What day's today—Wednesday?" Occasionally he does—the way people now inspect him for the limp wrist, and so forth. There are surely more giggles behind his back in his home town. On the other hand, they may well respect him more now because he is—supposedly—wealthy from his Truman book. And again, people don't care. "I was told I'd be stoned in the Brewster A & P for writing the articles. I wasn't. Not stoned that way, anyhow. . . ."

But in all his comments, the horror stories are recurring. They shape his answer to the questions, obviously obsess him. Always his mind turns, not to achievements by gay liberation, but to existing, ongoing, unchanged oppressiveness. Even among liberals, and in New York. Six times in five years that city has defeated a gay rights bill. And Miller, who has worn out shoe leather in twenty liberal causes over the years, finds that his liberal friends "don't come along with me on this." Still; yet. And the **New York Times** has yet to print its first editorial on gay rights. "There's not a long line" of people in support, he says wryly. Supposedly no homosexuals on the **Times** staff—he's informed, within the earshot of several. And other things like this, continue to pique him. Columnist Pauline Kael's asking "where are there any more undeclared homosexuals in the country any more except in monasteries?" And when, on tour, he asked the size of the gay student community at the (12,000-person) University of New Hampshire, an official informed him—"Nine." In the 1950's, in Houston, he was asked "Are you a communist?" He replied "None of your business." He was instantly blacklisted as a lecturer then. Last year he was told he should go on the circuit again. "But I'm now

a communist faggot," Miller warned the organizer. "That's all right," was the reply, "That's big this year." Well, it wasn't; microscopic audiences. "The country is still not ready for that yet."

Certainly not in Marshalltown, Iowa—still, yet. Revisiting his hometown—where his mother still refers to this subject as "that subject"—the librarian proudly informed him that his book is not kept in the secret room! (Yes; later he learned a young man had spirited the volume out of the library in a bulky raincoat, fearful of checking it out. Being honest, he returned it later. The young man told Miller this in a place he thought he'd be safe from being seen by any of his parent's friends. He was in fact seen there by some of his parent's friends. The beat goes on.)

And the beat goes on in Miller's mind. Why his homing-back to the horror stories? It was temptingly easy at first, to peg him as a scarred member of the old generation, still deeply-dented by oppression. But then it seemed truer to see him as, after all, not only a reporter, but a life-long liberal. Hence, someone dedicated to telling the whole truth, the seamy side too, "telling it like it is" decades before that phrase swung trendily into view. Plain speaking indeed. And also someone actually living his liberal principles. So under his disenchantment lies his tough resilience. Gay progress is slow. "But it is ever thus in all movements, he said ponderously," Miller at one point intoned in that low-key, wry-ironic tone which imbues *Different*. And progress occurs. When Sgt. Matlovich visited the *Post* offices for an interview, an observing reporter said, "He doesn't look like one." That's progress. And now each year the *Times* at least has to reconsider its no-editorial policy on "that subject." That's progress. And people are still writing Miller about the 1971 book; only last week, a letter from Georgia saying the writer now doesn't feel like

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Miller's liberal friends still ask him: if so many people really don't care, then why does he talk so much about it? His reply is firm and clear: "So I won't have to talk about it." And the man from Marshalltown rises and exits on his way to dinner and the evening's public Truman talk. All others rise; and three minutes later, the room is utterly deserted. Marshalltown, Wisconsin?

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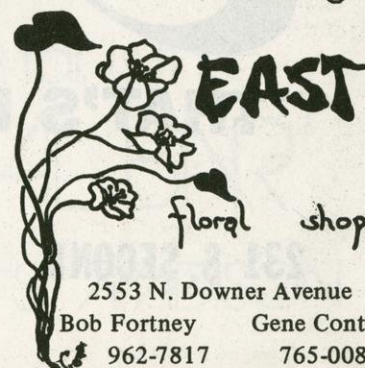
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SURVEY SAYS GAY O.K.

Washington, D.C.—What people think today about laws concerning abortion and homosexuality was revealed by a major survey by the Bureau of Social Science Research recently. An overwhelming majority of Washington area residents oppose laws that would restrict the right of women to seek abortions or of consenting adults to engage in homosexual acts.

63% felt consensual adult homosexual acts should be legal and 77% said abortion should be left up to a woman and her doctor.

Of Roman Catholics living in the District, 63% agreed concerning abortion despite their church's view that abortion is murder.

More hostile to individual choice on these two sensitive moral issues were Blacks, older people, those with less formal education and lower income people.

"Particularly in the last 10 years

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SUNDAY BUFFET 2-7

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MILWAUKEE, WI 53204

or so. . .something has gone on in terms of change of attitude in general," said Franklin Kameny, a leading spokesman for homosexuals. "There has been a heightened sensitivity in recent years to questions of privacy and personal freedom in several ways."

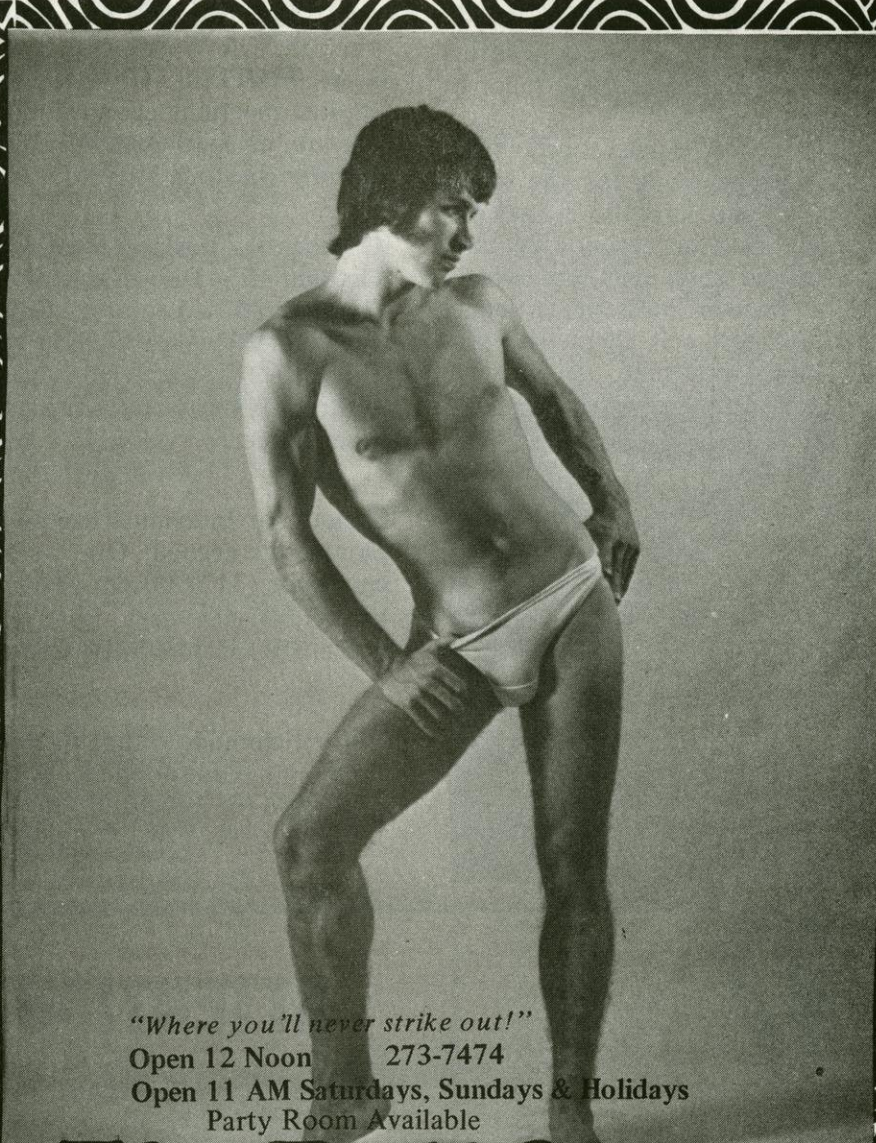
But Nellie J. Gray, of the D.C. Right to Life Committee said, "If you had properly asked people if killing a child is within a woman's rights or within a physician's right, I don't think you would have gotten the answers you did."

A nationwide campaign to amend the Constitution to prohibit abortion has so far proved unsuccessful.

Oral and anal intercourse, among the sex acts often practiced by homosexuals, is still outlawed in 36 states. Of the 12 state legislatures which have removed such laws, 11 of them have done so in the last five years. Courts in two additional states have invalidated such statutes.

"One of the things I've noticed," said Kameny, "is that the traditional stereotypes of homosexuals in terms of being effeminate, of being transvestites are much more prevalent in the black community than in the white community."

The dominant feeling about abortion among catholics in the District was expressed by Ann Flynn, a 72 year old woman reared a Roman Catholic. "It's a woman's body," she said. "Let her do with it what she wants. . .There are too many children in the world today. There is not enough food for them and not enough homes."



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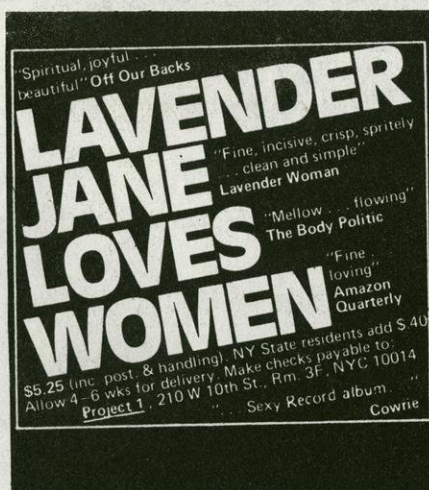
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REVIEW from page 15

a snake." Williams proudly informs the reader that he told the sailor to go snake hunting.

There is, of course, constant reference to his work for the stage, putting things into the framework of his theatrical chronology, and some of his characters, but mostly it's just the old Southern gentleman gleefully getting it all on paper at last. It's about time.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

GAY PEOPLES UNION, INC.

Topical meetings every Monday at The Farwell Center, 1568 N. Farwell Avenue, at 7:30 p.m. The first Monday of every month is the monthly business meeting.

October 6 - Business Meeting.

October 13 - Discussion: Dealing with Gay Homophobia.

October 20 - Lecture: Gays in Popular Films. (Well-known producer, film-maker Owen Pritchard will give the lecture.)

October 27 - Special Interest Groups Meetings: Theater Group, Gay Writers Union, Fund Raising Committee, Speakers Committee, Telephone Committee.

Society for Individual Rights (SIR) announces that two paid full time employees are needed. One is a project director and vocational rehabilitation counselor (\$12,000 per year). The other is for a para-professional counselor (\$9,000 per year). Both require experience/or degrees. For particulars write SIR, Community Center, 83-6th St, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Betty Fairchild, author of **Parents Of Gays**, is asking lesbians and parents to submit correspondence which "relates in some way to a young person's revelation (or inability to reveal) to parents that she is gay", to 3700 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

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Dignity—Milwaukee

Catholic Mass with discussion group following—Every Sunday at 7:30 PM., Newman Center, 2528 E. Linnwood.

Forker Motorcycle Club

"A Men and Women Riding Club" Meets every second Sunday of the month. For information write 5816 W. Carmen Ave., Milwaukee, Wi 53218

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous

Meetings Sundays at 6PM in the social hall of the Newman Center, 2528 E. Linnwood. Call 271-5273 and ask for group 94.

Gay Peoples Union, Inc.

Meetings every Monday at 7:30 PM at the Farwell Center, 1568 N. Farwell, Business meetings the first Monday of each month. Call 271-5273 or write P.O. Box 90530, Milwaukee, Wi 53202.

GPU Examination Center for VD

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Grapevine

A lesbian/feminist action core. Meets Thursdays at 8 PM at Women's Center 2211 E. Kenwood Blvd., Dances every 1st Saturday of the month at Center. Call Women's Crisis Line 964-7535 for more specific information.

Milwaukee Area Teens

For more information call 271-5273.

Milwaukee Gay Community Services Center

2211 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Phone 263-4110
Peer Counseling Services

Milwaukee Health Department Social Hygiene Clinic

841 N. Broadway, Room 110
Phone: 278-3631

Clinic hours: Monday & Thursday from 11:30 AM to 7:15 PM; Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30 AM to 11:15 AM and 12:45 PM to 4:00 PM.

Silver Star Motorcycle Club

Business meetings every 2nd Sunday of the month. Affiliated with W.B.C. Write PO Box 90878, Milwaukee, Wi 53202. Club night every 2nd Friday at The Wreck Room.

UWM Gay Students Association

Meetings Wednesdays at 7:30 PM. Meetings Wednesdays at 7:30 PM Student Union 309 East. Write Box 10, Student Union, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wi 53211.

WISCONSIN

Fox Valley Gay Alliance

Meets alternate Tuesday evenings in member's homes. Write for specific info and directions to PO Box 332, Menasha, Wi 54942.

Madison Gay Center

1001 University Avenue
Madison, Wi. 53715
(608) 257-7575

Lesbian Switchboard

306 N. Brooks (UYMCA)
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CHICAGO

Beckman House

Community Center/Switchboard, 3519 N. Halstead St., 929-4357 Daily 7-11 PM.

Daughters of Bilitis

Lesbian group. Box 2043, Melrose Park, Ill 60164

Dignity/Chicago

Catholic Mass, Sundays 7PM, 824 West Wellington, Phone 525-3564 or write Box 11261, Chicago, Ill 60611.

Gay News and Events Line

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DIGNITY, a national organization of gay Catholics, organized to unite all Catholic gay people to develop leadership and to be an instrument through which the Catholic gay person may be heard by the Church and Society. Dignity has four areas of concern: spiritual formation, education, social involvement, and social events. Interested? Contact Dignity/Milwaukee, P.O. Box 597, Milwaukee, 53201.

Birmingham (England): Young Man (26 yrs., 6'2" tall, 161 lbs.) desires American pen-pals. Will exchange photos. Write: Robert M. Cole, 36 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham B25 8RQ England.

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PORNO COLLECTORS —S. S. M. C. is starting a library. If you are cleaning out your collection and do not know what to do with this material, please donate to the club. Contact SSMC, Dept B P.O. Box 90878, Milwaukee 53202 or call 344-5883.

FRANCE: Jeune Francais (ne comprenant pas l'anglais) voudrait correspondre avec des americains francophones. Echange de photos possible. Ecrire: Dominique Massaglia; 47, rue Camille Jullian, 13004, Marseille, France.

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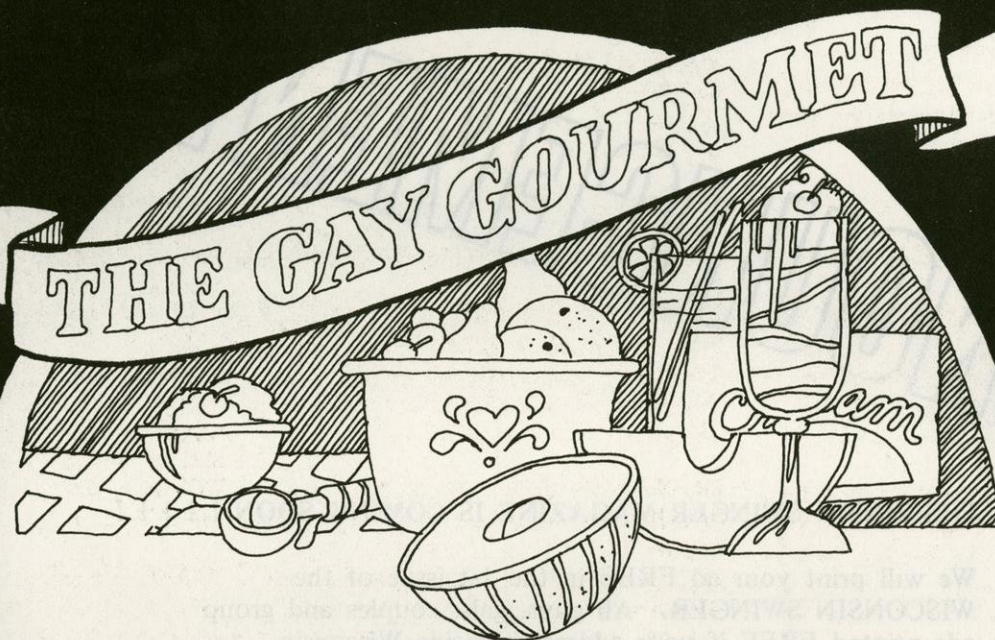
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ROOMS TO LET 278-9150

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"Grecian Glade" Salad

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4 C (1 lb) SHELL MACARONI—cooked in salted water, rinse cool, drain well

2 C unpared CUCUMBER—diced, patted dry on a towel

3 to 6 SCALLIONS (GREEN ONIONS)—dice and use **all**, the green too
All you do is read, the above in a big bowl and then swab it with the dressing below:

½ C MAYONNAISE

2 Tblsp DILL WEED (not
"seed")

½ C SOUR CREAM

3 Tblsp FRESH LEMON JUICE

1 tsp SALT

Simply conjure together the above 5 items in a bowl. Adjust or correct the balance of the seasonings if you wish. But if it seems to taste or smell "too strong"? Good, it should—it'll dilute in the next step. That's where you simply wrap it around the salad, blending well.

Chill a bit; or not. Then enjoy; fresh and cool, it tastes as if eaten *al fresco* (picnic style) in some classic Grecian glade near an ivory-colored Doric marble column entwined with sprigs of green ivy.... oh all right, create your own geographical-gustatory fantasy then!

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