

The Boys in the Bind

Homosexuals and Civil Rights— The Silent Ones Are Speaking Up

BY BERNARD GAVZER
Associated Press

Twenty-six, ex-Marine, high school football player, B.A. in education.

"That's about my resume, condensed," says a husky young man. "One day, when I'm brave enough, I'll add another word. Homosexual."

When he does, it'll probably happen in a small Midwest town.

"I've dreamed of living in a place like that, and teaching there," he says. "If I did, I wouldn't hide any more. I'd go to the people and tell them I'm gay and, that I don't want to seduce their 8-year-old sons or turn them into flaming faggots."

But to this young man, and to growing numbers of homosexuals, the fact that they have unconventional sexual preferences should not determine whether or not they can have any occupation.

These are the homosexuals who—under the impetus of nationwide ferment on many civil rights fronts—are determined to make an issue of homosexual civil rights. As more and more opt to quit a double life, the prospect is that the issue will confront Americans in small towns as well as big cities.

While the number of vocal, public homosexuals is small, polls indicate from 4 million to 15 million persons are homosexual.

Mattachine Society

Today's militancy grew from a very modest, uncertain band of six California homosexuals who founded the first openly homosexual organization in the United States in the early 1950s.

They called it the Mattachine Society, a name taken from the Middle Ages court jesters who, behind masks and under the guise of humor, spoke the truth to the king.

The society was a sort of civil liberties association for homosexuals. Its goals then were to advise homosexuals on how to behave in public and avoid blackmail or arrest.

"In 1960, we became the sort of NAACP of gay life," says Dr. Frank Kameny, a World War II veteran and founder in 1961 of the Washington, D.C., Mattachine Society. Kameny's doctorate is in astronomy from Harvard University.

"We decided not only to enlighten the public through education programs and publicity, but to address ourselves through mail campaigns to all congressmen. We provided legal counsel for homosexuals arrested or discharged from employment."

Mattachine's Causes
The Washington Mattachine has been involved in court actions challenging constitutionality of bans against federal employment, firings and discharges from the armed services.

In Miami, they were behind a former cab driver's suit claiming homosexuals have a constitutional right to congregate and be served in bars. They lost.

In Washington, they challenged the Civil Service Commission's discharge of a NASA budget analyst. A federal district court ruled the commission could not fire him. But in 1970, the Supreme Court turned down tests of

the government's authority to fire homosexuals and to withhold security clearance.

Gaydom's SDS

Now, there has arisen a sort of SDS in gaydom—The Gay Liberation Front, which finds itself turned on to a variety of civil rights causes, from the women's liberation movement to the Black Panthers' cause. More tightly focused on issues of gay life, but still militant, is the Gay Activists Alliance. They are out for confrontation.

One 58-year-old homosexual, who hides his homosexuality, sees encouraging signs that the public will be more sympathetic about homosexuality, as a result of plays and movies such as "Boys in the Band," and the report of the Hooker Task Force, which made an intensive study of homosexuality under government auspices.

"The fact that the federal government was involved in a genuine attempt to study homosexuality is a landmark in itself," he says.

Opposes Militants

Another homosexual, insisting on anonymity, bitterly opposes the militants as irresponsibly frightening heterosexuals. He says:

"It is wrong to make them think that homosexuals truly want to remake the entire society. It is evil to speak of extremes of marriage and joint legal status. To talk of adopting children is to deal in lies because homosexuals know better than anyone else that their union could not tolerate the responsibility. It is simple-minded and foolish for anyone to argue or propose

that there will ever be anything more than a very small minority who would prefer to be exclusively homosexual.

"What homosexuals can legitimately and honestly seek is the end of repression and sanctions."

All Walks of Life

The Hooker Task Force report—perhaps one of the most thorough investigations of homosexuality—observed that the subject of homosexuality is "often viewed with either disgust or anxiety, emotions which interfere with an objective understanding of the problem." It made these comments:

"Homosexual individuals can be found in all walks of life, at all socioeconomic levels, among all cultural groups within American society, and in rural as well as urban areas.

"Homosexuality presents a major problem for our society largely because of the amount of injustice and suffering entailed in it not only for the homosexual but also for those concerned about him."

Behind the Laws

Child molestation lies at the root of most modern laws and attitudes proscribing homosexuality. There appears to be no decisive evidence to demonstrate that active homosexuals commit a substantial amount, abnormal amount of even significant amount of such offenses.

A significant question as it relates to young boys is whether it is possible to determine whether a boy of 5 or 6 has already been fixed upon

a path which inclines him toward homosexuality.

Dr. John E. Adams, a National Institute of Mental Health expert, says he is convinced "there is no evidence that being homosexual is a priori evidence of being sick or mentally ill. But I do very strongly believe that being a homosexual increases the risk of mental illness because it is a high risk life due to its many stresses."

Tragedy of Life

To some homosexuals the tragedy of life isn't being homosexual but in being unable to cope with it and unable to cope with the social stigma and legal prohibitions.

The threat of blackmail of sex deviates has been the traditional foundation of prohibition against employing them in sensitive jobs.

"So far as is known, there has been no publicized incident of blackmail involving national security because of a person's homosexuality," says Kameny, the Washington Mattachine founder.

If a person is called for armed service or attempts to enlist and he is found to be a homosexual, he will not be inducted. It was on this basic premise that some young men, opposed to Vietnam war



AP Photo
**DEMONSTRATORS MARCH FOR PROTECTION OF HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS
Pair in Foreground Clasp Hands as They Picket New York City Hall**

or the draft, claimed they were homosexuals.

"Such a person has to show he has been engaged in homosexual activities over a period of years or have proof that he has been under psychiatric treatment for homosexuality or prove it through other tests," said Lt. Col. William Tyson Jr., a Pentagon spokesman.

'Thou Shalt Not'

There are several references to homosexuality in Mosaic law and the Bible, and except for the warmth in which it is described in the story of David and Jonathan, the word is thou shalt not. St. Paul condemned it, and in Mosaic law the proscription comes from Leviticus: "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination."

But prohibition, degradation, infamy, abuse—even a litany of plagues—has not stopped homosexuality—among either sex.

"I would say that in a lesbian relationship there is considerable difference than with males," says a young lesbian. "Society has always accepted the idea of two maidens living together until they fall over with old age."

'Gay Day' Today

There was the period of June 28-29 last year when police raided The Stonewall, a

gay bar on Greenwich Village's Christopher St. The action went from a holiday adventure to riot proportions when the gays struck back, forcing the raiding police into the bar, which was then set afire.

As a result, the event has grown into an exploitable rallying cause.

Now, through their jour-

nals, newspapers and newsletters, the call is for a national day of observance—a sort of Gay Day—to be held today.

"It may be effective as publicity," says a homosexual with grave reservations about militancy, "but I think that what counts is trying to get people to deal with facts rather than the myth."

OLD, NEW TABOOS COVER ANCIENT HAWAII TEMPLE

Honolulu (AP) — Some old and new taboos will be imposed when Kaneaki, largest of Oahu's ancient Hawaiian temples, is opened to the public this summer.

Women's liberation aside, ladies will be banned from the temple's upper platform—lest Lono, the god of peace, be upset.

"We didn't want to offend Hawaiians who revere the traditions of their ancestors," said Russell Apple, a historian for the National Park Service.

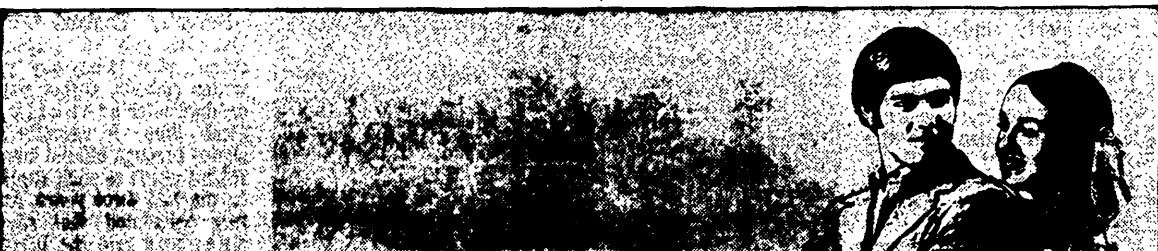
Smoking will be forbidden, too, because of the dry pill grass.

Honolulu's Bishop Museum and the National Park Service are restoring the four-century-old temple, in which Hawaii's most powerful king is believed to have sought the blessing for his fleet of longboats.

Apple said all the work is being done by hand, using only the ancient Hawaiian housebuilding arts and materials. "There isn't a single nail," he said.

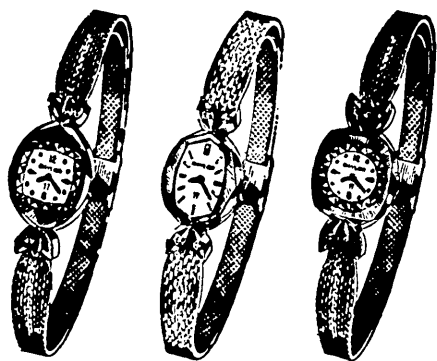
The restored temple features two prayer towers, an altar, two grass houses and five hand-carved images, including one of the god Lono.

The site was dedicated with a hoomanalo, "a sweetening ceremony to remove any bitterness or bad influences left from the old days," Apple said.



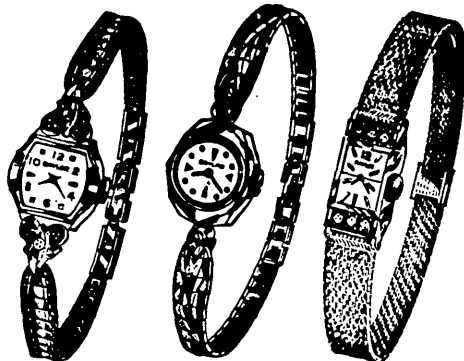
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