

# GAY

50¢

## WILD MELEE AT THE YMCA



Photo by Richard C. Wandel

"Do Not Disturb" signs for YMCA doors are offered by Morty Manford (right) & Bob Ruecker (left) in the Y lobby.

BY RICHARD C. WANDEL

New York, N.Y. "Heterosexual perverts molest Gay youths," or at least that's what the leaflet said. GAA was about to zap the YMCA so off I went on August 6 to yet another demonstration. My only contact with the Y had been once in Des Moines where I spent two nights with my lover in the heat of July. It wasn't a bad place if you don't mind a little paranoia. We could always mess up the second bed to pretend someone had slept in it or for a little diversion would sit in the john and read the various advertisements, complete with room numbers, listed on the wall.

But this is New York with a movement going on and with things to be done, so I found myself at the edge of Central Park with about eighty others waiting to see what would happen. All the regulars were there as Bob Ruecker, noted for his costuming, came into the park. As usual he had outdone himself by wearing tiny hot pants and a gay power T-shirt combination. The blue eye shadow made his lids stick out from behind the several tons of powder which covered the rest of his face. The finishing touch was a rather

## Kiss-In Staged by Young Men

large round handbag of the type tourists are said to tote half way around the world.

After the usual delay Bob, along with Morty Manford, walked arm in arm into the West Side YMCA and asked for a double room. The clerk was a bit taken aback, but began to fill out the forms. Bob wasn't about to take such cooperation without a fight. "Where's the gay bars," he asked after planting a kiss on his beautiful comrade. "Sorry, I don't live around here. Here's your key." Escalation was clearly in order so I walked Jim Owles and Arnie Kantrowitz. Not only

did they ask for rooms but they also pointed out that they had every intention of making it together. Nothing deflates a zap as quickly as cooperation; when they too received their keys the situation began to look desperate. Arthur Bell quickly went to the Public Relations Office to tell them what was happening. The lone person in the office, a Y employee, simply shrugged his shoulders, thanked Arthur for the information and went back to work. By now the rest of us had entered the lobby, given off a gay power chant, and proceeded down to the cafe-

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## ZSA ZSA WALKS IN ON NUDE BOYS

Dayton, Ohio The oft-married Zsa Zsa Gabor recently checked into a Dayton hotel and found two naked men in her bed. Furious, the actress stormed out of the hotel and checked into another nearby.

The desk clerk had assigned the star, who was in Dayton for a summer stock appearance, what he thought was an empty room. Two young men had found the room empty and unlocked and decided to put it to use. When the actress and her hairdresser unlocked the door and switched on the lights, they found the bed occupied by "two naked boys," Miss Gabor said. "I was petrified. It was scary."

The hotel's manager got rid of the twosome and tried to make amends to



the actress by putting the legend, "We Love You Zsa Zsa," on the hotel's marquee. He also sent her some flowers. Miss Gabor, still outraged, declared the manager "worse than an ex-husband. He sent me white mums, which are for dead people."

## ANTONY GREY RESIGNS FROM BRITISH GROUP

London, England Antony Grey, the barrister and journalist who served as Executive Secretary of the British Homosexual Law Reform Society/Albany Trust since 1964, has resigned. In a letter to Dick Leitsch (who also joined the homosexual movement in 1964 and recently resigned), Mr. Grey wrote, "Like

you, I have found that eight years at a stretch is more than enough . . . increasing tiredness and escalating problems (not least money), led to my resignation."

Mr. Grey was internationally renowned for his zealous work in pushing the homosexual law reform bill through Parliament and for his many published articles and international lecture tours. His most recent visit to America was two years ago when he made a coast-to-coast tour, lecturing and appearing on radio and television shows under the sponsorship of One, Inc.

When homosexual law reform became a reality with the passage of the Sexual Offences Act on July 27, 1967, the bill's sponsor, Lord Arran, paid tribute to Mr. Grey on the floor of Parliament. After

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# WHERE WILL YOU GO TONIGHT?

## A DIRECTORY FOR DISCRIMINATING DISPOSITIONS

### New York Night Spots Drink, Eat And Be Merry!

**THE BARREL INN**, 568 North Avenue, bet. 41 & 42 Sts. (563-8212) Basic, as is its cory name implies, and usually lively. Some hustlers looking for the tired businessman, but a good mix of people. GM.

**THE BEADED BAG**, 215 First Ave., bet. 52 & 53 Sts. Originally a chibby chaser's bar, now mixing all gay male types. Manager Sonny Trenchy has redecorated and now serves fine gourmet Italian food (prix fixe) in addition to super drinks.

**THE BIG SPENDER**, 315 W. 48 St., just west of 8th Ave. (586-9889) Very popular for before and after theatre drinking, but basically a watering spot for the gay theatrical crowd, this is where you'll find that gorgeous hunk who's three-from-left in the chorus line. GM

**BON SOIR**, 46 W. 8th St. bet. 6th Ave. & St. George (473-9859) Charming palace overlooking the lovely young ladies. Also known as "a bit of San Juan in old New York." GM

**BONNIE & CLYDE'S**, 82 W. 3rd St. bet. Sullivan & Thompson Sts. (GR 3-9304) Big dance floor, Monday movies, Sunday brunches. Mostly gay. GM

**CANDLELIGHT LOUNGE**, 309 Amsterdam Ave. bet. 74 & 75 Sts. (874-9607) One of the "landmark" bars that's been around forever. Neighborhood crowd, a bit cliquish, but fun once you break the ice. GM

**THE CANDY STORE**, 44 W. 56th St. bet. 5 & 6 Aves. (581-4654) Piano bar, popular particularly with out-of-towners because of its long history and international reputation. "Sit-and-be" requirement no longer stringently enforced. GM

**CARR'S**, 104 W. 10th St. (255-9742) Where Village goes to get away from the invading hordes from Great Neck and Staten Island. This place is to Village residents what the neighborhood pub is to a Londoner. GM

**CHARADE**, 1800 Second Ave. at 93rd St. Where Black is beautiful, the age to be young, the food and music is soul and the dancing is outrageous! GM, mostly.

**CHIPP'S**, Columbus Ave. bet. 66 & 67 Sts. A pleasant bar/restaurant/sidekick club close to Lincoln Center. Mixed, but the bar is getting gay and gay. GM

**CHRISTOPHER'S END**, 180 Christopher St. Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor gay partisans nor Federal raids can depress this indomitable gay club. It's back in business, now with gay cabaret shows. GM

**COUNTRY COUSIN**, 1313 Third Ave. bet. 75 & 76 Sts. (879-6614) The "in" eatery for the gay set. Excellent food, fine liquor and all the beautiful people you could want to see. GM, some GF

**DAMON & PYTHIAS**, 105 W. 13th St. bet. 6 & 7 Aves. One of the smarter Village-area dining-drinking-dancing palaces. GM

**DANNY'S**, 139 Christopher St. (929-9321) An old landmark that's seen better days but still draws the business. GM (See also: New Danny's.)

**DIRTY EDNA'S SCOREBOARD**, 264 W. 46th St. at 8th Ave. (265-9077) The ads say "If you're elegant or pretentious, you won't score with us," but the word is out that everybody makes it at Dirty Edna's. GM

**THE EAGLE'S NEST**, 111th Ave. & 21st St. They won't let you in if you're not wearing leather or western gear. If you manage to slip in, they won't serve you. GM, super-studs only. FEDORA'S, 239 W. 4th St. (CH 2-9691) The only place to eat in the Village. Excellent food, "family" atmosphere. After your second or third visit, Fedra and the waiters treat you like a rich uncle. GM & GF

**FINALE**, 48 Barrow Street (CH 3-7538) Another famed gay eatery in the Village. GM & GF

**FRESIDE INN**, 411 W. 24th St., just west of 9th Ave. (WA 4-0665) Fine restaurant, good bar with dancing from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. Popular with the chic Chelsea set.

**THE FOUR SEASONS**, 99 E. 52nd St. The grand ones cruise the bar-cautiously, as the place is integrated. GM

**FRANCIS**, 115 MacDougal St. bet. 3rd & Brecker (at the Cafe Wha). Free admission, light show, dancing. Soda bar open 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. GM

**GAY DOGS**, 180 Christopher St. A 24-hour sidewalk-cafe snacker. Near the trucks so you can satisfy one hunger after taking care of the other. Mostly GM

**GERALDINE'S**, 36 W. 48th St. bet. 5th & 6th Aves. (265-2291) New gay cabaret features dinner, dancing, entertainment and drinking. Popular piano bar. GM

**GIANNI'S**, 53 W. 19th St. (675-9809) A dancing bar for women ONLY. GF

**GOLD BUG**, 83 W. 3rd St. (677-9874) A dancing bar popular with the every young set. It has everything: shows, buffets, door prizes, the works. GM

**GOLD RAIL**, 2850 Broadway (MO 2-4704) Restaurant and bar, hang-out for Columbia students and (way) uptown gay set. Mixed straight & gay.

**HARRY'S BACK EAST**, 1422 Third Ave. bet. 85 & 81 Sts. (249-6991) What can you say about a bar that's been the City's most popular place for more than five years? Go—even on Monday nights when all the other places are dying. This one is always busy. GM

**HEAT WAVE**, 131 West 3rd St. (GR 5-9325) No longer a gay bar, this one's turned into a straight strip club with a gimmick. That's the miserable pudgy Robert Camp Queen of the Drag Set, and the fabulous Mr. Tony Winters.

**THE HIPO-DROME**, 165 Avenue "A," bet. 10 & 11 Sts. (228-9984) The gay center of the Lower East Side and haven for the young, radical chic set. GM

**THE HOT LINE**, 1544 2nd Ave. bet. 80 & 81 Sts. (734-8863) Popular gay supper club—with phones on each table so you can cruise sitting down. Dancing and live entertainment nightly. GM, some GF

**JIMMY RAY'S**, 729 8th Ave. (582-9507) A neighborhood bar-restaurant in a gay/theatrical district. Not terribly cruising, and not really gay, but lots of fun. Int.

**JULIUS**, 159 W. 10th St. at Waverly Place (929-9672) Popular, possibly because of its international reputation as the young set's gay bar. Back in the mid-1960's the owners sought a landmark case that helped establish the present equality of gay bars. GM

**KELLY'S**, 3rd West St. (near Christopher) (CH 3-1907) The mother and father of New York's leather bars; the Landmarks Commission ought to put a plaque on the front of it. Still popular with the congenial. GM

**KOOKIE'S**, 149 W. 14th St. (242-9226) New York's longest-running lesbian bar. It has a national reputation, and is the first stop for immigrants from whatever is on the other side of the Hudson. Hence, it's the only place for girls to find girls who haven't been toughened by New York. GF only.

**LEO'S LION**, 57 Lexington Ave. at 25th St. (865-9608). Paul is your host at this charming, and very friendly, "neighborhood pub." Reasonable prices. GM

**LUIGI II**, 104 W. 13th St. (929-9568) Intimate dining in the Village area. The pleasant piano bar provides background for cruising, chatting or just listening. GM

**MALE BOX**, 1716 Second Ave. Intimate bar, dancing, and dining with that East Side charm. GM

**MARC EAST**, 213 E. 46th St. bet. 1 & 2 Aves. (355-9180) Lovely and lively new dance palace with all sorts of inducements: new faces, free buffets Mon. thru Thurs. and Wed. night drawings for a free weekend at Fire Island. GM

**MENEMSHA BAR**, Hotel Marlton, 132 E. 57th St. at Lexington. Live over-30 crowd retreats when the Youth Culture gets too cloying. GM

**NEW DANNY'S**, 140 7th Ave. South bet. Charles & W. 10th Sts. (691-8373) The only really "in" place in the Village for afternoon drinking. Dancing nightly. GM

**NEW JIMMY'S**, 1576 3rd Ave. bet. 88 & 89 Sts. (860-4509) Another GREAT gay restaurant. Quiet elegance, excellent service and truly fine food. GM

**NINE PLUS SOCIAL CLUB**, 149 W. 21st St. (924-9387) Private club, exclusively for lovers of leather and western gear. GM only.

**OLD VIC**, 309 E. 60th St. (832-9049) Very friendly dance palace with intimate atmosphere. Most popular with the classic Latin set. GM

**ONE POTATO**, 518 Hudson St. at 10th St. (691-6260). Very friendly bartenders dispense the drinks at this reasonably-priced restaurant/bar. Good food, too. GM & GF, neighborhood straight.

**THE PAINTED PONY**, 1485 Third Ave. at 84th St. (744-9380) Live entertainment at the piano bar, friendly crowd, good drinks. What more could you want? GM

**PAULA'S**, 64 Greenwich Ave. (691-3360) A lesbian lounge on The Street. Kind-hearted Paula will even sell a drink to a thirsty male. GF, some GM

**PAULINE'S INTERLUDE**, 2267 7th Ave. at 135th St. A Harlem landmark before most of us were born. Mixed, but widely-known as a gay-male watering spot.

**PICADILLY PUB**, 324 Amsterdam Ave. bet. 75 & 76 Sts. (874-8632) One of the newer and busier Upper West Side bars. Lately it seems to have become headquarters for very tall gay males which has given it the neighborhood nickname, "Seignior National Park." GM

**PEPY'S PLACE**, 153 W. 48th St. (265-9792) It's gay in the evenings and a hard-hat hang-out

during the daylight hours. The hard-hats may love you but the day bartender won't. GM

**THE ROUNDTABLE**, 151 E. 56th St. (758-0310) Dancing to live rock bands, entertainment and all types of gay males. Some say it's like going to heaven. GM

**THE ROYAL ROOST**, 28 Cortland St. (CH 2-9557) Small, excellent restaurant with tiny bar. The friendly ambience reminds one of what the Village must have been like before... Int., mostly GM

**STAGE 48**, 305 E. 45th St. (532-0290) Young, hip (racially) integrated crowd. The dancing's so good that it's almost as much fun to watch as it is to participate. GM

**THE SQUIRE'S NOOK**, 18 E. 13th St. off 5th Ave. (255-4746). This luxurious bar/restaurant advertising itself "for peasants with money" may bring back elegance. Lunch: 11:30-3 p.m.; dinner 5-10 (midnight on Saturday). GM

**THE STRIPED SHIRT**, 1393 2nd Ave. bet. 72 & 73 Sts. (861-3450) Good restaurant and delightful bar. Relaxed atmosphere for conversation and getting acquainted. Reservations required for dinner. GM

**THE [INTERNATIONAL] STUD**, Greenwich & Perry Sts. 50¢ beer and hordes of gorgeous numbers make this an excellent pick-up place. The raids on the near-by "orgy" bars should heighten the closing-time panic. GM

**TAMBURLAINE**, 148 E. 48th St. near Lex. (PL 1-0030) The current "in" spot. (You may have to wait in line to get in on weekends.) Gay men and women, including many of those elusive lovely lesbians who, like rare orchids which bloom once in a decade, materialize for a few weeks before disappearing for several seasons. Dancing. GF & GM

**THIS N' THAT**, 221 Columbus Ave. at 70th St. TR 4-9107 A new gay bar, one of the few (maybe the only) that foisted its facade for Gay Pride Week. For that alone it deserves your support. GM

**THREE**, 314 E. 72nd St. at 2nd Ave. (734-9303). The popular kitchen is closed for the summer, and the delightful intimate bar is now the social center for East Side lesbians. GF, some GM

**TIMOTHY'S**, 28th St. & Lexington Ave. New, said to be busy and filled with fun people. GM

**THE TOOL BOX**, 507 West St. at Jane (889-9498) It began as a leather lounge and grew; now it gets all types. That alone makes it fascinating. GM

**TROUBADOR**, 1078 1st Ave. bet. 58 & 59 Sts. (755-1955) A justly popular East Side spot for drinking, chatting and dining. GM

**TWELFTH NIGHT**, 281 W. 12th St. corner of W. 4th Intimate, very friendly bar presided over by Billy. They give marvelous champagne brunches on Sundays. Int.

**UNCLE CHARLIE'S**, 1049 Lexington Ave. at 75th St. (861-6132) A friendly, always-crowded, and very cruzzy bar. GM

**VICTOR'S QUARTERS**, 984 2nd Ave. This place usually gets a mixture, but not senile, clientele which causes managers of the Counter Culture to shriek and run away. This places the Victor's Quarters set. GM

**THE WESTSIDER**, 2160 Broadway at 76th St. (SU 7-9791) New and exciting Upper West Side center with dining room and bar on the ground floor, beer bar and game room downstairs. Brian and Frank dispense the drinks and the charm. GM

**WILLIE'S WEST SIDE**, 224 W. 82 St. east of Broadway (874-9833) A crowded, very friendly, dance bar where Blacks, Latins and Whites meet and mingle under the pensive eyes of the West Side Liberal set. GM

**YUKON**, 140 E. 53rd St. bet. Lex. & 3rd. (421-8122) Where the older set gathers and the Midnight Cowboys come to score. GM

**THE ZODIAC**, 1487 1st Ave. at 77th St.

Dancing and live entertainment on the chic East Side. Rather young set. GM, some GF

## The Baths

**THE BEACON BATHS**, 227 East 45th Street (687-0322). Take the elevator to 11th floor. Features: New Observation Deck overlooking Manhattan's fabulous skyline, Sauna, Wet steam room, Plastic lounge, color TV, snack lounge, dormitory and private rooms. As a special public service, the management conducts a free and confidential V.D. clinic every Wednesday between 3 pm and 8 pm. in the heart of Mid-Manhattan. Popular public relations director Walter Kent works hard to make Beacon a best buy. Highly recommended by John Francis Hunter in "The Gay Jinxer." Open 24 hours.

**THE CLUB BATHS**, Inc. 24 First Ave. bet. 1st & 2nd Sts. (672-3283) A most lavish bath house. Four floors, features: large sauna, beautiful double steamroom, carousel shower, whirlpool bath, swimming pool fed by natural springs, exercise room, dormitory section, beautiful TV lounge, game room & backyard summer patio for sunbathing. Great music, lighting & carpeting throughout. Good afternoons & evenings. Students half price every day with student cards. Open 24 hours. Best Buy. GM

**THE CONTINENTAL BATHS**, 230 W. 74th (799-2488) The place that revolutionized the tub business in America. Features: Live entertainment Fri., Sat. & Sun.; restaurant facilities open 24 hours, complete gym (with instructor three times a week), Olympic-sized pool, steam rooms, saunas, TV lounge, futuristic lounge downstairs with dancing, massage, V.D. clinic, roof deck for summer sunbathing, private rooms, dormitory, you name it, they probably have it. Open 24 hours. Students half-price with student cards. GM

**THE CONTINENTAL SAUNA CLUB**, 111 West 56th St. Operated by the Continental Bath house. Elegant, but on a less grand scale than the "mother church" on 74th Street. Still a best buy. GM

**EVERARD**, 28 West 28th Street (684-6235) Left over from before the "revolution," Everard stands as an example of what Continental saved us from. It's dingy, the wallpaper is peeling, and all it has going for it is a fine steam room. GM

**ST. MARK'S BATHS**, 6 St. Mark's Place (473-7929). Low rates for rooms and lockers. This ancient building is the birthplace of James Fenimore Cooper. Recent improvements signal management's belated desire to keep up with the times. Open 24 hours. GM

**SAUNA BATHS AND HEALTH CLUB**, 300 W. 54th St. (above Chgo's) (PL 3-6880) A smaller spot which encourages "togetherness." The Sauna closes at midnight, and does its best business from 4:30 in the afternoon until 10 or 11, as the midtown junior executives stop in to knock off a piece on the way home. Doesn't offer much in the way of facilities, and therefore directs everybody's attention to the main thing. GM

### WOMEN'S TALK GROUPS

Thursday evenings (6:30 p.m.) women are meeting at the Gay Activities Alliance Firehouse (99 Wooster Street, two blocks south of Houston) for discussions on topics of interest to women.

The Daughters of Bilitis is also open to women interested in meetings, dances and feminist workshops. DOB is located at 111 Prince Street (at West Broadway). Phone: 475-9870.



# The Editors Speak



CALIFORNIA: HERE WE COME!

It's taken us a while, but we've finally arrived! Now GAY is grounded in the Golden State; a new home, new faces, new friends. The fresh air, the beaches, and the relaxed easy-going styles of the West Coast are a welcome sight to GAY's pioneers. We've been cooped up in Manhattan's dark towers for too long, and a drive on the Big Sur is just what the doctor ordered for our pasty faces.

If you are now among GAY's West Coast readers, we welcome you, just as you have welcomed GAY, in a spirit of joy... which is what gay liberation is all about, isn't it?

You won't find many long faces in GAY's pages. In spite of the fact that the world sometimes seems to be falling to pieces, we still find time to laugh while we do what we can to hold it together.

Until now, GAY has been East Coast oriented. No more. We are calling on every talent, on every literary genius who has orange juice in his veins, to brighten GAY's pages with California sun. Let's hold hands across the rolling bosoms and flat chests of America, bouncing reflective gaiety from coast to coast.

### A LITTLE SUNSHINE AT THE YMCA

Ah, yes, the Y. The best thing Christianity ever produced. The only place where one can re-energize oneself with a Sunday morning Christian breakfast after a sleepless, deliciously sensual Saturday night spent—not out on the town—but in one's own room. The only hotel system in America whose showers run endlessly, and where patrons are always getting off—for some odd reason—on the wrong floors. And, lest we forget, the Y was the one-time rendezvous of LBJ's one-time aide, whose clumsy indiscretions were broadcast coast to coast during election time.

Certainly no hotel chain provides fun-palaces of comparable quality. But the Y is misnamed, isn't it? Are the men young? Are they Christian? Well, at least they're associating... yes, they are doing that.

We do wonder, as must many of GAY's readers, whether the Y is nearly as oppressive as some militants would have us believe. We all know people who've been thrown out—whose names have gone on strange records, and who've been told never to return again. But we also know that the Y, in many cities, has properly turned the other way while thousands of young men humped and pumped blissfully in their rooms, careful not to make noise, of course, but happy and content nevertheless. Perhaps there is oppression of sorts, and if so, it should be dealt with. But the most recent zap of the Y by GAA members gave little evidence of Leviticus' crazy spirit, or St. Paul's harsh condemnations. In fact, we know, and the Y knows, that without homosexual patrons, its entire hotel system might very well collapse.

The Young Men's Christian Association provides, in many smaller cities, the only reasonable alternative to Turkish baths. Surely there are more oppressive institutions which deserve our condemnation and our righteous indignation first. GAY thanks the Y, which is, as its ad in the Village Voice points out, "Where the Action Is."

# GAY

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# NEW YORK "VIRTUE" CAMPAIGN ESCALATES

New York, N.Y. The city-sponsored campaign to "clean up" Times Square has spread to other boroughs and parts of Manhattan. The New York city courts have joined in the campaign to put prostitution, pornography and sex out of business. Citing pictures showing the seduction of a boy and bestiality, Judge William E. Ringel declared the illustrated version of *The Presidential Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography* to be "obscene."

Judge Ringel's decision is important in that it held legal textual material does not protect "obscene" pictures in publication. The District Attorney's office hailed the decision, noting that it will enable the D.A. to bring charges against some 20 other publications the city hopes to put out of business.

It is rumored that "Gay Party" and "Gay Power," two homosexually-oriented papers that specialize in erotic fiction and photos, are on the D.A.'s list of publications to "get."

Judge Ringel based his decision on the opinions of the three-judge court which ruled last March 22 that SCREW is "obscene." In that case, the judges held that the advertising in that paper appealed to the prurient interest and made the whole paper "obscene" despite its other content and virtues.

One of the judges in the SCREW case, Joel J. Tyler, was License Commissioner during the big "clean-up" of 1966. The over-all supervisor of that anti-vice drive, known as "Operation New Broom," was James L. Marcus, later Water Commissioner, and still later imprisoned for dealing with organized crime and taking bribes.

### VICE IN THE VILLAGE

Some see the recent raids on Greenwich Village after-hours and "orgy" bars as an effort to extend the Times Square clean-up to the Village, rather than the "crack-down on organized crime" the raids claimed. *The Village Voice*, which has often spearheaded campaigns against gay bars, street cruising, and other gay activities in the Village has been front-paging stories which seek to connect gay life and organized crime.

One seasoned Voice watcher noted that the paper's editor, Mary Perrot Nichols, has "dropped her campaign of vilification of Mayor Lindsay to personally command the forces of clean-ups" in the area.

To date the Voice's campaign has been limited to alleged "underworld" influences in the Village gay scene and charges of drug-selling and other illegal conduct. "However," the observer predicted, "it is only a matter of time until the Voice campaign is expanded. That paper is very puritanical; already they're considering dropping model and massage parlor ads. Don't be surprised to see a demand for an investigation of all gay bars and a drive against street cruising."

### PROTECT KIDS FROM KNOWLEDGE OF GAY LIFE

Brooklyn's Judge Jack Misher let stand a ban against Piri Thomas' book, *Down These Mean Streets*, which had been removed from school libraries by the local school board in Flushing. The book, which deals with the harsh realities of life in Spanish Harlem, was found offensive because it contains "obscene" words and descriptions of homosexual acts.

The parent-teacher's association in that school district had asked Judge Misher to lift the board's ban of the book on the ground that Mr. Thomas' book was a realistic account of urban ghetto life and contributed to the children's education about the real world.

### GAYS ANGRY AND BITTER

"CONSENSUAL SODOMY" ARRESTS

In Manhattan, plainclothesmen from the Public Morals Squad invaded five midtown theatres featuring live sex shows and arrested six women and two men on charges of public lewdness. Two were also charged with consensual sodomy and obscenity. Only performers were arrested; patrons and owners of the theatres were allowed to go. At the same time, a topless massage parlor in Queens was being raided.

"We know where GAA is," snapped back a willowy out-of-drag drag queen with puffed eyebrows. "They're down at their dummed firehouse, hoping all the bars get raided so we have to go to their silly dances."

Several organization spokesmen said they decided not to get involved in the current raids because the patrons were not harassed and the places were closed, not for being gay centers, but for technicalities such as the management not having a \$56 Federal tax stamp.

### HURTS TOURISM

Meanwhile, the city's vital tourist industry has suffered from the moral crusade to stamp out vice. Tourism here fell by 20% in July, the month the

# The Cruising Photographer

QUESTION:

What's your favorite cruising place?



Jaroslav Grisecek, Brooklyn

"Due to egregious competition and excessive activity in Manhattan, I prefer the bucolic aura of the more serene boroughs. For example, the underrated borough of Brooklyn, with a population of 300,000—not all of whom center their lives around the Village—offers the area below the boardwalk at the very end of Ocean Parkway, not far from the amusement park at Coney Island, after 11 p.m. Daytime activities in the summer are sometimes really festive in the swamps across from Marine Park along Avenue U. The Staten Island Ferry (still five cents) is a favorite gathering place

for all kinds of people, many of them eager to see more of the city, as is the Bronx Zoo, the promenade at Brooklyn Heights, or the sands at Bay 2, Riis Park. But actually, I rarely cruise—I can't hack all the Death-in-Venice timidity and temerity, all the brazen ego-tripping and daring and staring. Lately, I've been enjoying the Firehouse, for the chance it affords to meet people and not challenge them."



Vicki Sarafino, Valley Stream, L.I.

"As far as cruising places for women go, there aren't any. Usually women meet at work or on the beach, but occasionally women know each other from childhood. It is a totally different scene with women. Women have to know each other for a while before any cruising is done. After a friendship is established it develops into an affair. Very rarely will cruising be done except in women's bars. There is always a bad taste in women's bars such as Kooky's. They give a bad image of women homosexuals because of the type of people that go there."



John Wright, Manhattan:

"My favorite place is a bar. I am most comfortable at bars and find meeting people somewhat easier than on the streets or at the trucks. You have a chance to get to know someone a little bit better at a bar, so that when you get them home you may not be upset with the individual that you had become interested in. I have met some really fantastic people at the bars, including my first, second, and present lovers. So, good luck, brothers and sisters, like I have had."

# The Randy Wicker Basket

Randy Wicker is currently in Europe, and his columns, for the next few weeks, will cover the European scene.



BY RANDY WICKER

The nicest thing about Paris is how it makes you realize how inexpensive life in New York really is.

Cups of coffee cost 55¢ or more at most sidewalk cafes. Of course if you stand up inside, a tiny cup of *café au lait* only sets you back 25- or 30¢. And for another dollar you can get the thinnest sliced meat this side of Saigon meagrely tucked into a roll.

Even simple habits are expensive. A package of chewing gum is 15¢. A beer in an ordinary bar runs a dollar but the gay bars charge two. If you aren't a street-walker when you arrive in Paris, you are by the time you leave.

And all this without the luxuries of syndicate bars and fat grey-faced goons guarding the door.

Of course, if nature calls, you can check into a toilette. In each an elderly lady greets you at the door. Men and women enter together, then after plunking down the French equivalent of ten American cents, the women go into a little row of stalls on one side of the big room and the men go into those on the other. You haven't lived until you've elbowed your way into the toilette with a bunch of paunchy matrons and their screaming brats.

Of course, those desiring native experiences can line up around one of the circular metal *pissoirs* on the street. Each handles about two at a time, judging by the number of ankles showing beneath the sides of the steel shells. For the novice, such an experience offers all the vicarious thrill of pissing against a convenient wall while throngs of people pass behind.

Gay life in Paris is concentrated around the St. Germaine Church and Square. It's all in keeping with those traditions one discovers in South and Central American countries—when you're new in town and it's too small to have a gay bar, cruising almost invariably takes place on the steps or in the park in front of the local cathedral.

The populations of mother countries always seem to absorb some population from their colonies. England has lots of Indians. France has lots of Vietnamese and Algerians. Gays must tend to emigrate to the mother countries. What gay young stud without a family holding him down wouldn't leave Saigon for Paris or Algeria for France? Anyway, if gay Vietnamese or Algerian exiles are your cup of tea, then Paris will be your meat. Couldn't wait to get a Vietnamese and make love not war myself, but the fates being what they are, I tumbled into bed with a gay Vietnamese in a Turkish bath but discovered afterwards I'd been doing the ying ying with a Japanese fashion designer. The pitfalls of tourism!

Baths in Paris are fairly reasonable. Compared to the rest of gay life, they are super bargains. The gay guides claim "hustlers ask and get \$100 a night in Paris" but poor folks can check into any of the local baths for just four dollars.

There aren't private rooms. At the Tierns baths, the largest and best, orgy rooms abound but the industrious can find semi-private cubicles and nook and crannies upstairs. A good third of the



bath clientele is Algerian-Arab.

In smaller spas like the baths in the Rue Dauphine, there are only four of five small rooms, each containing two bunk-type sauna decks, putting you in an "S" position. It makes for some strange positions.

Parisians all speak of how small the gay scene is in Paris as compared with those in Amsterdam and London. Paris is a later town than London. The subways run until 12:30 and bars stay open late, not closing at 11:00 as they do in London. The only things that close early in Paris are the baths. They close at 10:00 or 10:30 in the evening.

Paris has its "sex shops" and a 42nd Street-like area called Pigalle. Gay offerings in erotica stores are very limited compared to the profusion of homosexual erotica found in New York and Amsterdam.

Although consenting homosexual acts between adults are legal in France, there is at least one gay lib group called Arcadie which has been going some time. Laws are one thing and social attitudes are another. Young Frenchmen horsing around with one another display the same disparaging anti-homosexual biases found in the

states and elsewhere. Homo libre?

A final note, as of July 1st, a law passed by the New York City Council required cable TV stations to broadcast a certain amount of public service programming produced by non-commercial sources.

Previously, no half-inch tapes had been aired because they were technically poor compared to standard broadcast video. Various groups were encouraged to submit tapes and on the first day's programming, a video tape of the engagement party thrown at the New York City Marriage License Bureau by the Gay Activists Alliance was included.

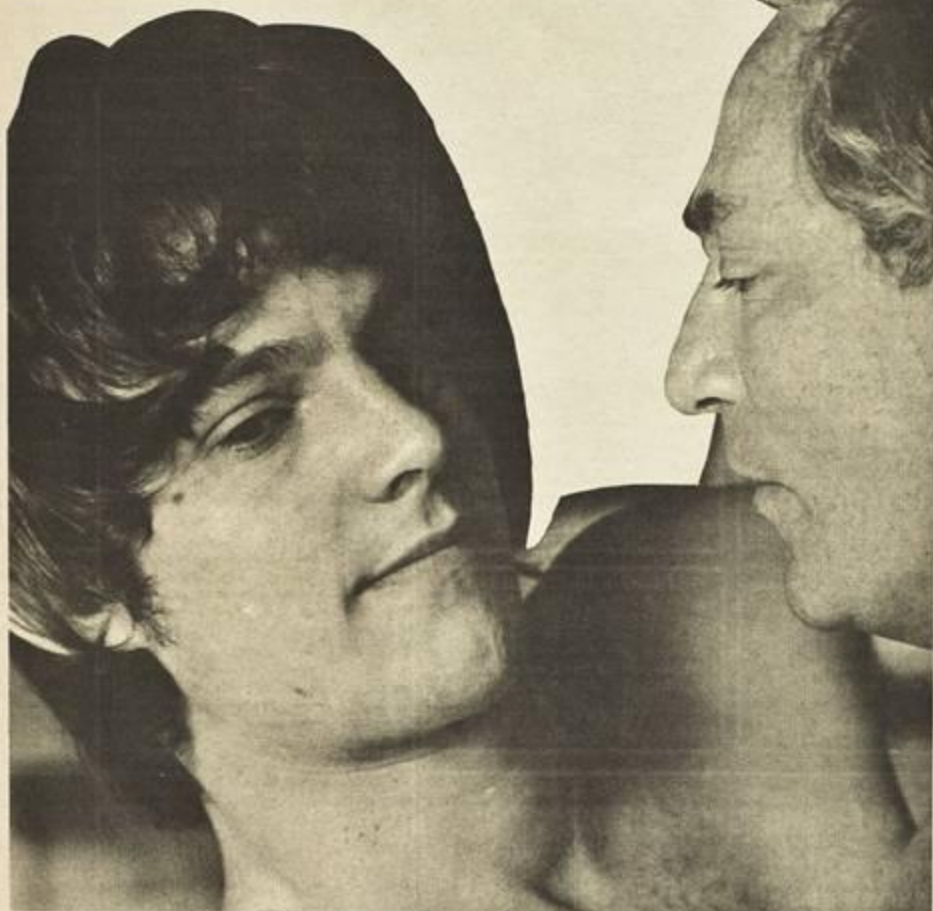
This tape in effect was put on the air by city pressure operating through an office called "Free Time." In effect, one branch of city government helped put a tap on the air of a protest directed against another branch of that ever-growing bureaucracy by GAA.

It was a refreshing change to see gay groups included in that broad-community spectrum of programming. Little things like this are the stepping stones to gay liberation. At last reports, the West Village planning council had suggested to some GAA people that a gay representative be included on that group's board. However, some GAA people felt there were insinuations of "strings attached" to the overture since someone had said something to the effect of "provided of course you don't have any more riots."

If GAA did indeed decline, it was a step backward. Gay representation in the arts, on TV, on local planning and governing boards, in local political groups, etc., is part and parcel of "equality."

And finally, this may be too late, but the David Susskind Show is planning to rebroadcast the dreary and boring bout between various gay activists and the aesthetic realists. Seems boring content doesn't matter. The show got good ratings, and that is all that counts in show biz.

# SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY!



Murray Head and Peter Finch in "Sunday, Bloody Sunday!"

BY THANE HAMPTEN

After the Sex & Sadism, what? I've been pondering this a great deal lately. It's all so asinine, really. Cinema striving to hold its own against Televisia with the only turf it can still claim: exploration of taboos. Only, as I have been indicating in the recent past, we are rapidly running out of taboos. Incest will probably hold its time-honored place for a while longer, at least in Western culture, but one supposes that is because it lacks the quintessential allure of other naughtiness—(unless you happen to have been separated from an extremely handsome and well-hung older brother for many years. But that's another story.)

Dear, dying cinema. Almost as dead as theatre, and taking almost as long in the process of expiration. And who cares? Godard fans? Beaver-flick fans? You're aware that we are entering the TV cassette age, aren't you? Oh, goodie! For at least the first whole year after you purchase your equipment you'll make a complete video-taped record of each Saturday night's hump. On cold winter Monday evenings you can play and replay that torrid three hours with passionate, dark little Jaunite. No commercials, no sagging Doris Day, no irritating FCC rulings, no dull stretches. But that's also another

story.

In the meantime, we must content ourselves with what the wide screen has left to offer that the small screen still denies. Sex & Sadism and an awful lot of lesbian vampires. I appreciate the desire and necessity of competition, but come on, fellas, this is getting ridiculous. The backlash will soon be upon us. And it's not a question of morals, at least not with my friends or myself. I am simply weary of gratuitous sex scenes; hand-held cameras pointlessly shoved up the first non-descript twat in sight; the schoolboy leer stuck smugly on the face of the middle-aged purveyor. "I'm pleasing the hell out of you with my raunchy inserts, ain't I?" No, m'lord, you are not. Judith Crist and I have had our fill.

Back in the late '30's, when the public (that inconsequential protoplasm) had had quite enough of Ruby and Dick's campus tippy-tapoe thank you, the frantic studios began pasting flyers over movie ads: "This is not a musical!" *The Singing Marine*, and its eight hundred sequels, was one of the industry's first real errors in judging audience levels of intelligence and tolerance. It would be far from the last boner. And it is time for me to respectfully submit that we drop the present ineffectually vacillating code ratings and simply label each film *Leer* or *Non-Leer*.

Example? Yes, of course I came prepared with a candidate for the first gen-

uinely adult *Non-Leer*. (We all have our lists of fatuous *Leer* pictures.) Beginning with this film, I would like to hear a great deal about *The New Maturity* in Films. *Sunday, Bloody Sunday* is about to hit town. No, that doesn't sound accurate. Rephrase. It is about to gently and subtly make itself available to you. First, let me hasten to say that the title (unless I'm missing some obscure irony) is dreadful, at least outside the United Kingdom. Even though I had returned from London only one day before seeing this film, I automatically assumed the bloody referred to gore instead of the moderately bland epithetical synonym for *damn*, of which the British are so fond. The title is a wistfully disgruntled sigh: "That damned, unnecessary Sunday." (You see, the boy leaves them on a Sunday. It's only a wretched coincidence that the dog is killed the previous Sunday. And few people are so perverse as to really care for Sundays anyway.)

It's actually rather difficult to review a film of this type. The director, John Schlesinger, has himself admitted it is without plot. It is simply a delicate, tender, and marvelously compassionate exploration of that archaic emotional state known as love. A middle-aged doctor, a divorcee, and the youth they are wise enough to share. Its theme is a quietly urgent instruction to us all: Life is a chain of compromises, a casually but irrevoca-

bly forged structure that can only be seen objectively at the time of parting, or crisis, or death. Give and take what you can, when and where you can find it, and always—with compassion. Ask no more than a reasonable share of simple happiness and reciprocal pleasure. There is no other insurance against continual disappointment; the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to.

After the electricity generated by Schlesinger's *Midnight Cowboy*, more than a few people will likely be disappointed by the lack of violent emotion in this introspective film. It is an examination of embers rather than fire. As interesting as *Cowboy* was, I would like to feel that Schlesinger ultimately realized that its basic grotesqueries robbed it of the universality that all great art must strive for. *Sunday*, while perhaps not apologetic, is certainly antidote for the previous film's monomorphic concept of depravity as the *elan vital*.

It is also the first film I have ever seen that actually and honestly treats homosexuality in precisely the same way as heterosexuality. Here, there is definitely no apology. Hetero-Homo: opposite sides of one coin; neither is more important or more valued than the other. We are all the same. We live; we die. We eat, sleep, cry, laugh, and make love. We love. Schlesinger does not seem at all concerned with the usual obligatory placation of straight sensibilities. There is no chorus line of campy swishes doing the Parody Parade, no reliance on bizarre aberration as a means to achieve quick and cheap effect. When the doctor gratefully enfolds the boy in his arms, we are concerned only with their happiness. When they rest side by side in bed, contented after sex, our own pleasure comes from hearing them simply plan the immediate next hours. They never speak of guilt or perversion. These do not exist; they are terms devoid of meaning. And we are not at all astonished to find the boy equally giving, with the woman on the floor of her apartment. We accept what is natural as natural. We are only as irritated as they by the insistent interruption of the ringing telephone. (Telephones, by the way, symbolic of the price we pay for the uglier modern "conveniences," are the only real villains of this film.) Profanity comes, sparing and reasonable. When, at the end, the boy leaves them both, escaping London for the questionably greener pastures of New York, we know that his problem is one of facing life in general, and not an isolated confusion of gender differentiation. There is no retribution for any of the protagonists, other than final self-awareness and the poignancy of

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Triangular Lover: Murray Head

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teria to spend some money and celebrate the "victory."

It really seemed as if the afternoon were going to be rather uneventful and boring. There is only one thing more certain than the ingenuity of activists—the stupidity of the establishment. Just as we were about to leave, a phone call was received from Maurice Taylor, Director of the West Side Y. He informed Rich Amato, the leader of the zap, that he did not like gays and would continue to discriminate against them. At last we had something to shout about as we returned to the lobby and sat down. As a dozen older men sat in the lounge and watched with mild interest, we went through all the normal chants and threw in a cry for Taylor's removal for good luck. Now events were going well, leaflets were placed under the doors on the upper floors and "Do Not Disturb, Homo Is Happier" signs were placed on the door knobs. One older man stuck his head out the door and told leafletter Bill Chalson, "I'm really with you, I wish this had happened when I was younger." Another resident wanted to know "Who put this queer shit under my door?" Meanwhile back in the lobby, Rich Amato and a few others were rapping with the police to set a time of departure, and castigating the head of the maintenance crew with the list of grievances prepared for the occasion. Objections were raised to reported purges and room checks and to the use of a two-way mirror in the basement john. At one point one of the more vociferous members of the group noticed that the maintenance men spoke Spanish and shouted out "chingal," which roughly translated means "fuck off." Finally another phone call set up a Monday meeting and after some picketing outside the building everyone left.

Maurice Taylor had had the opportunity of meeting gay activists before. One afternoon last May, Arthur Bell and Peter Ruffet of the Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee paid the elder-

## WILD MELEE AT THE YMCA



Gay militants in the lobby of the YMCA. "Where the Action is!"

ly Director of the Y a little visit to inquire about the possibility of his donating about a hundred rooms to house the out-of-town gays coming in for the march. Mr. Taylor didn't take them too seriously. "Homosexuality is out as far as practice here at the Y is concerned. If we catch a visitor in someone's room whom we suspect is there for homosexual practices, or if we catch someone in the act, we ask both parties to leave the Y immediately." Asked how this is done, Taylor replied, "A guard along with a witness will knock on a door. This rule is set up to prevent two people from being in a room after a certain hour when the room is retained as a single." Do they enter illegally without a search warrant? "We knock first, then enter." According to Taylor, gays could stay at the Y as long as no sex took place.

On Monday, August 9, Rich Amato and John Howard of GAA arrived at the Y for the meeting. Mr. Taylor told them that he'd only speak to one of them, as two would be a "confrontation." But the activists insisted and both entered the office. Along with Taylor was Richard May,

Operations Manager for the YMCA of Greater New York. After commenting on how upset he had been with the demonstration, Taylor allowed the group to get down to business. Rich Amato had a simple point, that hotels and motels all over the nation made no attempt to determine who was screwing whom in the privacy of their rooms; the Y was virtually a gay hotel and its residents should be treated no differently than guests of other hotels. Maurice Taylor told GAA that although discrimination had existed in the past it no longer did. When asked about the rumored two-way mirrors, Taylor admitted their existence but claimed that the Y had a perfect right to use them. What about room checks and purges? Taylor denied them. If a gay is discreet he won't be bothered; it's just the "flamboyant" ones who get into trouble. According to Rich Amato the Y apparently keeps track of how many visitors visit a room. Too many and you're in trouble. After 9 PM anyone with a visitor is required to keep his door open. According to Taylor policy is made by the Greater New York YMCA after consult-

ing with some of the members and employees; GAA maintains that a check with some of the members and employees indicates that no such consultation has ever taken place.

Richard May said little during the meeting except to challenge what GAA claims to be documented cases of discrimination, but after May left about three-quarters of the way through the ninety-minute session, Taylor admitted that in the past 15 years his file shows that a thousand men were "asked to leave" for homosexual reasons. Being an upright man, however, his conscience bothered him so he set up a psychiatric office to help those evicted. Of the thousand cases in his files only two made an appointment with the psychiatrist; one never showed up and the other walked out during the first interview. The files remain indicating the sexual preference, or the supposed sexual preference, or these thousand men. For some reason or other it never occurred to GAA that those files should be destroyed, but I guess we're getting used to being on file for everything from failing to pay bills to sexual orientation.

What will happen next remains to be seen. The editors of GAY have characterized the Y as the best thing that Christianity has ever come up with; that's probably true but there still remains the existing prying and discrimination. Maurice Taylor has assured GAA that the discrimination no longer exists but this doesn't quite square with some of his other statements, not only those of last May, but even in the meeting with GAA. He's been warned that if GAA receives any more cases of discrimination more demonstrations will follow, perhaps not quite so polite as this one. But even if no more cases are heard from there is still the matter those mirrors and the thousand names on file in the West Side Y. The zap leaflet ended with the words, "Caution: Harassment of gay people may be hazardous to your health!"

## EEKS! TRICIA NIXON IS A MAN! (Or Mrs. Cox's Cock)

BY AARON BATES

Midnight is traditionally the time when hobgoblins and other assorted freaks roam the earth. Could this be the reason that the Elgin Theatre decided to have only midnight showings of *Tricia's Wedding*, supposedly a take-off of you know who? Starring San Francisco's fabulous collection of freaks known as the "Cockettes," the movie is every bit as cheap and vulgar as one would expect it to be. Apparently produced on a \$50k budget, the grainy film gives the viewer each and every Excedrin headache number one can think of. To add to the fun, there is not a single word in sync, and in comparison, spaghetti westerns become classics of the cinema art.

The sets, if they can be called such, are a combination of early mausoleum and late Danish modern. The costumes look like the spoils won from the siege of a Salvation Army store. But the players manage to surpass all these little trifles in sheer grotesqueness. The fact that the "Cockettes," drag queens with beards or at least five o'clock shadow, have little or no talent doesn't seem to bother anyone. When making *Tricia's Wedding*, they were out for a good time and a good time is what they got, though definitely not the Glen Campbell variety. In short, *Tricia's Wedding* is a home movie, best enjoyed by those who participated in it. Anyone else had better watch out. However, if you like to hiss at the end of movies, this one was made with you in mind.

This is not to say that there aren't any humorous moments. Indeed, there are. Unfortunately, they are few and far between. The "coquette" playing Rose Kennedy sits on her ass through the entire wedding ceremony mumbling, "This is a funeral! Is this a funeral?" Or when the queen playing Jackie Kennedy Onassis (who happens to be the only legitimately good drag in sight) is asked what she thinks about returning to the White House, she cries, "O God, I don't believe it! It's so tacky!"

When asked what she thinks about the Nixons, the queen playing Liz Taylor replies, "They're a real boot!"

Among the many musical interludes, there is an act in which the Kennedy Sis-



ters—Ethel, Joan, and Jackie—belt out that old chestnut, "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree." Ethel, of course, is noticeably pregnant. Other singers include Mahalia Jackson and Coretta King. Other guests include the Pope, Ladybird Johnson, Lester Maddox, and Eartha Kitt. But the genuine showstealer is none other than the queen who portrays an extremely pissed Mamie Eisenhower, although for some strange reason she looks more like Pat Nixon than the queen impersonating Pat. At any rate, the guests manage to keep Mamie propped up during the ceremony, but when she is asked to cut some of the wedding cake, she falls on top of it. As an expert stone-faced drunk, she provides the few worthwhile moments in

what could have been an amusing satire. After the freakish wedding rites are performed, a mini-skirted Eartha Kitt decides to wake up the guests by pouring acid into the punchbowl. This has the desired effect. Mahalia Jackson brandishes a whip and proceeds to lash everyone in sight. President Nixon decides to make it with his giant teddy bear and the lovely bride Tricia gets humped by an ax handle, courtesy of Lester Maddox. The ensuing orgy doesn't disturb one bit the inebriated Mamie or the still-mumbling Rose: "Is this a funeral?" The audience is still wondering.



This reviewer also caught several plays at the Workshop of the Players Art at 333 Bowery. The first was by something or someone named William Aue and was titled *A Broken Cowboy* and subtitled *Another Greek Tragedy*. Indeed, it was broken as a play and tragic for the audience. Its sole blessing was its short length.

It starts out as two girls are woken from their slumber by a very butch lady, apparently their employer, who feels that it is time that they went to work. Exactly what their work is is never stated. At any rate, the butch lady and the two girls visit a pawnbroker and have him sign a contract in exchange for a gift he has always wanted, sort of a chandelier made of three large, stuffed aluminum balls. He is thrilled with the bargain until he discovers that his son is now owned by the butch lady because of the contract. The son is taken away and he has nothing left worthwhile but a man representing a broken cowboy on a broken horse.

The dialogue is agonizingly bad and consists of such gems of wit as the following—as the pawnbroker describes his late or ex-wife to his son, the son replies, "You make her sound like an Amazon," to which the pawnbroker answers, "After all, she was foreign." Hah hah.

### AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM

The second play was written by Josef Bush and entitled *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, a motto of the Jesuits. Holding on to the belief that the Theatre of the Absurd is still alive and functioning, Mr. Bush feeds us his own perverse blending of sex, power, and anti-religiosity. Or is the play anti-religious? Perhaps, anti-Christian would be more apt. After all, did not Satanism spring from Catholicism which sprang from just about everything? Can't there

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## Pen Points

### THE CONNECTICUT SUNDAY HERALD

Dear GAY:

I really flared up when I read William Loeb's editorial from the Connecticut Sunday Herald as reprinted in your paper (Vol. 2, Issue 55). I was disappointed that I did not read of any action on your part toward zapping this man and his newspaper (make that read "hate rag").

Your paper is just the greatest! Keep up the good work! Your/our work will not be done until we stamp out the hatred of men like Loeb and many others who would rather see the gay community caged than parading proudly up the avenues of America.

Sincerely,  
S.E.,  
N.Y.C.

ED. Note: You'll be pleased to know that the gay lib group, the Kalos Society, zapped William Loeb's birchite rag, and, the last we heard, is still giving him no little flack.

### ARTHUR BELL DEFENDS ARTHUR BELL

Dear GAY:

It's unfortunate that Sorel David, in her words, had nothing much to do over the July 4th weekend but sit around and take issue with Arthur Bell's article, *Toward A Gay Community*, in the July 1

issue of the Village Voice. Had bitter Sorel sat less, and read the article carefully, she'd have noticed that all of the quotes she attributes to my sexism were made by Sidney Abbott, writer, active in the gay women's movement.

Prescription lenses and a Hershey Bar, Sorel dear, before you "crank" out your next column.

Arthur Bell  
New York City

### ONE MAGAZINE

Dear GAY:

Your lively, well-written article about ONE hit many a nail squarely on the head, if you will pardon the phrase. Your readers might like to know that courageous, organized steps were being taken in Los Angeles 10 years earlier than the 1958 date you mention, steps aimed at giving homosexuals that sense of individual and group identity which is so needed even yet. As to a "Homosexual Manifesto," ONE's 1961 Midwinter Institute devoted 3 days of roundtable and symposiums to developing "A Homosexual Bill of Rights," in addition to 2 full semesters of class work at ONE Institute itself.

It is indeed true that ONE Magazine neither looked nor sounded like GAY and many other publications of today, but it would be a mistake to lay this to timidity or lack of awareness of the issues. The simple, legal fact was that it took ONE 4 years of costly, frightening court battles before we won the right to publish freely

about homosexuality in the U.S. Supreme Court. Prior to that, lower courts had held, the subject could be written about only in medical, psychological and other "professional" terms. Hence, today's Gay Press without exception exists because ONE made it possible for it to exist.

ONE Magazine is not necessarily "gone with the wind." What has gone is a hopelessly expensive publication which never was able to pay its costs and had to be subsidized by taking much needed funds from ONE's educational, research, social service and many other activities. Now that paid advertising (the lifeblood of any publication) is more readily available, distinct rumblings of life can be heard around ONE Magazine's files these days. The fact that ONE as a national organization, with branches now in several cities, is stronger and more vital than ever makes things more feasible than say 5 years ago.

A word on those staff names: Lorna Strayer is no longer living; Sten Russell transferred her affections to the DOB a number of years ago, but is still in friendly contact with ONE; Alison Hunter and friend moved to Australia; William (Lambert) Dorr Legg also sometimes used the pen name Hollister Barnes, and is still laboring at ONE's offices every working day, and many others besides (!); Lyn Pederson, who is also Dal McIntire, and was christened Jim Kepner, writes for the *Advocate* and many publications, also works part-time in ONE's offices quite frequently. So, the apparent diaspora is more of appearances than a reality. Undeniably, there are many who weary at

"fighting the good fight" and fall by the wayside but, essentially, the story here in LA has been one of quite steady, unbroken homosexual progress for over 20 years.

Sincerely,  
W. Dorr Legg  
ONE, Incorporated

### A SHRINK'S TWANG

Dear GAY:

My psychiatrist, who is from Vienna, and has all the degrees you need, and diplomas, plus a big twang, says he doesn't really like Americans socially—he says they're really a bit facetious.

He says he likes them sexually or "suckshually" but that socially they're a bit of a drag. (Actually I think he's a little crazy, but with his big twang, who cares!) Anyway, when he's not letting me swing on his big twang, he's advising me on current suck mores, and he says it's okay now to say you're one and also to let down both your hair and your pants when you're in a compatible suck group.

He says the suck strides we've made in the past half-decade have made sucking almost a must, even amongst formerly strictly non-sucking trade numbers. Actually I object to his over-use of the word suck, but really, with his big twang, who cares!

And he told me not to suck so hard (on his big twang), because I could develop like a Viennese complex.

He also said Vienna was never like this.  
Y.D.  
N.Y.C.



# A FRIENDLY CHAT WITH THE Y's DIRECTOR



BY LEO SKIR

3 P.M. Friday, August 6th, three hours before the GAA zap, a resident of the Y (myself, Leo Skir) went to talk to Mr. Maurice Taylor, the executive director.

I had felt that the basis of the GAA protest was not mine. The GAA felt as if a one-issue organization it would confront the Y solely on the issue of its anti-homosexual policy. I felt, still feel, that it cannot be countered so simply, that the Y's anti-sex policy must be confronted.

It was as a resident and on the basis of this question that I discussed the matter with Mr. Taylor.

At first he had been more than a little defensive, asking that I contact a Mr. Francois Skrats at City Headquarters about Y policies.

I discussed the anti-black policies that I had encountered in 1964 at the Maryland Y and asked if there was no national policy to counteract such discriminatory practices.

Mr. Taylor informed me that the Y is a federation with independent policies at a local level and that there had been changes in national policy. Now the membership is no longer labeled as 'Christian.' As for the place of blacks within the national Y framework, at the present time both the national President and Vice-President were blacks.

(Note: Mr. Taylor's background is not in theology but in sociology. He worked in criminogenic research with the Chicago Institute for Juvenile Research in the 1930's. He has been executive director of the Y since 1957.)

Re: discrimination vs. women. Mr. Taylor showed me a large tome (duplication printed), a Study of the Market in Central Manhattan by Booz, Allen and Hamilton commissioned by the Manhattan Y's, showing the Y should/must become co-ed (I did not see the contents, he summarized them). I asked Mr. Taylor about breaking the sex-barrier now at the 63rd St. Y. He said that the Y cannot presently afford renovations needed for women residents: clothing washers, hair dryers, women's locker rooms, separate stalls in the showers. At the present time there are 300 women members at the Y (vs. approximately 8000 men).

Mr. Taylor, speaking on discrimination, said that in the past his major fight has been for black representation. He noted that in the past local black leadership had sometimes been willing to settle for separate facilities, as in Plainfield, New Jersey, where he had been a Y executive. The local black leaders as late as 1952 were willing to accept separate-equal facilities. Mr. Taylor had told them if they chose this they would have to do it openly. The news of a possible separate Y had reached the NAACP which had denounced the plan and Mr. Taylor with it. Mr. Taylor had asked the Afro-American press at that time to investigate the charge against him and they had. They retracted all charges of racism against him.

And now? Now, progress meant funds and money was tight. The drug addiction program had priority. The residence had had to increase its rates. There had been a decrease in services. The new Federal tax programs affected contributions. He hoped to have women represented on the

board of the 63rd Street Y. At the present time, of the 28 members, none were women.

I told him that Arthur Bell, representing the Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee, had reported an interview with him in which he had said that he did not like homosexuals and would not hire them.

Mr. Taylor said, "I may have said it because I was so mad, but it's not true. I don't hate homosexuals and have hired people I think are homosexual. I don't know and I don't ask. I think they are, but as long as there's no homosexual activity of theirs in the building, it's no concern of mine. Their private life is their own business."

Mr. Taylor informed me at this point that he had five grandchildren.

"Do you have any homosexual friends?" I asked.

"Not that I'm aware of," he said. "Though I think some might be. But they don't bring it up."

"About gay rights," I said. "You know that in some states the legal penalties for consensual sodomy have been removed. Would you favor the legalization of homosexual acts, here, in New York?"

A moment of silence.

"The question's never come up..." he said.

"It just came up," I said. "I just asked it."

"But not as legislation—"

"Mr. Taylor, if it came up as a referendum, you were in a voting booth and had to check one box or the other, for or against, which would you check?"

"I wouldn't be interested. I wouldn't answer the question."

"You say that Mr. Bell is not correct, or that you might have said something in anger that was not reflecting the realistic situation—that you DO hire homosexuals as you hire black and Puerto Ricans—without discrimination."

"Yes."

"If someone said to you, or put down on the application they were homosexual, would you hire them?"

"There would then be the question of why they were making an issue of it, if this reflected on their ability to work."

(Note, by Leo Skir: I know several employees of the Y who are gay, have open gay associations and do not seem fearful of losing their jobs.)

"Mr. Taylor, about entrance into the Y as a resident, is there any discrimination against homosexuals?"

"If there is a certain flamboyance in dress which calls attention to the person. Extreme exhibitionism—I find that repellent."

"And in a heterosexual woman—a low-cut dress?"

"Oh no, I find that attractive."

"About dismissal, I have heard that a member was dismissed for a beefcake poster from an off-Broadway play on the wall. Do you consider this sufficient grounds?"

"The maids have to go into the rooms. We can't have them offended."

"I understand there are 2-way mirrors in some of the men's rooms. Do you know of this?"

"Yes, though I don't know if they are used. They are cheaper than having attendants. The attendants would cost \$12,000 a year for a 5 day week."

"I asked about any official relation to the large homosexual community resident at the Y. Mr. Taylor said he was quite unaware how many members were gay but that there had been Y conferences about "the problem of homosexuality" with psychiatrists talking of the "psychological basis of homosexuality." (Followed by dermatologists talking about Negro skin and its problems? Advances in skin-lightening? L.S.)

We asked what he felt his own relation to the homosexual community could be. We knew that many in the older generation cannot face the sight of blacks and whites dancing together. How would he feel if there were Y dances and boys danced with boys and girls with girls?

"I would have to overcome my feelings of repulsion."

Was he aware that such dances were being held with Church sponsorship at Columbia University and New York University?

"I would absent myself from such a dance. I don't have to like something like that—"

"Would it be so repulsive to you—?"

"It would look damn foolish. Look, I don't understand why you people have to be so public about it, make such a fuss. One of the supporters of the Y—a man who stays there when he comes through—is a prominent playwright. He gives money to the Y. I think he's homosexual but he doesn't say so and I don't ask him. Why do you people have to make a fuss? That's what I don't understand."

I spoke then of equality. I explained to him that the Y was my home as his home was his, that the tiny room I had was, had been for six months, my home, and just as he wished to do as he wished in his home, his bed—so those in the Y desired an equal freedom. Not even the other 600 resident members had any right to vote their wishes on how I should conduct myself. Much less the 800 non-resident members. They could no more vote on my sex life than they could on Mr. Taylor's.

Mr. Taylor's face reddened. He was embarrassed but not impressed. The residents of the Y were poor like myself and should accept the rules laid down by the rich who supported the Y.

Didn't I know things had always been this way? There were the rules (as in orphanages and prisons) and you obeyed the rules. They were handed out in mimeographed papers. No visitors. You could do what you liked alone in your room, so what was the trouble?

"If you are against homosexuals residents you could expell me," I said.

"We are only following the law against homosexual acts," said Mr. Taylor. "You are welcome to stay unless I and a witness observe you in homosexual acts. I wouldn't like to do that."

"Observe me or expell me?" I said.

"Both," he said.

"I think I and all the Y residents have a right to a sexual existence, as you have in your home," I said. "I think the males here should have the same rights they now have in colleges—which is the same age group. Women are allowed there in the rooms—"

"When heterosexual activity is allowed," Mr. Taylor said, smiling, "maybe I'd come out in favor of allowing homosexual activity. But I'm retiring soon. It's

5 o'clock. I have to get home to my wife—"

Two hours later the GAA zap occurred. I observed but did not join.

I saw Mr. Taylor in the hall the next Monday. He smiled a little bitterly at me and thanked me for telling him I'd let him see my writeup. "The News had it wrong," he said. "The police phoned me and asked if they should clear away the protestors. I said no, they could stay. I made an appointment with the sit-ins to see them Monday and asked them to clear the hall and let the Y go about its business."

About the 2-way mirrors, he was adamant that they were not for entrapment of gays but prevention of muggings, dope-dealing and anti-social behavior. He also added that there were no civil liberties involved (i.e., invasion of privacy) and that the Y, as a private institution, had the right to look into its own toilets.

On homosexual residents, he said the Y would not tolerate 'solicitation.'

So: there are to be two worlds. Mr. Taylor is in one, where he can speak of asking a girl for a date. That is not 'solicitation.' He can boast to his comrades of conquests, marry, invite others to joy in his union. He wears no mask. He feasts on sex openly.

I am to obey certain rules. No 'solicitation.' I am not to ask another man to sleep with me, nor is he to ask me. My 'homosexuality' is allowed outside of my bed in my own bedroom. I am not to take off my mask, not to be open about my sex as Mr. Taylor is of his. If this mask is confining, if these 'rules' (if followed) lead to sex-starvation, why do I complain?

"What is the fuss about?" Mr. Taylor asks.

Mr. Taylor seen Tuesday, August 17th, by me in his office, returned my transcript of our interview with some slight corrections.

"I saw you on the subway," he said, "I was observing you. You seemed... very dignified."

(?) What did he mean? Was I cruising someone? Goodness gracious!

I told him I'd send him any copy of the conversations published.

He told me he wouldn't correct any errors, just let it ride. "If I did, it would make too much of a fuss over the thing, enlarge it."

Then he said, "I want you to think of me as someone in transition... getting more liberal. Yes, if you keep it up, have other confrontations, Sloan House, other places, they can't sweep it under the rug as they have been doing. They'll have to take a stand one way or the other."

British public to the fact that homosexual law reform (especially the grudging, limited British reforms) didn't nearly solve all the problems of England's homosexual community.

Mr. Grey's successor is Michael De-la-Noy, a former Press Secretary to the Archbishop of Canterbury. De-la-Noy was "sacked" in June of 1970 after he wrote two magazine articles on sex which the Archbishop's underlings thought "obscene." Since taking over the Secretaryship of the H.L.R.S./Albany Trust, De-la-Noy has won international headlines by making pulp demands on the Anglican Church to recognize gay marriages as "sacramental."

BY JOHN P. LeROY

Is Gay Good? Ethics, Theology, and Homosexuality, edited by W. Dwight Oberholtzer, Westminster Press, 287 pages, paperback, \$3.50.

Every time I read a book on ethics and theology, I can't resist the temptation to play God. The above title is no exception, and I would send the editor and most of the contributors to hell. But because I am a mere mortal, the best I can do is to urge everyone who values his freedom, his personal dignity, his self-respect, and his right to love and make love to anyone he or she chooses, to avoid this book as if it were the black plague.

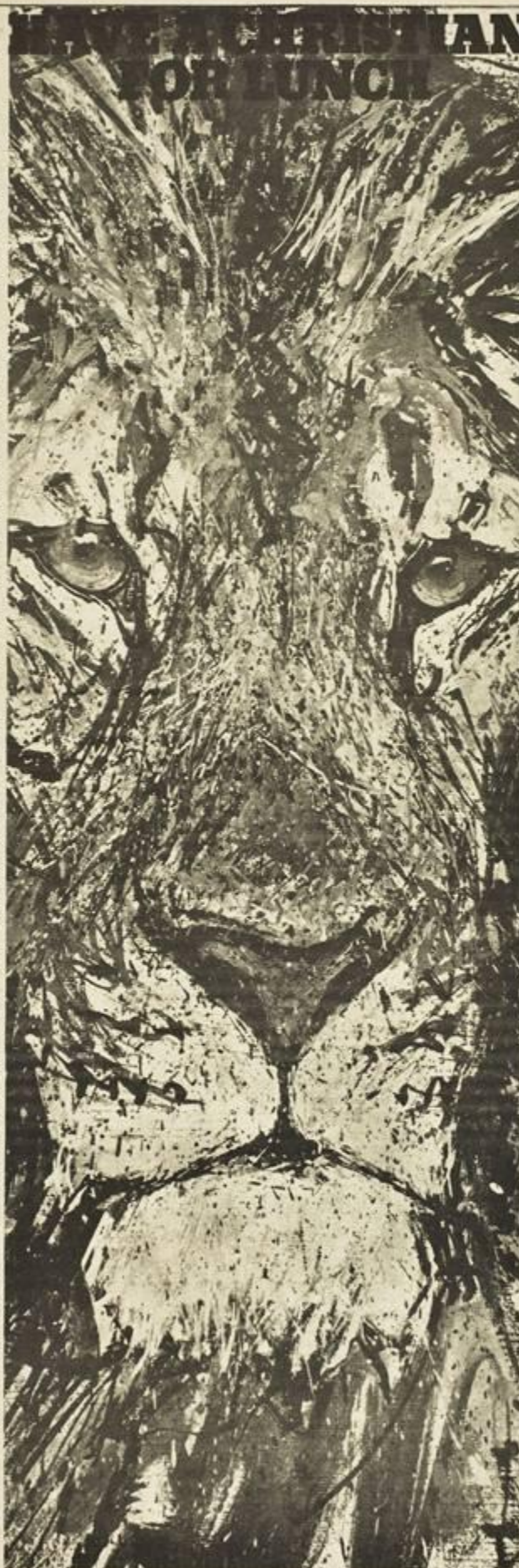
W. Dwight Oberholtzer, the man responsible for bringing together this conglomeration of boring prose, muddled thinking, distorted logic, and outright ignorance, probably thought he was doing everybody a service. In his introductory essay, "Subduing the Cyclops," he displays a sincere desire to understand the gay world in all its depth, scope and variety. He quotes from all the right authors, Kinsey, Hooker, Pomeroy, Hoffman, and Rechy, and shows how desperately he wants to "do the right thing," but, like a constipated cow, he can't quite bring himself to answer the question, "Is Gay Good?" All he can do is admonish us to sift out informed opinions, be aware that even gay life can be beautiful, that most gays don't want to go straight, that gays can't be categorized, that God's will must be considered, and that maybe the homosexual "problem" is part of the larger problem of human sexuality.

He leaves it for the contributors to answer the question, and, with a few exceptions, they are a muddled bigoted lot. John von Rohr, in the lead essay, ignores Oberholtzer's admonitions, decides right away that all sex is part of original sin, that homosexuals are seductive, promiscuous, and downright lustful. He quotes Berpler and the Bible, and concludes that homosexuality is, at best, a bad habit because it isn't procreative and, besides, it's not natural. He hasn't found many animals doing it. He would get all gays cured. Failing that, he would urge them to live their lives as sexlessly as possible and then, and only then, accept them with condescending tolerance.

The other contributors respond to this position. Thomas Maurer rejects it flatly, calling von Rohr's position insolent and reprehensible, which it is, but Carl F.H. Henry supports it, feeling that the gay world needs "redemption." Troy Perry argues that Christ might well have been homosexual, and that the writings of Paul are in reality only Paul's opinions, not the unquestioned word of God. Christ never condemned homosexuality, and nowhere did he specifically exclude homosexuals from the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, homosexuals cannot be excluded from the church.

But John F. Harvey, giving the Roman Catholic viewpoint, comes out for chastity, permanent relationships, treatment, prayer, and "love of God," whatever he means by that. In butter-milk prose, he assures us that "a creative spirit finds ways of living chastely with the support of spiritual direction and prayer." Through "spiritual guidance," the dangers of "self-abuse or blind pick-ups in lavatories" can be avoided. He advocates "chaste companionships," a sort of Homosexuals Anonymous, so that gays can presumably feel holy while they make each other miserable.

H. Kimball Jones gives a "provisional stance," which means that he isn't sure



what to do, though he agrees essentially with von Rohr. Lewis Williams can only wring his hands at the situation of the homosexual, and exhort the church to do more in the way of civil liberties, but spells out no new theology or workable program. P. E. Coleman reports that, in England, the majority support law reform, but still consider homosexuality sinful.

Antony Grey puts his heart in the right place, by decrying self-righteousness, and coming out for fearless guiltless sex, and Henry J. M. Nouwen opposes the suppression of homosexual urges and advocates the breaking down of artificial barriers that separate men from one another, mainly by helping gays respond more fully to their own feelings.

Del Martin and Phyllis Lyons represent the Lesbians, and they, too, warmly support sanity, joy, and stability. So does Norman Pittenger. Von Rohr gives a non-reply to all these diverse views, condemns cruising, both straight and gay, and reluctantly admits that the church must accept all Christians, but only those Christians who don't cruise or cheat on their lovers.

Even though the works of Troy Perry, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyons, Antony Grey, Henry J.M. Nouwen, and Thomas Maurer, have things of value in them, none of them, except possibly Troy Perry and Thomas Maurer, treats sex as if it were a damned good thing. All of them put too much emphasis on the dubious notion that love and understanding and faithfulness are good, and since gays too can be loving and faithful, then homosexuality is all right only if gays limit themselves to lifelong monogamy.

This view, which is popular among the more liberal clergymen is both patronizing and hypocritical. And the one thing that is worse than being rejected is being conditionally accepted on the grounds that outright rejection would make the oppressor feel guilty. In the Christian Church, the standards of insincerity seem to be very high indeed.

Thus, it is my considered opinion that the only religion that a gay person who genuinely loves being gay can sincerely believe in is a religion where sexual joy is holy. I don't know for certain if Christ ever preached this, but if he did not, then no homosexual ought to be Christian. To be able to give and receive sexual joy is a first step in being able to give and receive love. Indeed, we love our most casual tricks at least a little, for we agree to give them our bodies and they agree to give us theirs. It is this mutual agreement or the desire for it that can kindle the flames of love, that can make us want to please and be good to the other person, to explore each other's lives and experiences for things in common and things to share, and build lasting friendships thereby.

These things are implicit in the way homosexuals behave toward each other. At the most recent gay-in, the entire affair was conducted in an atmosphere of friendship and good will that was not to be found among the Italians where Joe Colombo was shot, or among rock festivals, where freak-outs and shootings have become so common they are no longer being held.

A question like "Is Gay Good?" ought never to be asked, for it is like asking "Is Sex Good?" which in turn is like asking "Is Life Good?" Clergymen who would place limitations on sex, like many of the contributors to this anthology, would also place limitations on life and the realization of its full potential. They are builders of walls and fences rather than expanders of horizons. They belong in hell.

## The Life of Rae Bourbon: "ONE MAN'S MEAT IS ANOTHER MAN'S CIGAR!"

BY DICK LEITSCH

"When the man said 'Let there be light,' I was the bitch who pulled the switch."—Rae Bourbon

Nobody seems quite sure when Rae Bourbon started in show business. Some say he was always there. Certainly it was long enough ago for him to have worked as an extra, and sometimes as a stand-in, for Clara Bow and Douglas Fairbanks. In drag, he was a hag in Pola Negri's first film, *Bella Donna*. Trivia experts can pick him out in all of the Valentino films including the two sheik pictures, *Blood and Sand* and *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. He was in *Hurricane* in 1937 with Jon Hall and Dorothy Lamour (that's the film that gave us the new Bette Midler hit, *Moon Of Manikora*).

Bourbon, born on August 11, 1892 as Ramon Icares to a Mexican-Irish couple, has become a legend in the gay world. Of the great gay performers of this century, Dwight Fiske is now only a name on a very rare, scratchy 78 rpm record. Julian Eltinge, famous enough to have had theatres named after him all over America in the 1920's, is forgotten and the theatre names have been changed again. Babette still exists only in one of Cocteau's more obscure essays. Rae Bourbon has survived the one to remember, not only because he's very good, but because his routines have been preserved on ten lp records. Fortunately for the new generation of homosexuals who've just grown up and



Did you doubt that Rae was Queen of Queens?

crept out of the closets, U.T.C. Records has re-released the entire set.

Bourbon was not just another female impersonator from the 1920's when every show from the Ziegfeld Follies to the Podunk Opera House had a drag queen; Rae Bourbon was the greatest, probably the first, and maybe the only, gay stand-up comedian.

"He had an imaginative mind," Bourbon's record producer recently recalled. "My God, it was so quick. I don't know any comic today who can deliver material like he did—unless maybe some Negro comics, but their delivery is into black lib while Rae's was, well, it's into gay lib, but the records were made back in the 1950's."

If gay lib means self-pity, Bourbon is no part of it. Being gay and even suffering oppression were no reasons for adopting tragic poses. He was undefeatable; he would be himself and survive, no matter what. The oppressors were the pitiful ones because they were such fools, making trouble for themselves and losing their dignity through their oppressive actions.

One of his better routines deals with a drag party given by one "Mother Kennedy" (probably, from "internal evidence" as literary scholars say, in the 1930's). Everybody was dragged off to court, kicking, screaming and bitching. Mother Kennedy was put on the stand. She peered at the judge and said, "I know you, you've been to my place."

"I don't think so," says the judge. "Oh yes you have," screeches Mother Kennedy. "I run a respectable house... club and you've been there. They call you Market Street Myrtle!"

The case was quickly dismissed. Bourbon's humor is directed toward gay audiences and employs heavy use of gay slang and in-group jargon (some dated, like "bitch" for "gay" or "homosexual" or whatever the current noun in use is). In that, he's rather like the present generation of black comedians who

communicate with a black audience in ghetto slang, leaving whitey to keep up if he can. Radicals probably won't approve, but the ADL and the Urban League probably don't approve of Steve Rossi and Slappy White's hilarious new album, *I Found Me A White Man, You Find Yourself One!* either.

For all of his apparent spontaneity, Bourbon worked from well-memorized scripts prepared for him by prominent Broadway writers. Cole Porter's hand is discernable in some of Bourbon's patter songs. Robert Wright and George Forrest (who wrote the lyrics for *Kismet* and music and lyrics for Broadway's *Kean* and Hollywood's *Maytime*, *Sweethearts* and *New Moon*) are also said to be among Bourbon's writers. Mr. Forrest arranged for Rae's burial in Forest Lawn, and Mr. Wright bailed him out with financial help on many occasions when luck ran out for the comic.

Whoever wrote the material, Bourbon delivered it well, with a timing that was to other comedians what Mabel Mercer's song styling is to other singers. On the records, the monologues seem to be spoken too rapidly and are sometimes hard to understand. This is said to be due to the less than perfect conditions under which the original recordings were made—some from old 78's and others even from wire recordings.

Just as Miss Mercer is the singer's singer, Bourbon was a comedian's comedian. Many of his gags, in heterosexual and dirtier versions, turned up in the routines of Belle Barth and Pearl Williams. Phyllis Diller has obviously borrowed her laugh from Rae Bourbon. Wherever he worked professional comedians always dropped by to watch a real pro at work.

Probably no other homosexual, and certainly no other performer, has had the effect on America's gay community that Bourbon did. "In his own way," Jim Gardner, Rae's long-time friend and the producer of the U.T.C. Records, says,

"Rae was something like the San Carlo Opera that went from town to town producing operas. The local inhabitants always remembered seeing the production of *Carmen* or *Madame Butterfly*, maybe the only show they ever saw. Rae went all over the country, appearing everywhere, and people remember him because he was there once." For many gay people, particularly outside the major metropolitan areas, he was the only gay performer they'd ever seen.

My own introduction to Rae Bourbon came many years ago, in 1958, I believe. I was still living in Kentucky and was still uncomfortable about my homosexuality. I had a good friend who was in homosexual panic; he thought being gay was the worst thing that could happen to anyone.

We happened to be at a party in Covington (a straight party at that). Someone played Rae's monologue about the gay wedding "in Chicago in the 19's and 20's (when)... these two friends of ours decided to get married to each other. Well, even in Chicago in those days you just didn't do that kind of carryings on..." There was a preacher's son "who was 20 years old and had been under suspicion for ages. After this mess they proved it on her. She was going to perform the ceremony..." There's the inevitable raid and the queens go through the church windows "running down State Street with stained glass halos."

We, the two uptight, just-out hicks, literally got sick from laughing—I still think that monologue (U.T.C. No. 1, *An Evening In Copenhagen*) is one of the greatest comedy routines of all time. Later, homosexuality never again seemed so tragic. Once you've laughed at something you were afraid of you lose your fear. That's liberation.

The list of cities Rae Bourbon played is impressive and contains every town anybody's ever heard of—and some nobody ever heard of, like Deadwood City, South Dakota. He also played Cairo, Buenos Aires, Hong-Kong, Shanghai, Madrid, Paris, London, Mexico City and Juarez (where he lived for a time, commuting to West Coast jobs).

Back in the reign of Edward VII (who died in 1910), Bourbon played a command performance for the royal family at the Belvedere Palace—probably at the request of Queen Mary, Elizabeth's late grandmother, who was a notorious fag-hag.

It was in London that Rae got an early start impersonating women when he was cast as a young girl in a West End play. In his later years, he was an improbable-looking "woman" as he was built like, and had the features of, a slightly overweight John Barrymore. Though he adopted the "usual show-biz femme mannerism" as one friend put it, his virility always showed. (That contributed to his string of arrests; it didn't take much for even the cops of the 20's and 30's, who were less aware of homosexuality than the present-day "socially-conscious cops," to tell he was a man in drag.)

Newspaper articles dated 1956 make much of Bourbon's alleged sex-change operation, supposedly the first done on the American continent. Actually, that was just a publicity gimmick, an attempt to get some of Christine Jorgenson's headlines, say his friends. A New Yorker, in whose apartment Rae stayed (and tricked) when in town recalls seeing him carry on after the alleged operation. "He had an enormous, perfectly functional cock," the friend said, "so I know the stories were lies."

Fake or not, one reporter asked Bourbon what sort of sex life he'd have after

the operation. "Nothing's changed," he smirked, "they didn't do a thing to my head." The papers printed the comment.

From 1945 to 1947, Bourbon appeared on Broadway with Mae West in *Catherine Was Great*. Originally there'd been two "pansy" (the "in" word back then for homosexuals) roles in the show: a hairdresser and a dressmaker to the Empress. During rehearsals the actor playing the hairdresser tripped, bumped La West and knocked her into the orchestra pit. Madame picked herself up, dusted her ample bosom and fired the actor on the spot. The two roles were combined and

blackening both eyes so badly make-up couldn't cover the swelling and discoloration. Mae saw him first on stage. Smirking, she told the audience, "Oh, my poor little dressmaker (Rae was 6 feet tall and weighed nearly 200 pounds). He was up all night making my gown and he's got such awful dark circles under his eyes!"

His big line was a running gag, later used in Tallulah's film *A Royal Scandal*. He'd call her "Mother Russia," and she'd hiss, "Stop calling me mother!" In the penultimate scene, just before Mae made her famous speech, "Catherine was mother of all Russia. I've done what I could in



Bourbon got all the lines. (One can almost hear his raucous laugh, "heh-heh-heh!")

Rae Bourbon was one of the few people able to steal scenes from Mae, the greatest scene thief of them all. He'd purposely maneuver her so her back would be to the audience as he spoke to her. She'd look up at him and mutter through gritted teeth, "I'll get you for this, Mary, you son-of-a-bitch!"

The night before one of the out-of-town openings Bourbon picked up a bit of rough trade, according to Billy, who later worked with Rae and now manages the West 72nd Street branch of the Studio Bookshop. The number beat up Rae,

two hours," Catherine dispenses gifts to the court.

One night Mae offered Rae, as the dressmaker, his gift. Rae asked, "May I have anything I want, Mother Russia?"

"Uh, yes," Mae, befuddled, said. "Then I'll take himmmmm!" screeched Rae, pointing to a huge, no talent (but what muscles and looks!) stud Mae was seeing outside and had put in the show to keep him around.

The number blushed, got angry, and almost made a scene. Mae signaled him "No," and said sweetly to Rae, "Of course, my dear," and added under her breath "but if you touch him I'll kill you."

Rae also had a role in Mae's other Broadway hit, *Diamond Lil*. He played (in drag of course) a shoplifter. A bit of business called for him to stop center stage and open his purse. Unknown to anyone else, he caught a couple of moths and concealed them in the bag. When he opened it, the bugs, naturally, flew towards the lights. Mae ordered the moths out of the play—they got too many laughs and distracted attention from her.

Despite (or perhaps because of) these escapades, Rae and Mae remained close friends for years, especially during the period Rae ran his own club near Hollywood. Errol Flynn, the Duke of Windsor, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Robert Taylor (who got to Hollywood and got his first film role through Rae) also spent a lot of time at the club, grooving on Rae's routines.

Bourbon often told friends that the real Mae West is dead. The current "Mae West," he claimed, is actually Mae's younger sister, Beverly, who impersonates Mae to keep her image alive and collect the royalties, roles and profits from Mae's investments.

Rae's popularity began to decline at the end of the Fifties. His material, which was always *Double-entendre* designed to make the listener think dirty, was not explicitly dirty enough for the Smutty Sixties. After Lenny Bruce, Belle Barth and Pearl Williams, audiences didn't want subtle verses about Mr. Wong having the biggest Tong in China; they wanted Mr. Wong's huge, throbbing yellow cock to spurt massive loads of hot, sweet joy juice.

Besides, "Rae had no confidence in himself," as Jim Gardner put it. "He was a sweet, lovable man who didn't think anybody would pay to see or hear him. He wouldn't recognize that he's a damned fine actor. He could walk into a room, gauge the audience and figure out what they could stand. Then he'd push them 10% above what they could take."

"In recording sessions he would get sentimental and make tapes we couldn't possibly use. These times he'd come out with some of the most beautiful, most dramatic things he ever did. Once he moved us all to tears with a monologue he'd written about a nurse on a battlefield. He'd written it himself and it was about the most beautiful thing I'd ever heard anywhere."

Who'd buy a record of a drag queen doing dramatic readings? Comedy, yes. Drama, no. Isn't there a cliché about every clown wanting to play Hamlet and there being a tragic figure behind every rubber nose? The trouble with clichés is that they are often accurate; it's because they're so apt that they've become clichés.

Drama Bourbon could do; comedy he thought "filthy" he couldn't. He expressed his feelings about "crap" in a letter just before his death: "I've read some of the things from Olympia Press. They are porno to the hilt. No plot. Not exciting. There seems to me to have to be a reason for a book. To me a plot is important. Without a plot, or a good reason, there is no book. Just crap. And crap we get enough of from natural causes without having to read it."

Nor did he approve of drugs and the crime syndicates that peddle them. "All the new people that are coming up have so little to offer unless they are high on Stuff. It's certain narcotics will not take the place of talent... The reason I know all about (narcotics) is that I've been offered so much money over the years to work for the Syndicate..."

Continued on page 17



The Dairy-Chain of Command.

Photo by Mann Duncan

## HE KISSED THE BOYS AND MADE THEM LIKE IT.

BY BOB AMSEL

At 62 E. 4th Street, there is a little play by George Birimisa named *George Porgie*. It is well worth hiking down to the East Village to see it, not because of the homosexual characters or nudity, but because it is very exciting theatre. A simple set is expertly put to use by the author-director. Some of the acting performances alone are worth the price of admission. Yet, I think, there are many homosexuals who would be offended by it because it exposes certain of the more sordid aspects of gay life. In these days when gay libbers are screaming, on the one hand, how oppressed they are, and blasting, on the other, any play or movie that depicts the homosexual in less than sugar-and-spice terms, *George Porgie* may not be very popular. Too bad. Mr. Birimisa is deeply involved in what he has written, sometimes too involved. But it is an honest and courageous attempt to try something different, and that is exactly what a very stale theatre needs today.

*George Porgie* consists of nine scenes dealing with different aspects of homosexuality. Five of these scenes concern different phases in the life of one homosexual, George (Claude Barbazon). The remaining four concern the experiences of other homosexuals. Out of these nine scenes, I would say that three are completely successful. This is not a bad batting average when one considers what Mr. Birimisa has attempted to do, and if six of the scenes fail, they are still ultimately more interesting than the successes of many other playwrights.

The playwright is a gambler, and he gambles on emotional impact. Practically every scene is charged in such a way as to devastate the audience. While most authors are content if they can accomplish

this once in a three-act play, Birimisa is constantly trying to hit the bull's eye. When one is prepared to jump as often into the fire as the author, one can expect to get burned a few times.

With one exception, the weakest scenes are found in the first parts of the play, and they can be blamed in part to a miscast actress, Stacy Alden Giles. Miss Giles is called upon to play three roles—a little girl, George's mother, and George's fag hag wife. Though adequate as the wife, she is not a very convincing little girl and is atrocious as the mother. In this latter scene, George tries to make his mother understand that he is a homosexual but she refuses to listen to him. The scene definitely has a certain validity. I think many parents prefer not to know if their children are gay and prefer to cling to their own fantasies of what their children are or should be. To make his point, Birimisa has chosen some pretty grotesque excesses. Throughout the conversation, George is seen putting on his

mother's make-up and jewelry, while his mother reminisces about happier times when George was a boy. In fact, she does everything in her power to keep her fantasies from being shattered and accepting George as he is. Since Miss Giles comes across as a young woman playacting at being an older one, the audience finds itself concentrating on George's dressing-up. Instead of enhancing the scene, this theatrical gimmick destroys it. Instead of feeling compassion for George, we feel the titillation of watching a carnival show.

If there is one theme that connects all of the vignettes, it is this—every person is involved in his own particular fantasies and he is willing to fight to keep his fantasies from being shattered. One of the best scenes illustrating this takes place when George picks up a man he imagines to be a black stud hustler, brilliantly portrayed by J. Pearson Gant. Since I don't wish to spoil this scene for you by discussing it too much, I will simply state

that if all playwrights had their scenes acted as this one was, then all playwrights would be the happiest people on earth. Any devotee of acting should not miss Mr. Gant's breath-taking interpretation of his role.

Similar praise is deserved by actor Paul Rosson in two equally rewarding scenes. In the first, Mr. Rosson plays a middle-aged east side queen named Finley who has apparently picked up a member of the now generation. "I'm a head," the boy declares. "Ahead of what?" Finley asks. Not making himself understood, the boy further declares, "My generation calls you straight." Finley gasps, "Me? Straight?" In a scene packed with good lines, the best comes when the boy asks Finley for a beer. "I'll call Gristedes and have them send some," he matter-of-factly replies. It's amazing how one line can so perfectly sum up an entire character. As the boy, Barry Kael also deserves his bit of praise. Author Birimisa pulls one of his best punches at the end of this scene and an unsuspecting audience catches it right in the gut.

In another scene, actor Rosson also has a field day as an Emory-type queen turning on to a "straight" body builder (Richie Broche). In what could easily have been an exploitation of a gay cliché, playwright Birimisa is subtle enough to pull it off and the scene becomes an amusing anecdote on muscle queens.

Birimisa is less successful in a scene dealing with police entrapment, basically because the victim is not interesting enough to make us care about what happens to him. However, Birimisa does attempt a new twist by highlighting the policeman's fast life and latent homosexuality.

In the scene between George and his

Continued on page 19



A scene from the play.

# Loosely About Women

## LOOK MOMMY! THAT LADY HAS HAIRY LEGS!

BY SOREL DAVID

Congratulate me, I've reached a new level of consciousness, I stopped shaving the hair on my legs. Speaking of shaving, I remember this friend of mine, one time discovering with a profoundly horrified shriek that she had crabs, or at least a crab anyway. After a thorough examination by all the parties concerned, no more than this one, for which we had only a horrified shriek as proof, could be officially documented. Still her hysteria would not be calmed until after she had grabbed a razor and marched off into the bathroom to shave every hair on her body, is what she said. This was a long time ago when we were very young, freshmen and sophomores in college, and this being our first experience with anything of this sort, secretly, I think, we were all a little pleased and thrilled that this new level of sophistication and degeneracy, debauchery, we thought, though none of us dared to say this word aloud, had come to our little circle. The thing I remember most about the incident is her coming out of the bathroom after shaving to show us all her new hairless look. Actually the business with the crabs may have been just a ruse, looking back on it now. Joanne always did lean toward exhibitionism, I thought. But did she ever look funny all smooth and bald like that. In some cultures it is customary for women to remove their pubic hair—in India, for example, if stories in the Olympia Press Reader are to be believed. But to me she looked very strange, kind of like she was a little girl and yet so obviously a big girl, which all in all gave rise to some rather interesting and deliciously naughty thoughts in my consciousness.

Meanwhile, Billie came out of the bathroom a few days ago (we don't have any closets in our apartment), to confess to all of us sitting around the living room that she wasn't a radical anymore. "Look," she said, raising her arms high above her head, "I've shaved my armpits." In her defense, let me just say that



reasons for so rash an act may not be purely aesthetic or having anything to do with fashion consciousness. It can be a question of comfort and hygiene too, you know. It's easier to keep this area clean and free from odor when it's shaved, and also it's less itchy, or so I'm told. Myself, I've never shaved under my arms and so I wouldn't know. (If this isn't Confessional Literature, I don't know what is.) With me it was a consciousness of how sharp the razor and how soft my skin more than anything else. Actually, though, I've always rather liked women with hair under their arms, I guess it's just the narcissist in me.

I never shaved under my arms but

somehow I could never quite bring myself to let the hair grow on my legs. The image of the unattractive old spinster type, an elementary school teacher with hair tied back in a severe black bun, hairy legs and a mustache was too much for me. At the same time, something in me rebelled every time I took the blade in hand. It annoyed me to find myself complying so readily with society's standards and rules; I resented being so dependent on somebody else's notion of what an attractive woman is supposed to be like. Intellectually I regarded the custom of shaving one's legs as a bad, anti-body, self-put-down kind of a trip. I applauded the European fashion of considering body

hair on both men and women sexually exciting. Yet I could not translate these ideas into that part of my emotional existence invested in my own image of myself.

But now, for some unknown reason, I've changed, or am changing. It's more like I've changed, really. Suddenly I decided one day last week that I wanted to have hair on my legs, that I wanted to be, to look like that. I don't know why exactly this kind of consciousness should come to me now, at this particular time—I haven't really thought about it much lately. I suppose it has something to do with a woman I met recently who has, among other things, hairy legs—and I don't mean your fair haired blond drizzle of hair kind of hairy legs. That's nothing, I've known lots of blond women with hairy legs. This one has a luxurious growth of dark brown hair on her legs. Thick brown hair on sturdy peasant legs. For the first time in my life I find this exciting, sexually arousing and not at all masculine looking as you might have supposed, or as you might have been led to believe. No, not at all. Instead, there is something intensely womanly about it all, at least to my way of thinking, I should say. The big solid thighs, deep rounded calves, sturdy ankles and the hair—*carthy* is of course the word but I'm trying to stay away from that word as it is so over-used in certain circles these days. Exciting—but then Kathy is a terribly exciting person anyway.

Anyway, I've sliced my shins for the last time. I'm letting it grow. Though it's hardly longer than a stubble now, every day it grows and grows, as the song says, and where it's going to stop, nobody knows. Before long I'll be, to all appearances, the perfectly liberated woman. I won't have to bother with any of that stuff—arm patches, buttons and signs—to show I'm hip. No sir, after all I got my hair. I won't have to shell out fifty cents to be with it with a new Radical Radish button—not me, I got my hair. I got my feet, got my toes, got my ears, got my nose—I've got love—and my hair.

# Joie de Vivre

BY THE STAFF OF GAY

**I**f you have a question about PERSONAL matters, write to the staff of GAY, c/o GAY, P.O. Box 431, Old Chelsea Station, New York, N.Y. 10011. Only letters of the widest possible interest can be published. All letters will be answered if accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Dear GAY:

I wonder if you have ever received the inquiry that I'm now making. It has to do with fellatio between two males. I have a friend who from personal experience insists that the most intense fellatio involves some apparently mysterious and rarely used technique. The fellated places his penis in the mouth of the fellator who does not exert any motion whatsoever on the penis. Then gradually the one being fellated feels an enlarging of what seems to be the glands and this increases to such a great extent that the pleasure is indescribable, culminating of course in orgasm. Could you shed any light on this technique, which is apparently so rare?

R.P.  
Atlanta, Ga.

Dear R.P.:

It's a new one on us! The technique may be so rare as to be actually non-existent. We wouldn't want to say that someone may be pulling your leg, but it does sound a bit improbable. There may be



some people who are so turned on by this simple placement of the penis as to climax, but as a general rule we wouldn't bet on it. In any case, there's really a very simple way to have your question answered—try it a couple of times. If it works for you, do it, if not, do something else. Experimenting can be fun. Alan Watts talks about such a motionless sex technique in one of his Zen books. He apparently thinks highly of it, calling the orgasm "an explosion whose outer sparks are the stars."

Dear GAY:

I'm 24 years old and have enjoyed sex with females since the age of 18. In my last affair, the girl I was with told me she was a lesbian, she also said that if I let myself go she was sure I would enjoy making love with a man. Since then I've been thinking about it and I would like to

give it a try but I don't know how. The only people I know are straight and I don't know how to find someone to introduce me to gay life. I would greatly appreciate any help you could give me.

T.F.  
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear T.F.:

Indianapolis is one of the few major cities in the U.S. which does not have a gay group operating; there are however several gay bars. You might try the Golden Horn outside the city on Washington St. A gay bar could be defined as a place where drinking is the primary concern of the management and the secondary concern of the patrons, their primary concern being "cruising," i.e. finding a bed mate or just being sociable. Cruising usually starts in a non-verbal fashion: you look at him, he looks at you until finally one of you says something

and the chit chat phase begins, hopefully culminating in an invitation. The most important thing to remember is if you don't succeed, try try again. It's worth it! Dear GAY:

I read your paper for the first time and found it very interesting, especially the article by Sorel David on the Daughters of Bilitis, an organization which I am seriously considering joining, since I am in the older generation of "bitches." My problem is that I am not as radical as this group seems to be. I am what you would classify as a sissy bitch type, that is I am not a physical type although a little mental I'll grant you. I'm extremely lean and lanky so if you find anyone in your lavender directory that's interested in this sort of thing pass the word along. I like any sort of music except hard rock and soul, am a social drinker of sorts. I do not smoke anything and take tranquilizers only occasionally.

S.F.  
Queens, N.Y.

Dear S.F.:

Membership in DOB or any other group for that matter is not determined by physique, or tastes in music, or what a person does or does not drink, smoke or swallow. Whether or not the Daughters of Bilitis is radical or not would depend on your definition of radical. We'd suggest that you give it a try, the only way to know is to investigate for yourself. They have a center at 141 Prince Street, where a variety of activities take place, including a Saturday night dance each week open exclusively to women.

BY NICHOLAS MARTINO

**O**ut here amidst the oak trees and shopping centers of eastern Long Island some of GAY's subscribers breathlessly anticipate the bi-weekly arrival of the "plain brown envelope," bringing to us as it does news of the great Mecca to the West. The faithful may be disturbed at having to look West toward Mecca, but then we gays are noted for doing things with a new twist. GAY, and WBAI's program, "Homosexual News," are the only contact we have with the happenings of the great metropolis, the home of great thoughts and thinkers and heroes who get busted zapping the Board of Education so that we might all one day be free.

We're terribly opportunistic out in the suburbs. We don't contribute to, or by and large even identify with, the liberation movement for which our brothers and sisters in the City work so creatively. Do you know what Liberation means to us by the time it filters down to the provinces? It means the opening of a couple of tacky new bars, to which we all dutifully trot off to haunt. Outside of perhaps meeting more people than we used to, Liberation has had little effect so far. There is little here in terms of gay politics or society to involve ourselves in. We lack the concentration, the congestion even, of the City's talent, its events, its resources. Out here one might have to drive thirty or forty miles just to make it with someone. Of course the anticipation, while weaving in and out through the traffic, is wonderful, but it doesn't make for safe driving. Whenever I run across Nader's book, *Unsafe At Any Speed*, I think he meant me. In the City everything from the mayor's office to the nicest bars in town is within quick reach of the local subway station, if you can stand the heat in those gawdawful tunnels. Or maybe the problem is that we lack the inspiration of those great concrete phallics rearing up so proudly toward the heavens, their enthusiastic assertion hampered only by their thick coating of grimy smog.

Yet, despite the shallowness of our suburban existence I believe that, perhaps because of our very detachment, we country bumpkins may be able to offer some constructive contribution, some sense of perspective, to our cosmopolitan cousins. I say this because I fear that the gay movement, like any political movement, tends to promote among its active participants a certain short-sightedness, an inability to relax, a frenetic obsession with truth. I wonder, for example, how many of GAY's readers paused to notice the wonderful contradictions in two of Dick Leitsch's recent articles, "Let's Put the Sex Back in Homosexual," and "Mart Crowley: Harriet Beecher Stowe in Drag." Anyone who can contradict himself as casually as did Mr. Leitsch in these articles must be a very enjoyable, a very real, person, and yet, if Franklin Kameny's letter to the editors in GAY no. 54 is any indication, an attitude such as Mr. Leitsch's is not to be appreciated these days. Apparently Dr. Kameny felt that Leitsch, in his "Sex in Homosexual" article, was disavowing himself of any concern with "prejudice, bigotry, housing, education, employment, the war," etc. Yet, in his next article, on Mart Crowley, Leitsch wrote quite eloquently on the violence of the Pentagon, the dark side of each of us and of human nature itself, of its cruelty and ugliness and ridiculousness. Dr. Kameny wrote that "oppression is a deadly serious thing." How true. Yet, must the ultimate answer always be to fight fire with fire, to confront the seriousness of oppression with yet more seriousness? True, some small and temporary improvements in the quality of life may be made this way, but really, looking back on the history of the past two thousand years, can we really believe that

# A View from the Suburbs: WHAT HAVE WE GOT GOING FOR OURSELVES?



Angry faces and righteous frowns rush forward as gay militants protest mistreatment at City Hall.



Stone-faced bureaucrats remain unmoved by gay pleas.

all the great concerned dedicated would-be architects (and guardians) of freedom have accomplished very much? I would say no.

So as to try to avoid misunderstanding, let me say that I think Dr. Kameny did a marvelous, and rather gutsy, thing, running for Congress as an avowed homosexual. I certainly think the issues he raised were important issues, and I think he deserves the praise and admiration of every thinking, sensitive human being, straight or gay. I find, however, that Dr. Kameny's thinking does not go far enough.

There has been painfully little examination into the roots of the deadly serious thing called oppression. Has anyone ever thought that one of its most fundamental characteristics, perhaps even a cause, is deadly seriousness? We all recognize that the purveyors of oppression are big nasties—but why? Has anyone who would wish to effect fundamental changes in the nature of human existence addressed himself to the notion that what an oppressive person is specifically, though often subconsciously, trying to do is to deny pleasure to others, this compulsion resulting from his inability to experience it, or give it, himself, making him jealous and resentful of the potential for pleasure in others? A few years back there was a joke circulating among college kids to the effect that the real reason this country was pursuing the war in Vietnam was that

Lady Bird wouldn't go down on Lyndon. To that I would now add the comment that even if she would have, Lyndon wouldn't have wanted it or accepted it. I do not find, as apparently did Dr. Kameny, that Leitsch's sentiment, "homosexuality was something one did for pleasure—sexual pleasure," was written by someone insensitive to the blight of the human condition. Far from it. Strange, isn't it, that anyone who flouts the notion of pleasure risks being considered somehow shallow, or petty, or lacking in compassion. Western Civilization defines heroism, especially as an aesthetic concept, in terms of austerity and asceticism. Pleasure seekers are supposed to be little, inconsequential people, and yet I cannot help feeling that pleasure is a creation, and that especially when two people create it together it is the most monumental and glorious achievement we attain.

I hope no one thinks I'm straying away from the essentially political tone of my earlier paragraphs. Straying away from the subject would be bad form. There is a connection in all of this, you see, which can be illustrated by the following real-life true incident. Recently two earnest, terribly sincere and dedicated-looking people from the Long Island GAA organization dropped into one of the local bars. Both of them carried clipboards, to which were affixed sheaves of nicely mimeographed papers. They

acosted me, talking both at once, about setting a precedent, and a petition, and I must sign, etc. "Sheddup Yer a second and let me read the damned thing," I said in my best country-bumpkin drawl, realizing I was meeting cosmopolitan people, and feeling mildly defensive. The petition, I soon found, was concerned with the plight of a fellow, twenty-eight years old if I remember correctly, who had honorably served in the Navy for seven years, had earned a good service record, had recently been "found out" as being gay, and was now being summarily and dishonorably discharged. A legal action was being initiated, and the signers of the petition were asking Congress, or someone, to realize that the dishonorable discharge was unfair, unconstitutional, and generally nasty. "I'll sign your petition," I said to the two GAA people, and did same, "but personally my sympathies are not with this guy. I think that any gay who honorably serves the military for seven years, above and beyond the call of duty, etc., the military, after all being in the business of killing people, deserves what he got." Well, the two earnest, anguished-looking GAAs suddenly looked even more earnest, and much more anguished. They thanked me for my signature, mumbled something again about setting precedents, and shuffled off.

You know, if I were Franklin Kameny, I would take the denial of security clearance to me as a definite compliment. I myself once had a tussle with the State Department after they found out about some political activity of mine involving minority civil rights and a protest of this country's war policies. Outside of the fact that this stupid hassle came at a particularly inopportune time when I was penniless, bumming around, and sort of out of whack, I found the whole thing quite flattering. I would consider most people (Daniel Ellsberg excepted of course) whom the government thought of as people suitable to be entrusted with the kind of scandal which has recently been published in the press to be rather unsavory characters, certainly not people I would want to be around.

The great danger in being politically active is that one may lose some, if not all, of his joy and enthusiasm at being with people and as a result his political convictions, no matter how sincere, how intelligent, will become less alive, less germane to life itself. I believe this is what Leitsch was trying to say about Dr. Kameny's campaign.

After I came out I thought—Wow! Gay Politics—that's really cool! At last there's a political movement which first of all attaches to itself the word gay, which among other things means happy, and secondly the most obvious common denominator holding together the participants in this movement is the acknowledgement that, well, they have the hots for people (of their own sex). I mean, a lot of straight couples think, at least subconsciously, of the rationale for their relationship as being the bearing of children or the fulfilling of societal patterns, etc., but homosexuals, lacking these dubious reinforcements, are faced head-on with the realization that they are definitely horny for their bed-mate(s). (A notion which, unfortunately, still scares some gay people.) Anyway, I thought, at last we're gonna have some real positive politics. Well, it's a dangerous business, mixing politics with people, especially people who have an awareness and appreciation of pleasure, at least as long as politics implies in some way or other dealing with, hence actually becoming involved with, institutions and individuals whose need to deny and destroy affection and warmth and fun is a consummate passion. The dirt and the poison is bound to rub off a little on anyone who comes close to such individuals and institutions, and you do have to come close to them

Continued on page 19

# The Last Estate

BY GREGORY BATTCKOCK

**I**t's rather pleasant—sitting at a cafe on the Boulevard St. Germaine, pick up a copy of the *Voice*, read your name in Jill Johnson's column—but did ya read that hatched job she did on John and Yoko? Jill is no woman, she should be president!

Bumped into Alazar Marberger (claims he runs the Fishback Gallery) in Rome. We enjoyed a lovely dinner together in Trastevere and after a nice stroll in the Piazza Navona. Alazar was wearing his new *haute couture* \$250 one-piece black woolen suit, in 90-degree heat, fresh from Paris; the Italian youths lounging around the fountains were all eyes. He was showing Rome a thing or two. At this point, for some reason, I fell down. Every head in the piazza turned. Alazar simply kept walking as though he hadn't noticed a thing.

The next incident occurred when our Alazar chose to inflict his South African find (from the beach at Ostia) upon me at dinner. Claimed the chap was a supreme court justice in apartheid country but, fortunately he was only a 29-year-old lawyer who lived with his mother in Johannesburg. (Actually we had a long phone chat before dinner debating whether or not it was morally proper to dine with a South African supreme court justice. We decided it would be OK because we might learn something from our encounter with a representative of South African racism.)

At the table the South African made a fuss about not liking garlic (nor did he drink). So Alazar deliberately ordered the spaghetti *alla pescatore*, which as we knew, had things like clams, squid,



shrimps and a bushel of garlic. We drank a 1961 Altinori Chianti and everybody ordered more food than an

army could eat. At meal's end our South African disclosed that garlic turned him off. By this time the entire Piazza San Francesco Lupo reeked of it. He revealed he couldn't consider seeing Alazar that evening (nor ever again, one presumes) so Alazar got rather annoyed and would speak to the South African any more; nor even pay for his tartuffe and cognac at Tre Scalini afterward.

We leave Alazar and Rome for such intriguing spots as Gubbio and Viareggio. Details concerning the pine forest at the latter resort would, no doubt, intrigue the reader. It's enough to say that, in the center of Viareggio (a corny but not unsympathetic seaside spot about the size of Atlantic City) lies a pine forest that has one star in the Michelin Guide but not even a mention in any of the gay guides.

At night people lurk in the shadows of the pines, alongside drives, and last summer my friend Joe—who ventured into the woods while I waited in the car, all eyes—had his watch and wallet stolen. It didn't matter because every time I see Joe his watch and wallet get stolen. The last time it happened was right in the lobby of my building, and before that in Riverside Park, the Villa Borghese (Rome), Haguib Bourghiba Park (Tunis), and the Sheraton Russell Hotel (Park Ave.).

In Paris several things happened; a waiter at the Cafe de Flore attacked a customer and almost killed him. James Baldwin was attacked by just about everybody, waiters included, but in a different way. He really is famous in Paris. He held court for a large crowd, mostly black (male and female) mostly gay and mostly speaking French. I wanted to introduce myself but got frightened lest he not know my name.

In France a hitchhiker is called an

auto-stop. My auto-stop that I picked up at Joigny and took to Paris showed up at my hotel and suggested we have dinner together. My French was only strong enough for an aperitif at the Select, whence he confided that he had spent a year in a seminary at Beause. "We prayed all the time," he replied when I asked what he did at the seminary, hoping to hear a tale right out of Roger Peyrefitte. "Who did you pray for, Pompidou and Nixon?" "We prayed, the whole year, for the camera the Apollo astronauts left on the moon because it wasn't working properly. Every day they made us pray for it."

The remainder of my time in Paris, waiting for the departure of Her Majesty's ship the Queen Elizabeth II, was spent shopping and not, as my students would have, at the Louvre. Those among the readership who admire banal lists will appreciate an itemization of purchases for importation to New York. Our GAY editors are not quite as fond of my boring lists as are a handful of demented readers, so let's keep our rosaries warm: 6 tubes Dijon mustard with tarragon, one jar fruit compote from Dijon, 6 boxes colored felt pens, 5 tubes Swedish organic toothpaste, four jars moutarde de Meaux, several rabbit and pheasant pates, 4 litres olive oil from Provence, several tins *foie gras*, one litre tarragon vinegar from Lyon, a copy of the *July Domus* containing an article on me by Pierre Restany, a tin of chestnut cream, several shirts, 2 suits, shoes, two bottles Campari bitter, one package black peppercorns, one package tarragon from Provence, two leather arm bags (one for Jose), four posters from the Pitti Gallery, four alabaster cups (for Jose), a rubber rain coat, two Borsalino hats, some Gucci ties... enough.

# Wanton Ads

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**YOUNG MALE, SLIM, GOOD LOOKING, BUTCH, WOULD LIKE TO MEET SAME UNDER 25 FOR FRIENDSHIP.** PHOTO APPRECIATED. PO BOX 163, PARKCHESTER STA., BRONX, NY 10462.

**SWEDISH WELL BUILT MALE, 27,** medium long blond hair, 6', 170 lbs. Interested in art, music, beachlife, hiking, yoga, cooking & really together living. Am looking for dynamite guy with beautiful smile who wants exciting relationship anywhere in U.S. Can travel now. Sincere only. No S/M. Write detailed answer with photo to: L. Nystrom, Storgatan 60, 11523 Stockholm, Sweden.

**ATTRACTIVE WHITE MALE** college student seeks attractive, intelligent, loving, white guy up to 27 for beautiful friendship. No hustlers, sadists, butches or fattiest! Photo helpful. Write to Jeff Caldwell, 2732 No. Kensington St., Arlington, Va. 22207.

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**STUDENT, 22, 5'11", 165,** desires young beauties around 22 for friendship & frolic. Tired of aimless bar scene & phonies. Photo & letter essential for reply. Box 7159, Station 'E,' London, Ontario.

**LIKE TO LIVE IN FLORIDA?** Key West welcomes you. Young, AC-DC chick for companion to young guy & girl, expenses paid, no stone butch, good thing for right girl. New Yorker preferred. Write with photo: PO Box 1731, Key West, Fla. 33040.

**SWEDISH MALE, 27,** medium long blond hair, 6', 170 lbs., interested in art, music, waterskiing, horseback riding, hiking, yoga, cooking, travelling & really together living. Am looking for dynamite guy who wants exciting relationship & study gurdjief anywhere in U.S. Can travel now. Sincere only, NO S/M. Write detailed answer with photo to: L. Nystrom, Storgatan 60, 11523 Stockholm, Sweden.

**PHYSICIAN, 34,** interested in travelling, wants intimate, permanent relationship with man (30-60 years). Write English, Polish, French. Doctor George, Ul. Morzysynska, 41 A, Warsaw, Poland.

**ROBOTS.** Rubber robots to stroke & caress you. The Ejaculator will tickle your hole & massage your thing. We make sex machines to intensify the act or replace it. Our catalogue \$1, refundable with 1st order. Enterprise 291, PO Box 291, Mendocino, Calif. 95460.

**YOUNG GUY, 25,** wishes to meet others between 18-35. Write to PO Box 181, Glend Ridge, New Jersey. Please send photo.

**21-YEAR-OLD GAY** photographer wishes to meet & talk with young fashion & advertising photographer. Write: Jim, Box 6624, Greenville, South Carolina 29606.

**ANYONE ELSE LIKE ME?** Good looking guy likes mens' black military dress, shoes, tall black motorcycle boots. Needs white butch male to share interests. Resident, 1308 28th St. So., Apt. 2, Arlington, Va.



## MIDTOWN'S Fuck Book BESTSELLER LIST

Courtesy of Bob at the Midtown Bookstore, 138 W. 42nd St. (947-7525).

1. **JUDAS' GOAT**, by Lance Lester, *A Pleasure Reader*, \$1.95.
2. **HIS OWN THING**, by Douglas Dean, *A Pleasure Reader*, \$1.95.
3. **FRONTIER BOYS**, by George Delecourt, *A Pleasure Reader*, \$1.95.
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Continued from page 7

## (Or Mrs. Cox's Cock)

be only a fine line between virtue and vice, especially when they stem from the same superstitious source?

The Marquis de Sade, product of a very Catholic background, spent his life perverting the concepts with which he had been indoctrinated as a child. Much of the old marquis can be seen in *Ad Majorem*, which is not surprising when one considers that its playwright wrote the fairly successful off-Broadway venture, *De Sade Illustrated*, based on de Sade's *Philosophy of the Bedroom*.

*Ad Majorem* consists of a conversation between Giorgio, an effeminate, pleasure-seeking priest of sorts and Renata, a depraved nun. Though both are dedicated to the worship of evil and vice, it becomes apparent that Giorgio is slightly lacking in faith and is ultimately punished by his cardinal, Fanny. When not on stage, Fanny seems to spend his time lifting his legs for soldiers, assuming that any would be interested. In fact, the entrance of Fanny does not bring the play to a climax, but dulls it. Whether this is the fault of the playwright or an extremely

monotonous actor, I couldn't say. The play ends with a posing-strap Fanny supposedly fucking a papier-mache Christ while a number of monks, also in posing straps, simulate an orgy.

*Ad Majorem* is at its best when Giorgio, nicely played by Steven Holt, is on stage. Every prance and every cackle highlight the author's intent. Although Francine Middleton is slightly less convincing as Renata, she is still a very positive force in the proceedings. Robert Stocking, grandly attired as a magistrate, has a definite flair for this sort of thing, while Gary Swartz as Fanny manages to blow his part, figuratively, that is.

The dialogue is always lively, if occasionally incoherent, and the pace is briskly set. The costumes by Robert Tadlock, the sets by Bob Oldson, and the wigs by Zaxarius deserve special mention. I can't whole-heartedly recommend *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, because many people would detest it. Mr. Bush is writing about what concerns him, and if you are similarly concerned, you might benefit from it.

Continued from page 11

# The Life of Ray Bourbon:

Unwilling to do material he thought dirty, outside of the drug scene, hostile to the Syndicate, there was no place for Bourbon in the late Fifties and the Sick Decade that followed. There was no room for a gentleman or for subtle comedy. The public wanted insult and put-down jokes. Homosexuality was in all the headlines and one couldn't joke about such a deadly serious "social problem."

Rae's records went off the market because of lack of demand. Club dates became harder to get, and the palmy days of Carnegie Hall, Washington's National Theatre and command performances before Franco in Madrid's Teatro Lyrico were over. It was small towns and small clubs—when there was work at all.

In 1967 Bourbon was driving across Texas to keep a booking. His car caught fire and burned, leaving him helpless, penniless, and stranded. Fortunately, his special trailer, in which he hauled his beloved cats and dogs, escaped damage.

With his wardrobe in ashes, Rae couldn't keep his date. The loyal Mr. Wright wired him money to live on until his next engagement (months later in Kansas City). Bourbon put his pets in the care of a kennel/petshop-owner/veterinarian (stories conflict as to which he was).

In the interim, Rae was robbed and shot in the head. Friends advised him to buy a gun for protection, and he did. Word came that the person keeping his pets had sold them/given them away/turned them over to a vivisectionist (again, stories vary). But other things looked brighter. He was offered a small role in *Myra Breckinridge*, he had some bookings, and he was now traveling with a hitchhiker he'd picked up.

Somehow, and the stories conflict so much it's become almost impossible to guess the truth, the person who had disposed of the pets was killed, shot, they say, with Rae's gun. The hitchhiker/companion was convicted of the murder. Rae, who all agree was nowhere near the murder scene, was charged with masterminding the murder and was arraigned, quickly tried, and sentenced to life in jail by a Brownwood, Texas jury.

When you're 78 years old, have a long history of heart attacks, and suffer from leukemia, "life" is not long. Rae's only wish, expressed to all who wrote him, was to die outside of jail. His jailers were as nice as they could be, giving him every courtesy, even letting him walk outside. One evening they locked him out of jail, and he spent the night trying to get back in. What else can you do when you're old, sick, forgotten and flat broke?

His friends heard about his fate and started a defense fund to appeal the case. People who had enjoyed his shows and records wrote, expressing sympathy, sometimes enclosing a few dollars. Some of the letters, the ones he told me pleased

him most, were from gay people telling him that he'd helped them adjust to and accept their homosexuality in the beginning, when self-acceptance is hard to achieve.

Jim Gardner and the U.T.C. Records found that the public was again interested in Rae Bourbon. Plans were made to re-release the records, both to satisfy public demand and earn money for the defense fund. "Nothing in the record business is fast," Mr. Gardner said. "Before we could get the records out, poor Rae was dead. I wish he could see how interested his gay friends still are in him. We put 100 of his records in the Studio Bookshop. Less than seven days later, 79 of them were sold. Sales figures from the rest of the nation are equally cheering. I wish he could know this. He was the only gay comic in the business and he's still in the business. God loves him."

Rae's records will now go to the creation of a permanent memorial to the great artist, perhaps a scholarship fund to help poor gays attend college, or a fund to cover medical and/or housing expenses for other homosexuals who suddenly find themselves old, indigent and sick.

"I'd like to see Rae's records where they should be," says Jim Gardner, "in the homes of every gay couple, every young gay person, everyone who likes to hear something a little bit witty. I'm not trying to sell records. At these prices, I'm not making much. But Rae has something to say to all of us. And this is an era of nostalgia and he is gay nostalgia. If we can look at Mae West, W.C. Fields, Buster Keaton..." he trails off, his eyes misty.

Yeah, I guess old-style gay life is now ready to become "nostalgia." The raids of the late Fifties and early Sixties that were part of our everyday life probably look as silly and as far away to the "now" generation as Prohibition and dance marathons did to me when I was twenty.

But then, some things never change. I suppose a gathering of the radical Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries are a bit similar to those parties of the Twenties that Bourbon camped about, affairs where "Young men turned into young women right before your very eyes. Lipstick, powder puffs—oh, it's grand." And maybe when they get raided, it is like the end of another of Rae's party descriptions, when the cops came in and the "place looked like an explosion at Elizabeth Ardens'... make-up flying everywhere!"

Why don't you buy some Rae Bourbon records? Grab a bit of gay history, some nostalgia, old-time camp, and a few belly laughs. I'm sure you'll enjoy meeting the fabulous Mr. Bourbon who entertained three generations of gay people and still has words of wisdom and liberation for the Seventies.

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**SUNDAY BLOODY**

wife, Birimisa raises the question: are fags really latent lesbians? In order to accept the rest of the scene, one has to agree that they are, or at least that Georgie's wife is. By being so general, Birimisa fails to prove these charges against the particular character in question, so that his final statement—that fascism is founded on closet queerness and sexual cowardice—is considerably weakened. I think that these and other questions posed are to the role of the Jewish doctor as made his portrayal of Oscar Wilde so touching some years ago.

Miss Jackson? Well, for those of you who felt I was too unkind, regarding her performance as Nina in *The Music Lovers*, I am pleased to report that she has at least temporarily abandoned the more baroque neuroses and involuntary muscular spasms. I dislike seeing an excellent actress rely solely on mannerisms and stereotyping. In *Sunday*, she is a believable modern woman; arrogant, yet unsure; proud, yet sensibly humble enough to plead for the love she knows is slipping from her; spoiled, generous, selfish, selfless. It is a perfectly conceived and performed role and it renders Miss Jackson's Academy Award premature. I cavil only with her perpetual freedom in exposing what is not one of the world's more attractive bodies. Freedom from inhibitions should always be tempered by realistic knowledge of one's physical limitations. In other words, the dame looks better draped. Or, as one gentleman says to another in the film, when an ancient and drunken ingenue tries to disrobe at a party: "Oh-oh, here comes the tired old tits again."

*Sunday, Bloody Sunday* is not a picture for or about gays. It is for and about reasonably sensitive human beings. If you need hard-core, hie thee to the Park-Miller, or wait patiently for the video cassette christening. However, I cannot help but specifically recommend this film to all the gays who have been continually hurt (or left unsatisfied) by intentional and unnecessary misrepresentation on the screen. Schlesinger's forte, as with that of the other few accomplished directors, is in the artful employment of chimera, bits of mosaic which add up to a believable and satisfying whole. I urge you to spend a couple of hours investigating the product of truthfulness and integrity.

**WHAT HAVE WE GOT GOING FOR OURSELVES?**

to question their standards and methods, for such questioning is hardly a true confrontation, a repudiation of a power structure that is repulsed by life.

The strangest thing about all this is that many so-called radicals, or counter-culture people, in their aspiration for the golden apple of acceptance, for a slice of social power and control, are in a curious way greater admirers and defenders of the very sanctity of the system than those who truly are within the system itself. This is the mark of people who need institutions, apart from their necessary functions, as a vehicle for asserting their own personal identity, and this is very much a mark of the middle class, which in its insecurities has to fancy itself as especially pure and good, the moral keepers of us all, from the Ozarks to the Mekong Delta. As Leitch put it: "The emphasis today is on reconciling homosexuality and middle-class 'virtue'... Don't make fun of the fraudulence of organized religion and politics; start churches, join political alliances, and become a fraud yourself." While Leitch yearns for "the good old days," he implies that most of the people who have come out since Liberation are middle class. "The bourgeoisie couldn't accept the hedonism or make the break with conventionalities; they usually ended up in the closet queen brigade... The middle class is unable to deal with sexuality. They want to translate homosexuality out of sexuality and into terms with which they can deal: politics, religion, minority-group status." Of course a lot of people, largely middle-class as Leitch accurately states, would probably never have come out if it hadn't been for Liberation, myself

included (though I am not middle-class, but sort of still fit the pattern because I sorely desire middle-class money). I do not believe that Mr. Leitch is insensitive to the positive effect Liberation has had, nor do I think he is unaware of the need to strive for greater honesty and humanity, as his subsequent article on Mart Crowley clearly indicates. One thing he is trying to do, now that we're all liberated, is to remind us of "gay's being fun, hedonistic, campy and outrageous." His reminiscences in the "Sex in Homosexual" article evoke this quality very well, though we also see once again the truth to the statement that one picture is worth a thousand words. I mean, don't those two just look really fine together!

Even some straight people recognize what Leitch is talking about. I have noted with amusement some Long Island married couples—and not just straight, but super straight—who, looking for a lively place to go dancing, end up at Cherry Grove, thumbing their noses at "those weirdos" while at the same time being obviously turned on by the comparative intensity and vitality of the crowd. That's what we really have going for us, chillen. Vitality. Ergo, what this country bumpkin wants to say now is this: the way the system works is to exact a price of all petitioners who seek redress. The Devil exacted Faust's soul as payment; the system makes out even better and gets your vitality. We who need, and appreciate, and can do so much with our vitality must guard against ever agreeing to this bargain, for without it our most special and remarkable existence is lost, while with it we fly high about the small booms of a gelded society.

**HE KISSED THE BOYS**

too complex to be successfully dealt with in such a short time span. But it was a worthwhile try.

Georgie's final attempt to perfect his fantasy life through the use of drugs illustrates another idea and a fitting idea in which to end the play—that a man's fantasy life is very private and that he is unable to share this precious part of him with others. While showing some stag movies to a friend, skillfully played by Geoff Springer, Georgie is shattered when the friend laughs at the stupid couple on the screen. While the friend sees the couple as two dumb weightlifters dully making love in front of a porn director's camera, Georgie can only see a sincere, beautiful relationship enacted before his eyes. When his friend leaves, Georgie is left alone to sniff his poppers and aerosol cans and to indulge his masturbatory dreams, ultimately crying out in agony that his friend couldn't see what he alone could see. After this scene, I felt sort of let down. I wanted to empathize with Georgie, but I was unable to. What was the playwright trying to say? That life is a solitary and lonely fantasy? If so, it's a nice proposition, but how is one supposed to react to it? I felt that I was being called upon to react emotionally in some way to Georgie's final realization, but I couldn't find any justification for it. Perhaps I missed a point. If so, I apologize to the playwright.

At any rate, I believe that George Birimisa is a very talented playwright and should not be overlooked. I hope that heterosexuals as well as homosexuals go to see his play, basically because he is dealing in universals that affect us all. When he is successful, he is totally electric. When he fails, he still manages to pump fresh blood into the theatre's very tired veins.

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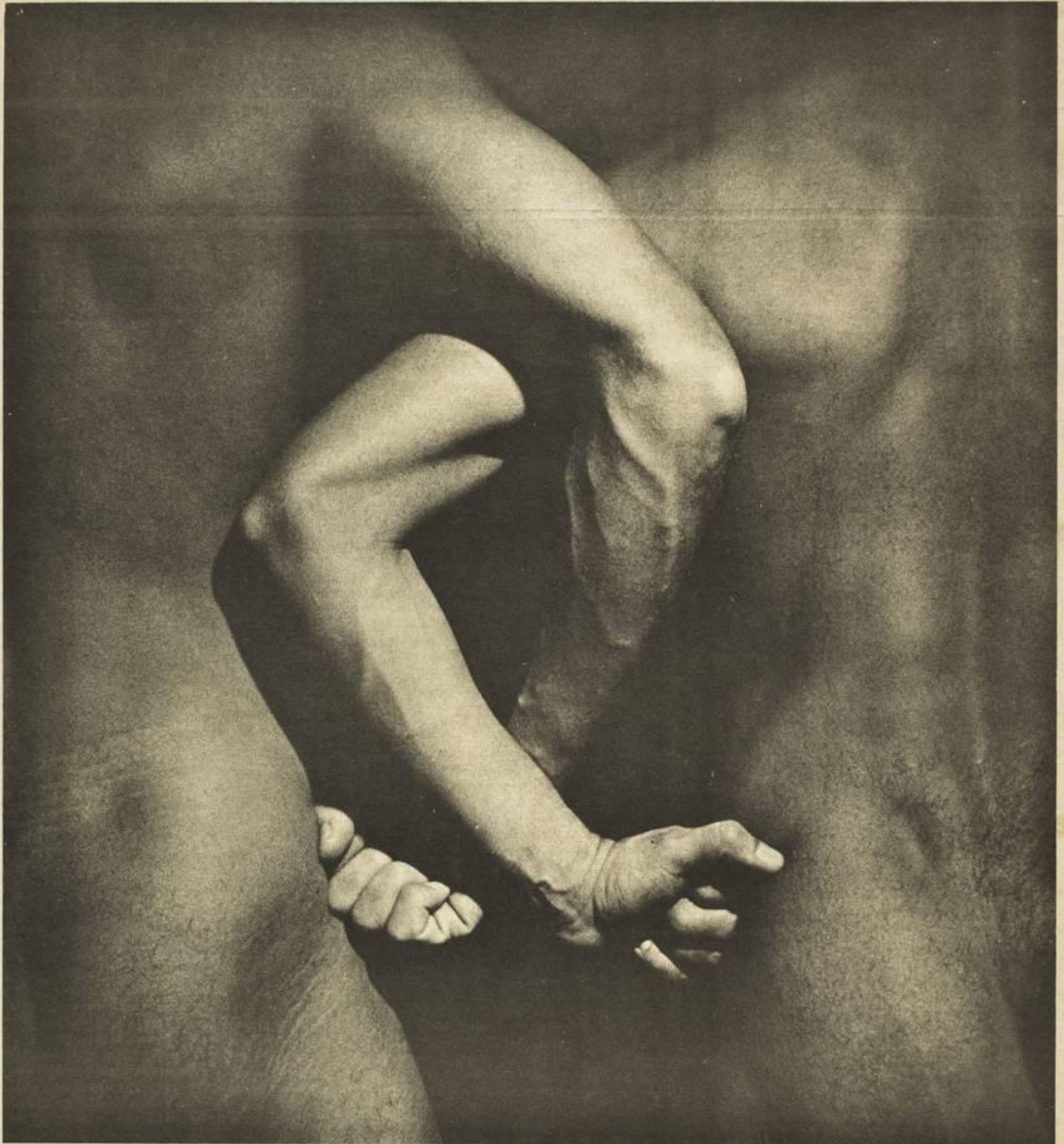
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