come out!
a liberation forum for the gay community

GAY LIBERATION FRONT
Vol 1 No 4 NEW YORK JUNE JULY 1970 50c outside NYC

Vol 1, #4, pg 1
CHRISTOPHER STREET LIBERATION DAY
JUNE 28, 1970
Dear Gay Friends,

Thank you for your paper and for your efforts to unite us with each other and with those of other oppressed minority groups in our pursuit of common goals. I like your political stand, I like the underlying philosophy of your paper which insists upon homosexuality as a potentially valuable form of human sexual expression. I like your business stand which refuses to succeed by displaying irresponsibly erotic materials (assuming there is a responsible editor), and I like those of you who have revealed themselves personally in the pages of COME OUT.

So, here's a check in the amount of $10.00 for 25 issues, or to help you stay in business. Or, even better, put me on the list for $5.00 worth of papers, and keep the other $5.00 as a donation to your (our?) center.

I think you are reaching the good people and helping them find the inner strength to put themselves on the line for homosexuality. So cheers and keep pushing!

Love — Judy Foe
Doctoral Student
Florida State Univ.

To Whom It May Concern:

Please send me a sample of "Come Out."

Needless to say, I am not a homosexual. In fact, I even think of another woman touching me. It makes me want to puke. If any of my children (five) turn out to be a homo — I will accept it with the feeling of love that I feel toward them today.

Hooray! for love and understanding. And piss on what narrow minded people think. Thank you for letting me express myself.

Sincerely,
Mr. Helen Drouillard

P.S. I wish that I were rich so that I could support your cause.

COMING OUT! is published by an open GLF Collective.
The basic Staff — editors, layout, co-ordinators, etc. — is drawn by lots and changes with each issue. Open contributor's Meetings are held regularly and EVERYONE is encouraged to submit articles, features, artwork, ideas, and criticism. COME OUT — a liberation forum for the Gay Community — is YOUR Newspaper.

Vol 1, #4, page 2
Dear Contributor:

We shall welcome your contribution to COME OUT because you understand the American Sexual Code of Conduct is a large and necessary part of the apparatus which perverts the creative powers of the majority into wars, occupations, agencies and toils to increase the powers of a diseased minority who wish either to rule over many others or to wallow in the wealth they steal from the lands and people who produced it — and because you are an artist, whether you are a poet, a novelist, a critic, a political analyst, reportage, Rock, alexandrine sonnets, cartoons of social comment, or has heretofore consisted in raising other children, or trying to dignify the ones imprisoned by delusions of American parenthood or The Affluent Society's slums of crime and scarce, or even if you had, before you recognized the evil of manipulating humans into ravenous masses, perverted your birthright selling your creativity to the sales promotion scum which floats upon the swelling cesspools of consummation blighting America from Madison Avenue to Wilshire Boulevard; or if you have been that purest form of artist, making the music, the poetry, of your thoughts, your visions, drawings, photographs, or of your own holy body and presence wherever you happen to be, for any who happen along, and have come to understand that intercourse with other artists, over such circuitry as COME OUT hopes to provide, may be the only way to generate force enough to repel thepophistic virus of greed and malignant sexual sublimations which have made America an empire as predatory and hypocritical as any yet to mar the planet.

We shall welcome your contribution because you have come to understand that such as photographs of undraped human bodies loving, being loved, or simply being, are expressions of the dignity which our species can radiate when free, and hence your art subverts the purposes, of this society in which nude-photos become a high-profit substitute for fleshlive, some glossy centerfolds in pseudo-exploitation magazines of being "in," a society in which profiteer artists consider the less aware no more than a mass to be inked and brutalized, a herd of body-cavities to be glutted with low-quality blueberry cheese-cake mass-produced at high profit rates, to be deceived into thinking they are like supposedly beautiful people who gamble in gowns and cutaways on cruise-liners outside the three-mile limit, or like youthful general someday superior as they thoughtless stand, suntan-oiled and nursing bottles of soda-pop on sandy beaches, — when the worst of them are the bloating slaves of the consumerism of a bloating empire, trying to satisfy their yearnings for human contact with the credit-card contacts or profitmaking or by mugging the garbage produce of the snack-food industry while they sit, hour after degraded hour, in their imitation aristocratic furniture, before their televisions, watching such as an empty-headed astronaut, competing unsuccessfully with a gigemegi in persian pajamas who sleeps in a bottle and not in his bed — nor in any other's, presumably — and never peeks while he showers to purge himself of all possibility of body-odor callowness and of his erotic humanity.

Because you know that artists do sell themselves to the villains —that a superb film editor, for example, could use her talents to produce a movie portraying the Nazi rise to power as a beautiful revolution — we shall welcome your observations of the mass media in America today, your reviews of books, movies, plays and television features, particularly those which put a port to define and celebrate The New Sexuality, The Liberated Generations, The New Freedoms, because you understand the profiteer manipulators are capable of perverting the desperately quickening need of humans to get back to loving each other — and finding sexual expressions of their love, for their own as well as the other sexes — into such as the money-making mass-minded pseudo-togetherness of Rock'n'Roll bioravos or manifestoes advocating spontaneous resolution and the creation of utopian nations stoned into a docility which is nothing if not premature, given the war-machine economies of Western Civilization — and because you want to share with those awakening politically within the Gay Community, as well as with other groups dedicated to transforming this inhuman society, your knowledge of any work of art which is to say any genuine expression of rebellion — which exposes or transcends the chicaneries of the American Empire, and thereby helps point the way out of the job-and-television emptiness and consuming madness alarmed by all excess the schizoid role-players and the power-addicts who dominate them.

We shall welcome your contribution because you understand that every human born, if the planet is much longer to endure in tolerable form, must be allowed to become not only an artist, but an artist who has learned that none of us is free until we all are, until we have gone far beyond societies which consider sexual expressions of love of one's own sex queer and military service manly.

Because you understand that all art intimate, however fleeting, the dignity which all humanity could reach — as much when it condemns societies which rob us of our dignity as when it vibrates with the freedom which is our birthright; that art grows out of our sense of unity with all the life and natural-beauty of earth, which the managerial industrialize from under us even faster than it is detached and bombed away by militarists; that art will be supreme in societies based on genuine cooperation and mostly degenerates to mock-heroics and television commercials in the cultures of competition, which are born of terror, of men's having to mistrust other men's motives, cultures in which innocent stres pay heavy premiums because they fear other men might harm their children if they died untruly — in the very cultures they so desperately praise and defend from change — we shall welcome your contributions which encourage all our brothers and sisters, wherever they are, whatever their ages, to struggle for their sexual freedom, their right to love one another without feeling barred by sex or class or which must win, because to do so is to affirm that all of us can live together peacefully, fully, once the profiteers and powermongers have been eliminated, that we can all accept responsibility for the orphaned, hungry, sick and lonely, inspiring them to become artists and thereby wholly human, and to resist all attempts to coax or coerce their creative powers into policing, power-brokering, profaning, profiteering — because the struggle to liberate us all from the degradations of offices, assembly lines, best-of-burden days in mines and on subsistence farms — and because not to struggle into lapses into the inhibitions of mafia bars, class-conscious clubs and squalid clubs, making money, earning money, or toiling without any why at all, until we are the dunes of totalitarianism triumphant, too bereft of grace to cease metabolizing.

Because you understand that all liberating art is given love and all hate perverted, purchased, loved, COME OUT will not — no long as those of us now on watch for you remain here — insult you by offering you payment in money for your contribution, even in the unlikely event that we receive any money; it will go toward a community center, and improving the circulation, through COME OUT of as many of your contributions as we can reproduce within the limits budget and production and reception impose on any medium, be it underground newspaper, or videotape, and we shall hope to greet you one day soon within the strictly walls and rocking music of our community centers, or along the trails we trust will turn out infinitely from the mingling of our minds, our souls, our liberating artistry.

Because we understand, we, most probably a little more than most, the beauty of the human body is an intuition of the inner grace attainable by all who live upon our planet, after liberation from all toil which doesn't lead directly to the end of toil for all, when all mankind becomes the fullest, final work of art, singing, playing instruments, photographing, sculpting visions, making love and being poets, teaching and learning and sporting, tossing basketballs and other balls, like dolphins in the frothed waters, beneath a clarity of purifying breeze — and even then we'll welcome all your contributions.

Because we have a heavy contribution we could make to all that's gonna soon be going down.

Your COME OUT watch, as of Spring, 1970, looking for your help, beyond the spring of twenty seventies.

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COME OUT AND THE GAY PRESS: Members of the COME OUT Collective confronted the audience at a meeting of The West Side Discussion Group when all efforts to be included in a symposium on The Gay Press failed. One man had arbitrarily decided that the Gay Press consisted of only two newspapers and GLF decided this ruling should be brought before the people. The Collective members presented themselves and their case to the general membership on Wednesday, April 8, and asked for a vote on the ruling. The vote was overwhelmingly in GLF's favor and COME OUT was seated on the panel.

THE GUARDIAN. The National Guardian, a Left weekly, was liberated by a group of former employees, Media Workshop people, and two GLF members—Martha Shelley and Dan Smith. The action was a result of a strike by Guardian Staff members who demanded a restructuring of the paper and a policy more responsive to the Movement. The building was cleared the next day and no arrests were made. GLF demanded and received space in the new Liberated Guardian which is now being published by a newly-formed collective.

GAY ORGANIZATIONS: GLF participated in a symposium on Gay organizations sponsored by WODG. Arielle Kramer and Steve Dziray, representing GLF, discussed its goals, accomplishments, and politics.

LIBERATION IN THE SCHOOLS: GLF participated in a discussion with high school students at The Washington Square Pecce Center. Two representatives from Women's Liberation and Bob Kohler from GLF conducted an open forum with approximately fifty students.

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NEW HAVEN - MAY DAY: A contingent from GLF went to Yale in support of The Panther 21. The following is a speech made during the New Haven Rally by GLF's Jim Fournet:

"The proud, strong homosexual brothers and sisters who are in New Haven to show support for the Black Panther Party and its struggle, and to identify with Bobby Seale and all the prisoners that are being held, bring you greetings.

The homosexual brothers and sisters who are in this crowd have a complaint to make. The very oppression that makes us identify with the Black Panther Party and all oppressed people, which makes us revolutionaries, which makes us work for a society and vision which is so far beyond what we live in today, we find that oppressiveness pervades this so-called liberated zone. It is that very oppressiveness that is stopping us from organizing our community, which is stopping us from making a revolution, and we call upon every radical here today to Off the word forgot, to Off the sexism which pervades this place and to begin to deal with their own feelings about the homosexual brothers and sisters.

We demand that you treat us as revolutionaries. We demand that you no longer look upon us as sex objects, that you judge us in the total integration of our humanity. We are on the barricades. We are submitting ourselves to the discipline that we see in the vanguard leadership here and there will only be a revolution when all oppressed people work together.

No elitism. No 'sexism. All power to Gay people. ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

GLF gay-in

EARTH DAY: The Planned Parenthood Cell of GLF handed out the following leaflet to thousands of receptive and uncommonly enthusiastic people on Fourteenth Street: "Homosexuality is the only answer to the problem of over-population."--Pope John XXII

MAY 10 - SUNDAY: GLF held its first GAY-IN in Central Park. This event was deliberately underplayed by GLF in deference to the murders at Kent State, the Student Strikes, and the general feeling of anger that engulfed the Movement that week.

PHOTO BY ELLEN BEDER.
by steve danksy

Every man growing up in this culture is programmed to systematically oppress, dehumanize, objectify and rape women. A man’s cock, a biological accident, becomes their weapon of oppression. A woman’s reproductive power is the key to understanding this birthright. Every expression of violence against women is hereditary. All men are male supremacists. Gay men are no exception to the maxim.

The ability to express homosexuality, however, is not a sign of weakness or lack of masculinity. The only sign of weakness in the male-dominated heterosexual society is the behavior of men who propagate this myth. Heterosexual men are driven to abuse women because they can’t directly express the love they have for each other. A man’s overt expression of love is rendered impotent by homophobia, which is why they are forced to fuck their females. This observation has been born of the experience of most women in the communal situation in the hip counter-culture.

Male homosexuality is the undercurrent to the surface, caused by the nature of the taboos placed upon homosociality by this male-dominated heterosexual society. Straight men abhor homosociality because of its sexuality and masculinity. This is the process for another male to become gay. Heterosexual men are driven to abuse women because they can’t directly express the love they have for each other. A man’s overt expression of love is rendered impotent by homophobia, which is why they are forced to fuck their females. This observation has been born of the experience of most women in the communal situation in the hip counter-culture.

Male homosexuality could be the first attempt at the non-assertion of cultural homophobia. It could be the beginning of a movement that we have not even imagined. A genuine effort to change the essence of male supremacy, a change that would be met with the fury of that homophobia.

The goal of G.L.F. is the establishment of a community center, a community center is proposed as an alternative to those exploitative institutions that are part of the male supremacy. It hasn’t avoided the alternative which already exists in each of us. We can’t wait for a building as it is, if a pile of bricks, was the answer to our oppression. We have been here all along, free, equal, ours, and we have always been here. We have been here all along, free, equal, ours, and we have always been here. We have been here all along, free, equal, ours, and we have always been here. We have been here all along, free, equal, ours, and we have always been here.

G.L.F. men have tirelessly fought for the presence of straight men who have come with their tongues and cocks dangling, ready to show G.L.F. women that all lesbians need is a true brother of the same lay. All the men suggest that heterosexual men believe it or not, get a charge out of female homosexuality. Playboy even promotes what they call Bisexuality in women, but not in men. Men have said the obvious: that bisexuality is practice is exclusive or impossible.

Men put themselves up against homosociality, but they are overwhelmed by our male presence and either leave or are forced to either way that doesn’t satisfy the whole struggle to find others of the same lay. G.L.F. men have either avoided or attacked the most important movement in the world today: the struggle for the liberation of women. Any organization which does not challenge the radical assumptions that are the bases of our society, any organization that does not challenge the collective violence that is the key to understanding any group of women, is not a challenge to this society. G.L.F. must be a challenge to this society. G.L.F. must be a challenge to this society.

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We are backed to the wall. There is no turning back. Our rage will no longer eat at our bowels. We have seen who has done it. We can feel him, identify him. At the Fireside old R.A.T. men called a meeting in the community to discuss with community support, tactics by which they could sabotage the R.A.T. women’s collective. At the Fireside I met my oppressor. I met That. I was angry. My “brothers” in the movement. They pleaded: “Don’t be distrustful. Work with me for the revolution.” But it is a revolution born of their discontent: It is a Man revolution. The Man revolution with women to fuck, beat, their children, to wound, and cock their masks. Pregos are to be put away. They are the same men who put me behind barred wire in Cuba. They watched me peek out at what I had fought along side of them for; what they had fought for. They are the same white supremacist who took black babies and gave them far too. They didn’t give up their white skin privileges. Instead they waited for blacks to suffer the same conditions with which they had been subjected. That night R.A.T men called the women togethers and spell the women’s R.A.T collective with a K. But R.A.T. men we know you are America. You are not America. Women and gay people will stop your revolution. It is a Man counter-revolution.

I don’t want your help, understand, that’s why I can recognize that, your message is fake. Your love is oppression; it means bondage. I will fight the capitalists, that is inevitable. Capitalism is another word for male supremacy. You, movement has never been in the same boat. When you are, you are ruled out. They make you fighting to keep your inherited power. Listen Man, give it up or go under. Your universe is being smashed. Your fantasy is being challenged. My soul won’t be cast into your drunken mugs. A leg of barbarics will come on: where side will you be?"
Mira, Young Lord

Mira la nena, cantándole liendo delante,
bañándose pasos de gracia delante,
de miras mirando de por dentro tu alma.

Mira la nena, eriza los lúos,
arrodilladas y guerrillas que gritan —
"¡Viva los machos que somos!"
— delante del mundo que quieren amar.

Mira la nena, que a ti representa,
las alas color de cofre y castañas
de tus sueños con sexos por razones unidos,
con el mundo después de las liberaciones.

Camaradas cáteds nacen de nuevo.
Penínsulas tristes no van a quedan ni criadas de bancos, ni de soldados,
creyéndote machos al herir Mozambique.

Mira la nena, caballero de antes,
conquistador de aquel tan lejano entonces,
hecho por fin revolucionaria
por tierras podridas que crecen caudillos.

corporaciones, y menstral de ricos
con derechos de organizar a muchísimos otros en masas obreras, dictatorías
— "Miren Ustedes. Sus esfuerzos han un país muy fuerte."

Mira la nena, contestándoles — "Miren Ustedes también. De planetas no hay más de uno para nosotros, hijos de tierra, y a todos pertenece, y a toditas también.

Luchuromos en contra de todo trabajo
que no contribuye al fin del trabajo,
el gozar permanente del planeta entero
por todos los nenes nacidos, y a nacer."

Mira la nena, cabalgando ahora,
detrás del jinete de sombra almizclera,
del gran castellano, hincando, volando,
llamando los cambios por todo el mundo.

Y la mira la luna, la mira y mira,
besando el cuello a su libre infante,
con su lengua que dice — "Vente, Si, vente.
A menudo, si quieres. De nuevo, de nuevo.

Hay camaradas aquí, bastante
para cantante, por cien mil visitas,
lecciones de luchas ya fracasadas,
visiones de gozos del gran porvenir."

Mira tu nena, mi joven infanta.
Baila con ella, tu majestuosa idonia,
de un pleno de lazo y de generalito —
hecho rió sonoro de la liberación.


A TIME TO DANCE, A TIME TO MOURN

In the past few weeks, events have occurred in America — actions, reactions, words, demonstrations. We have been witness to the continuing destructiveness of the two wars in which we are engaged. Southeast Asia and the very real war in the streets of this country. Somehow the death of four white university students have brought a message home to the people that Fred Hampton, Diego Víazán and countless other victims of American "justice" have failed to do.

Were it not for the fact that in our very beings we are political, it would be almost improper to hold a dance, a "social" function at this time. But women, by virtue of being gay men, are oppressed by the same system that is oppressing people throughout the world. If we really come to understand our own oppression we will see that it, like the illegal wars and wholesale slaughter, does not exist in a vacuum. We are all victims of a common enemy, whether it be wearing the garb of imperialism, racism, or sexism.

The lies that we as women have with other oppressed people are becoming increasingly more visible. And this dance, held in a period of mourning, contempt and revolution, is a direct outgrowth of how and why we're oppressed. We're here together, dancing, touching, relating, and we're here together outside of pre-defined rules, outside of convention, and most importantly outside of someone else's conception of morality. What this means is freedom — and freedom is radical. We are existing for each other in a world we are remaking for each other. In a sense, dancing together is one way in which we are fighters — a small part of our contribution to freedom and revolution. People have died, but we are alive and must keep in mind, along with rhetoric and ideology, that our solidarity hinges as much upon our being able to be together in times of anger and mourning as well as in times of victory and elation.

— Ellen Brody

leaflet for women's dance—week of Kent State massacre

Vol 1, #4, 9.8.7
A PARADE IN TOWN: Thousands of Homosexuals are expected to march through the streets of the Village on June 27th. I see flags. I hear bells. There's a parade in town. I hear crowds. I hear yells. There's a parade in town.

They will, I presume, be remembering the Stonewall and the Stonewall. The Stonewall, as most of us know was an illegal gay bar and it was raided by the police. It was a night of violence and the police harassment was so severe that it led to the formation of new groups and increased activism. The Stonewall is a symbol of resistance and pride.

I hear drums in the air. I see crowds in the Square. I see marchers marching, tossing hats at the sirens. A handful of Homosexuals rioted when New York's Finest raided the Stonewall on June 27th.

Did you hear? Did you see? Is a parade in town?

Are there drums without me? Is a parade in town?

It is assumed that the Street Queens rioted against the Police. I wonder if that is not an extreme over-simplification. No matter — but Oh, what great meaning! — they did riot. As tourists flocked to the Freak Show, punkies flocked for a piece of the action, and the police harassment was stepped up. Homosexual organizers fell over one another passing out leaflets, calling songs, and forming committees. Quicker than you could say "Professors, you're a maladjusted" the Lepers had been cleansed; the Street Queens had become Folk Heroes.

Game I'm dressed at last, at my best, and my banners are high. Tell me! While I was getting ready, did a parade go by?

The kids wellsaw in their new-found Stardom. Some of them even forgot how hungry they were.

Did you hear? Did you see? Is a parade in town?

Marches and rallies were planned, there would be Gay Dance and Community Centers, there was even talk of all sorts of funding, clothing and free meals. Some of the kids went to meetings of new organizations. Others went to meetings of old organizations. They named tables, distributed literature, participated in the Gay Power rally, the Village Voice nap and the New York Moratorium. But, it's a long, long time from June to November and they were starting to feel upight. We couldn't control them. They were too loud and too obvious. They were fucking up our image. They were heavy — they had to go! Cheated and plunged, they began drifting back into the safety of the Park.

Are there drums without me?

As a gay man, I doubt very much if I'll march on June 27th. I think I'll just sit in the Park with my brothers.

Gay men: in step, the boots are squeaky, and the banners are frayed.

Any parade in town without me must be a second-class parade?

"A PARADE IN TOWN —" Stephen Sonheim

I CAN'T HEAR YOU — I HAVE A CARROT IN MY EARC! I sidestep to gay Bars, they are just not my particular glass of tea. I am, nonetheless a little bug eyed by the Witch Hunters who keep crying 'Mafia Exploitation' with such overbearing and monotonous regularity. There is without doubt Mafia control of Gay Bars just as there is Mafia control of Banks, Unions, Supermarkets, Industries, Drugs, and much of the air we breathe. Expiation? No. Oppression is — is a peculiar word; over- used and rhetorical.

The other night, the world — my own private world, I guess — got a little close and walked up to a Gay Bar. I was asked for a dollar at the door and was given a chit entitling me to two beers. They were showing an old Bertie Davis/Mark Astor movie, THE GREAT LIE, and there was a general feeling of good, campy fun in the whole place. The fact that I had to make my way through a density of burping Levis and leather fringes was a small price to pay for being in the bar in no way detracted from that feeling. I watched the movie, grabbed some ale, talked with a few people, and walked for a little.

I didn't stay for the second feature but, instead went to one of the new Fuck Bars. Here, I paid three dollars at the door which, again, covered two beers. The Bar was well-appointed, well-lit, and well-peopled. The Fuck Room was exactly that! No game, no bullshit, no hassle — just simple, direct, down-to-the-nitty, old-fashioned sex! It is not my intent to weigh the pros and cons of anonymous sex; I leave that to the light- shirterd References. I will only say that no little blue pill could come close to relieving the nervous tensions that my two hours in that room did. I touched, I com- municated, I related and I loved. (Do I touch differently on a park bench? Do I communicate better in a litany room? Do I love more freely in Sheep Meadow? Who would presume to count the ways I love?) I also met someone and we went home together.

Check it out: I had four beers, saw a movie, was screwed, blew and sucked — layered, relayed and par- leyed — and I found a friend. All of this cost me exactly FOUR DOLLARS.

I am not making a case for Gay Bars. I am simply asking that we get our priorities together and dig the fine, almost invisible line between Oppressed and Oppressor.

The times they are a changin' — There's a new world comin' and Love is just around the corner. OFF THE RHETORICAL! I have no alternative to Gay Bars and I can promise none. The GLF dances and the Sunday night get-togethers are miniscule and token offerings, barely touching the surface. I cannot — I will not — judge my Brothers and Sisters and their deeds. I can and will try to offer counter-cultures and lifestyles when and if I am able, making sure the Left keeps careful watch on the Right hand. When I housebroke Maggie, I trained him first on paper. I left the paper down as I re-trained him to go in the street. For a while he went both on the paper and in the street. One day he decided enough with the paper — because I told him not to shit on the paper anymore but, because he decided he would rather shit in the street. I hope that I could extend the same freedom of choice to my fellow-humans.

—Kathy Wakeham

Lesbian oppression

The gay woman is a person who is very often overlooked within radical liberation circles. Her oppression is two- fold: female and sexuality. (If she is not Caucasian, her oppression is three-fold).

Her two-fold oppression brings forth looks of resent- ment and longing on the part of some gays of ignorance. She encounters social, political, and economic oppression. Her oppressors are of no particular race, class, structure, etc., they are the socialists who are most oppressed are identifiable to most of the oppressed.

Well to ramble on about oppression would fill a book: I want to touch on one very short article. On a social level, gay women want to meet other gay women; on an economic level, they frequently pay to do so at most meeting places. Their economic oppression also includes job discrimination as well as social exploitation, but right now, that's the specific subject. These encountering places are gay bars. The gay bars are explorers of gay women (and of gay men, too) and are mostly ran by men. A typical bar on a typical weekend: $3.00 for en- tering (which includes the cost of a drink) 50 cents for a can of beer, if you don't like watered-own, mixed drinks. $1.00 every hour the proprietor sees you without a drink (you cannot stay unless you are ready to show your money). So all cost check, crowdness, occasional heterosexual male googlers, Mafia guardians at the door.

Straight bars do not exist in this web of social harass- ment.

This oppression is. Where are gay women going to meet other gay women? if they feel oppressed by the above condition? An alternative is needed. An alterna- tive was made. The Gay Liberation Front has held mixed (gay and lesbian) dances that were pre- dominantly male. The women of GLF felt that their sisters might want an all women alternative, instead. On Friday, April 3, GLF sponsored an all women's dance which was held at Alternate U. The purpose of this dance was to give our sisters an alternative to the oppres- sive Mafia-controlled gay bars. In the general locale of the gay community in the Village, only two bars exist predominately for gay women. The GLF dance was held with four blocks.

Two weeks prior to the dance, six GLF women were threatened by the owner of one of these bars while they were giving small calls on the phone encouraging the dance to other girls in the bar. The owner approached the GLF women with the cards; and she told them if they con- tinue advertising, they wouldn't have a dance or an organization.

At 3:15 a.m., the night of the dance, the first attempt was made to stop our calls. We were placed in the type (big, broad, and mean) malicious forcibly push our way into the All Women's Dance. When questioned re- spectedly as to our intentions, he proceeded to threaten his women of GLF for the arrest of the women with arrest on the basis of not having a liquor license and rapidly quoted prices that neighboring bars have paid them. The dance did not require a liquor license because donations and not prices were suggested for admission and refreshments (beer and soda). After much verbal and physical harassment (a woman who tried to leave was pushed toward a wall, another woman was approached by her coat collar and had her coat snatched from her back as she fearfully dashed down the stairs to escape the harassment of these impostors; they physically refused exit to any of the women), they showed the women a badge which was later suggested to be phoney by un- formed policemen who approached these men left. Before they left, the three were questioned as to whom sent them. "Ginnis, Kookie and I."

They laughed, shrieking, "who's that, never heard of them."

"Oh they're lusty characters out of Zap Comix." "Why, hotter characters with less inclination than they, know Ginnis and Kookie's are just two of our gay tavern- owner oppressors.

The enforced, legal law-enforcing police were called by the women to verify the identity of these three. The uniformed police stated that no call was made with any specific to check with Mollie, to see if the information was legal, and that these three men showed invalid identi- fication.

The most threatening incident is another example of op- pression of gay women by an exploitative system. The system tried to scare us but did not succeed. Instead, they brought their oppressive acts to light where they will be carved with as gay sisters are now more ready and determined to come out and deal with the oppressors.
Any form of behavior that doesn’t fit into the image that television and Reader’s Digest believe the American people should be like, is usually categorized as either subnatural or supernatural.

The myths about homosexuals fall into both categories, depending on how close it is to being you.

Lesbians are unnatural when they live next door and supernatural when they live in Paris and write books.

Most people’s ideas about lesbianism come from pornographic films and magazines, all of which are produced for and by men. It’s a very strange thing to find your existence defined as a part of somebody’s pornographic fantasy library — sex episode No. 93.

One night at my regular women’s liberation group meeting, one of the women said, “You know, the first night you told us you were a lesbian, I sat in terror for the rest of the meeting, waiting for you to attack me or something.”

Men who are obsessed with sex are convinced that lesbians are obsessed with sex. Actually, like any other woman, lesbians are obsessed with love and fidelity.

They’re also strongly interested in independence and in having a lifework to do, but other than that lesbians are not extra ordinary.

I once met a lesbian who had built her own house, with her own hands, to her own specifications. (She was about 4’11” tall.) But I have no doubt that any woman who wanted to build a house could — except she probably married an architect or a carpenter instead.

Homosexuality and other “bizarre” characteristics are, associated with art and artiness partly so artists can be considered that much more supernatural. This keeps people in general from considering themselves as artists; they’re not kooky enough. If you can’t chop off your ear, you can’t paint.

Gertrude Stein didn’t write well because she was a lesbian: she wrote because she wanted to, and she had a disciplined, sensitive mind, and she didn’t have to work in a dimestore eight hours a day.

The women in history who were the less fortunate counterparts of Gertrude Stein, unable to retire on papa’s money, cut off their hair and joined the merchant marines, or sneaked out west for a life of adventure as cowboys. Some were never discovered until the local mortician . . . all astonished . . . came running out of the funeral parlor . . . “My God, guess what I just found out about old Harry Wills . . . .”

And as a matter of fact, old Harry may never have thought about loving another woman in her life, but she still goes down in history as a lesbian. Every woman who steps out of line gets assigned a sexual definition — lesbian, whore, nymphomaniac, castrator, adulteress . . . .

Lesbians who dress and act in a particular manner, do so as a means of mutual recognition — that’s how they know who is eligible to fall in love with, since you’re not allowed to just ask.

If anybody was allowed to fall in love with anybody, the word “homosexual” wouldn’t be needed: it’s used now only to set people off in separate categories, artificially, so they’ll know who to be afraid of — each other.

Bogeymen and bogeywomen function to keep people off the streets, and home watching television and reading Reader’s Digest.

Lesbianism isn’t something you are . . . it’s something you do . . . .

Specifically, it’s the love you give somebody who happens, also, to be female.

Reprinted from Gay Women’s Liberation, San Francisco.
Must we pay for celebration of life and love
With laceration? Life and love
are atrophied for us. The center comes apart
It cannot hold. Let go, Let go, Let go.

Must we throw ourselves on the great mandala,
Make it grind to a halt and let the healers
Take scalpel to that which could have been healed long ago?

What balm can assuage the guilt cast
upon us?
What gauze is thick enough to cover
our wounds?
What cord strong enough to bind up
our rage?

(On the afternoon of that day the moon passed the sun.
Millions watched, catching fleeting glimpses,
and paying prices of vision yet to be told.
Our trinity of planets intersected
for moments. Belying their obedience to any natural law,
That all might see law made manifest, theory bodied forth.)

Something rattled in the dead leaves at Sheridan Square.
A bronzed general watched the armies of the night.
A mother cried for a son who could not reveal himself,
Who cried out in a foreign tongue of why he was forsaken,
And took him down from his pinnacle.

The deposed St. Christopher of that street,
Of infinite numbers of travelers,
Relinquished his place for St. Sebastian of the slings and arrows.
Let down the child from his back, giving birth
To an unfolding of hands, a clutching of fists.

How much more blood of strangers is required,
To impulsion is, to push us to the leap
to faith,
In ourselves, and the gods we might become?

—Sandy DeWine

STANDING ROOM ONLY

It's spring again in New York City: my very first.
My peacoat is beginning to feel stuffy, and I'm
trying to think of buying a new shirt. Walked
down to The Marlboro Bookstore in the Village,
then to a smaller bookstore, where I asked for a
copy of The Well of Loneliness. I'm writing an
article about it. Young hippy bookstore clerk:
Yes, we have a LOT of people asking for it...
We don't carry it.
Well, what about... GET OUT!! our local gay
ghetto paper?
Noooo...
With a sarcastic smile.

On my way over, 2 teen-age girls were running
down the train platform:
Hey, How in the World do you get out of this
place? Is there a Way Out?
Six months ago, I was asking the same thing.

And, coming up the steps from the subway, I
KNEW that it was spring, because two young
men were sitting at the top. The younger one
was rapping about:
And then, when THAT happens, you
really start to think — Maybe There ISN'T
a God...
Then, on 8th Street:
Spare Change?
WE WERE VERY TIRED,
WE WERE VERY MERRY...

—Mark Giles

THINKING BACK LESBIAN

If I were to call upon the phoenix
to recover my late ashes
would I have come from the ‘mysterious’
Island of Greece?
Far flung as time through space
follows relativity must only be a wink
in that lady's eye —
The love of the arts was worth more
to her than the sharpening of Diana's
darts.
But I suppose we are all sisters of
some nature of those reincarnations...
But to them we are probably just incantations.

However, Sappho you must have been
a 'Right On' woman.

—Sue Schneider
WHAT IS A LESBIAN?

What is a lesbian? A lesbian is the rage of all women condemned to the point of exploitation. She is the woman who, often beginning at an extremely early age, acts in accordance with her inner compulsion to be a more complete and freer human being than her society — perhaps then, but certainly later — cares to allow her. These needs and actions, over a period of years, bring her into painful conflict with people, situations, the accepted ways of thinking, feeling and behaving, until she is in a state of continual war with everything around her, and usually with herself. She may not be fully conscious of the political implications of what she has begun as personal necessity, but on some level she has not been able to accept the limitations and oppression laid on her by the most basic role of her society — the female role. The turmoil she experiences tends to induce guilt, proportionate to the degree to which she feels she is not meeting social expectations, and/or eventually drives her to question and analyse what the rest of her society more or less accepts. She is forced to evolve her own life pattern, often living much of her life alone, learning usually much earlier than her “straight” heterosexual sisters about the essential loneliness of life (which is the myth of marriage obscured) and about the reality of illusions. To the extent that she cannot expel the heavy socialization that goes with being female, she can never truly find peace with herself. For she is caught somewhere between accepting society’s view of her — in which case she cannot accept herself, and coming to understand what this sexist society has done to her and why it is functional and necessary for it to do so. Those of us who work that through find ourselves on the other side of a tortuous journey through a night that may have been decades long. The perspective gained from that journey, the liberation of self, the inner peace, the real love of self and of all women, is something to be shared with all women — because we are all women.

It should first be understood that lesbianism, like male homosexuality, is a category of behavior possible only in a sexist society characterized by rigid sex roles and dominated by male supremacy. Those sex roles dehumanize women by defining us as a supportive/serfing caste in relation to the master caste of men, and emotionally cripple men by demanding that they be alienated from their own bodies and emotions in order to perform their economic/political/military functions effectively. Homosexuality is a by-product of a particular way of setting up roles (or approved patterns of behavior) on the basis of sex, in which it is an inauthentic (not compatible with “reality”) category. In a society in which men do not oppress women, and sexual expression is allowed to follow feelings, the categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality would disappear.

But lesbianism is also different from male homosexuality, and serves a different function in this society. “Dyke” is a different kind of put-down from “fag,” although both imply you are not playing your socially assigned sex role... are not therefore a “real man” or a “real man.” The grooming admiration felt for the tomboy, and the contempt felt around a sturdy boy point to the same thing: the contempt in which women — or those who play a female role — are held. And the investment in keeping women in that contemptuous role is very great. Lesbian is the word, the label, the condition that holds women in line. When a woman hears this word tossed her way, she knows she is stepping out of
line. She knows that she has crossed the terrible border, and she acts to control herself. She resolves to reshape her actions to gain approval. Lesbian is a label invented by the Man to throw at any woman who dares to be his equal, who dares to challenge his pretensions (including that of all women as part of the exchange medium among men), who dares to assert the primacy of her own needs. To have the label applied to people active in women's liberation is just the most recent instance of a long history; older women will recall that—long ago, any woman who was successful, independent, not orienting her whole life about a man would hear this word. In this sexist society, for a woman to be independent means she can't be a woman—the she must be a dyke. That in itself should tell us sibera women are at, as it says clearly as can be said: women and men are contradictory terms. For a lesbian is not considered a "real woman." And yet, in popular thinking, there is really only one essential difference between a lesbian and other women: that of sexual orientation—which is to say, when you strip off all the packaging you must finally realize that the essence of being a "woman" is to get fucked by man.

"Lesbian" is one of the sexual categories by which men have divided up humanity. While all women are disadvantaged as sex objects, as the objects of men they are given certain compensations: identification with his power, his ego, his status, his protection (from other males), feeling like a "real woman," finding social acceptability by adhering to her role, etc. Should a woman confront herself by confronting another woman, there are fewer rationalizations, fewer buffers by which to avoid the stark horror of her dehumanized condition. Herein we find the overriding fear of many woman towards exploring intimate relationships with women: the fear of being used as a sexual object by a woman, which not only will bring her no male-connected compensations, but also will reveal the void which is woman's real situation. This dehumanization is expressed when a straight woman learns that a sister is a lesbian, she begins to relate to her lesbian sister as her "potentially sex object, laying a surrogate male role on the lesbian. This reverses her heterosexual conditioning to make herself into an object when sex is potentially involved in a relationship, and it denies the lesbian her full humanity. For woman, especially those in the movement, to perceive the lesbian as another sister through this male grid of role definitions is to accept this male cultural conditioning and to oppress her sisters much as they themselves have been oppressed by men. As we are going to continue the male classification system of defining all females in sexual relation to some other category of people! Affixing the label lesbian not only to a woman who aspires to be a person, but also to any situation of real love, real solidarity, real primary among women is a primary form of disharmony among women. It is the condition which keeps women within the confines of the feminine role, and it is the debunking/scene term that lesbian women from feminine stereotypes, groups, or associations among ourselves.

Women in the movement have in most cases gone to great lengths to avoid discussion and confrontation with the issue of lesbianism. It puts people up-tight. They are hostile, evasive, or try to incorporate it into some "broader issue." They would rather not talk about it. If they have to, they try to dismiss it as a "lavender menace," a "minor problem," and especially excludes us from the success and fulfillment of the women's liberation movement that this issue be dealt with. As long as the label "dyke" can be written to the movement as a whole—"the term lesbian will be used effectively against women. Insolent as women want only more privileges within the system, they do not want or need to challenge the whole male power. They instead seek acceptability for women's liberation, and the most crucial aspect of the acceptability is to deny lesbianism, i.e., deny any fundamental challenge to the basis of the female role.

It should also be said that some younger, more radical women have honestly begun to discuss lesbianism, but so far it has been primarily as a sexual "alternative" to men. This, however, is still giving primacy to men, both because the idea of relating more completely to women occurs as a negative reaction to men, and because the lesbian relationship is being characterized simply by sex which is divisive and sexist. On one level, which is both personal and political, women may withdraw emotional and sexual energies from men, and work out various alternatives for those energies in their own lives. On a different political/psychological level, it must be understood that what is crucial is that women begin disengaging from male-defined response patterns. In the privacy of our own psyches, we must cut those cords to the core. For irrespective of where our love and sexual energies go, if we are male-identified in our heads, we cannot realize our autonomy as human beings.

But why is it that women have related to and through men? By virtue of having been brought up in a male society, we have internalized the male culture's definition of ourselves. That definition views us as relative beings who exist not for ourselves, but for the servicing, maintenance and comfort of men. That definition confines us to social and family functions, and excludes us from defining and shaping the terms of our lives. In exchange for our psychic servicing and for performing society's nonprofit-making functions, the men confine us on us just one thing: the slave status which makes us legitimate in the eyes of the society in which we live. This is called "femininity" or "being a real woman" in our cultural ringo. We are authentic, legitimate, real to the extent that we are the property of some men whose love they sell. To do away with the being and not our selves/ he confirms our womanhood—as he defines it, in relation to him—but cannot confirm our personhood, our independence, our ability to depend on another, the male culture for this definition, for this approval, we cannot be.

The consequence of internalizing this role is an enor-

mous reservoir of self-hate. This is not to say the self hate is recognized or accepted as such, indeed most women would deny it. It may be experienced as discomfort with her role, as feeling empty, as numbness, as restlessness, a paralyzing anxiety at the center. Alternatively, it may be expressed in shrill defensiveness of the purity and destiny of her role. But it does exist, often beneath the edge of her consciousness, poisoning her existence, keeping her alienated from herself, her own needs, and rendering her a stranger to other women. They try to escape by identifying with the oppressor, living through him, gaining status and identity from his ego, his power, his ac-

accomplishments. And by not identifying with other "empty vessels" like themselves. Women resist relating on all levels to other women who will reflect their own oppression, their own secondary status, their own self-hate. For to confront another woman is finally to confront one's self—the self we have gone to such lengths to avoid. And in that mirror we know we cannot really respect and love that which we have been made to be.

As the source of self-hate and the lack of real self are rooted in our male-given identity, we must create a new sense of self. As long as we cling to the idea of being a woman, we will sense some conflict with that incipient self, that sense of 1, that sense of a whole person. It is very difficult to realize and accept that being "feminine" and being a whole person is inconceivable. Only women can give each other a new sense of self. That identity we have to develop with reference to ourselves, and not in relation to men. This consciousness is a revolutionary force from which all else will follow, for ours is an organic revolution. For this we must be available and supportive to one another, give our commit-

ments to our love, and to sustain this movement. Our energies must flow toward our sisters, not backwards toward our oppre-

sors. As long as women's liberation remains a women without facing the basic heterosexual structure that binds us in one-to-one relationship with our own oppressors, tremendous energies will continue to flow into trying to straighten each particular relationship with a man, how to get better sex, how to turn his head around—into trying to make the "new man" out of him, in the delusion that this will allow us to be the "new woman." This obviously splits our energies and commitments, leaving us unable to be committed to the construction of the new patterns which will liberate us.

It is the primary of women relating to women, of women creating a new consciousness of and with each other which is at the heart of women's liberation, and the basis for the cultural revolution. Together we must find, reinforce and validate our authentic selves. As we do this, we confirm in each other that struggling in-' own anxiety of pride and strength, the divisive barriers begin to melt, we feel this growing solidarity with our sisters. We see ourselves as prime, find our centers inside of ourselves. We first recording the sense of alienation, of being cut off, of being behind a locked window, of being unable to get out what we know is inside. We feel a realness, feel at last we are coinciding with ourselves. With that real self, with that consciousness, we begin a revolution to end the imposition of all coercive identifi-

ations, and to achieve maximum autonomy in human expression.
On Friday, May 1st, at 7:15 P.M. about 300 women were quietly sitting in the auditorium of Intermediate School 70 waiting for the Congress to Unite Women to come to order. The lights went out, people heard running, laughter, a robot fell here and there, and when the lights were turned back on those same 300 women found themselves in the hands of the LAVENDER MENACE.

"Lavender Menace," a tart of the white male press rose incensed in the persons of the Radical Lesbians of New York who because of the discrimination and sexism with Women's Liberation took matters into their own hands to win the rights that had been denied them. The women at the Congress. For the first time since women's liberation began, the subject of lesbianism was brought into the open. Significantly the only way this could be done was forcefully, transcending established format—but although the take-over was decisive it was done with good feelings and humor.

Seventeen of the Radical Lesbians wore lavender tweedhirs with LAVENDER MENACE stenciled across the front. These women were the first wave of the assault and the ones who took over the auditorium. The second wave of the action was vocal support from about twenty sisters who hid their true lavender selves and blended into the audience. What we didn't expect was a third wave which came out of the general audience. Women responded variously—a few very left, the planning committee made a few tentative efforts to restore the "program," some women were pleasantly questioning the action but what was so incredible was the enthusiastic acceptance of most of the women present who began demanding that the lesbian issue remain on the floor.

The action was so successful we held the auditorium and the attention for two hours. Because the issue is of such meaning and relevance to a gut level to all women and because the presentation was done in a humorous and non-threatening way. As the Menaces surrounded the audience and lifted the microphone, rose-colored signs sprang up on the walls and podium. SUPERDYKE LOVES YOU: TAKE A LESBIAN TO LUNCH: WOMEN'S LIBERATION IS A LESBIAN PLOT. Freed from a boring panel and able to come up to the microphone and talk to each other women asked each other questions, confronted each other and gave testimony. Perhaps the most significant communication came in the form of the enthusiasm and joy felt by those present. "Thank you for what you have done for us tonight." Our straight sisters were coming up to us with warmth and openness. "I really need to hear this tonight. And I thought I could put off dealing with my feelings for a great feeling among us, for at least two more years."

So we really built some bridges Friday night—toward Women's Liberation and among ourselves. We learned that our straight sisters have less autonomy, are more unsure of themselves because they are more embroiled in the debilitating sex role. And for ourselves, at the outset a random group of individuals, and now with a heightened energy and a sense of solidarity and group identification. With that in mind you know that the LAVENDER MENACE will strike again—anywhere, anytime, anywhere.

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WOMEN COMING TOGETHER WITH WOMEN

Saturday, 5/2/70

The Lavender Menace (i.e., Radical Lesbians/G.L.F.) arrived at the school on West 17th St at 2 p.m. for the workshop we announced at the general session Friday evening. We had been assigned a room to meet in and were given another interesting label, "Alternatives in Sexuality," which we changed to "Workshop in Lesbianism." The room became filled with women of all ages and special interests in relation to an exploration of lesbianism, female sexuality, women. We remained in Room 402, our numbers over 300 women, for over 2 hours. During that time, many women went through changes. There was a special kind of tension that came out of a sense of relief, of being able to confront the fears and realities, and beginning to relate to each other as relevant and meaningful persons. Our "straight" sisters in the women's movement were not all totally straight, and there was agreement that in what we are trying to build, the labels would be meaningless but that we had to use them now in order to redefine ourselves as human beings without them and to examine why certain labels (i.e., Lesbian) are so threatening to women.

Is a lesbian a legitimate woman? In the way that the sex-role system is set up in this male-dominated society, if a woman is not fucking with a man, she is not a woman and these kinds of feelings put many of the women up-tight. Many of the women who came to the workshop were interested in exploring their own sexuality—I couldn't begin to label the various stages that women were at in this exploration—some were "out," some were "in the process of coming out," some wanted to know how to begin to relate to other women in a more complete, intimate way, and some women could relate what lesbian meant to them in only sexual terms and the consequences in this society of crossing the boundary of one's prescribed sex role, (i.e., they would feel like men—aggressive, wanting, if they made love with women). I feel more like a woman today (in my own very best definition) than I ever have before today—solitary, open, vulnerable, welcoming, warm. The experience is a new outline and being moderately filled in the void.

I can feel all the women I've met this weekend and some of the feelings I've felt are incomprehensible to me in that I am changed in subtle ways that are startling the shit out of me. I feel more alone and less lonely; also, good and more able to be together with others, really feeling touched by my sisters.

Sunday, 5/3/70

RESOLUTIONS FOR DEEP AND CONCERNED THOUGHT: We resolved that the statement that women's liberation is a lesbian plot. Resolve that whenever the epithet "Lesbian" is used against the movement collectively or against any woman that it be affirmed and not denied. In all discussions of birth control, homophobia, must be included as a legitimate method of contraception. All sex education curricula must include lesbianism as a valid, legitimate form of sexual expression and love.

The Lavender Menace/Gay Liberation Front Women/Radical Lesbians arrived at noon to meet with other women in smaller groups to further discuss aspects of lesbianism and women's liberation. We also related to the Congress in its attempt to make and pass resolutions. It was finally voted upon to no longer vote. The resolution making reflected our actual divisions but this is where we must begin because it is a reality. It is a reality, as stated by the Class Workshop that all women have knowledge of what it is to be a woman, and it is from this base that we must look at each other and begin moving towards one another.

A group of lesbians, black women and women from the class workshop was formed to talk about our experiences that were both common and related. There was a feeling of misery in the way we talked, each one wanting to use their energies positively to reach out to each other—in working towards an end to class bias, sex/role definition, racism, elitism and many other aspects of liberation that we need to talk about with each other.

Arene Kistner

14 - A Radical Lesbian
LAVENDER MENACE

DOES IT

Saturday at the Congress there was a sense of relaxation in my head and a feeling of acceptance—an almost totally unfamiliar sensation for me. People were watching for once, some with envy over the reality of physical contact with other women and what appeared to them be a sense of unity and closeness among ourselves. My natural state of paranoia vanished with acceptance and the realization that I was being seen as a human being.

As the workshop increased in size my ejection increased with it. In women's faces I detected a strip, a lone windmill on a prairie. As they made possible their first attempt at understanding and union. First attempts are often painful, and an attempt to overcome artificial but instantly powerful and emotionally charged societal taboos is an immense and frightening step—and one that must be guided with loving acceptance.

Barriers dissolve in chaos with understanding and a reaching out toward another (who is really the self).

Questions asked pointed out the alienation of the woman from themselves and therefore from their sisters. Later on at the party, the initial mood was discomfort—most individuals were interested primarily in relating verbally and intellectually, but not physically. They insisted that the bright lights be kept on. This appeared to reflect a fear and a mistrust among the women of their gay sisters. They seemed to want to see every move the "maze" made. Sitting in a chair is a comfortable way of maintaining distance and verbal communication is often times analytic.

TWO VIEWS

Women of GLF successfully confronted movement women on two successive weekends in April.

The Liberation News Service conference of women's caucuses on underused papers related strongly to the gay movement. About 150 representatives voted on the first day of the conference to break up into rap sessions and discuss the gay issue, rather than see a movie about Cuba.

They proceeded to two different rooms, with no one dropping off despite the late hour. Two hours of rapping followed with discussion of personal attitudes toward the subject (frequently fearful ones, i.e., "Can I go back to men after a lesbian experience?") to uncertainty regarding how to treat it in their papers ("Should we have straight writing on the subject?").

Their concern was a mixture of curiosity and growing respect which would not have been elicited without the organizing of the radical gay movement a year ago.

The workshops, which were continued the next day of the conference, lent a definite consciousness-raising effect. The realization that they are "stepping with the enemy" brings some Women's Lib people into an exploration of Lesbianism, or at least curiosity about it, but they are hindered by forms of the very oppression leading them to it. One woman in a workshop related that she could not feel turned on by a woman's body, and another countered "How could you do it?—It's used to sell everything from cars to toothpaste!"

Another related that friends of hers had found gay life as oppressive as straight life, leading GLF women to wonder how those with as yet superficial commitment might expect some magical solution to problems which beset all of us. One GLF woman said, "My liberation won't be won by them solving their problems."

The Congress to Unite Women, broader in scope than the GLFS conference, was more dramatically won on its first day, when the Lavender Menace struck! Tired of being labelled "a Lesbian herring" in the women's movement, it was decided to do something drastic about it. Friday night of the Congress the lights dimmed prior to an expected panel discussion (which was abandoned with much color from everyone except those who had planned it). Down the aisles strode GLF women in lavender T-shirts with "Lavender Menace" across the front, and holding signs announcing "Women's Liberation is a Lesbian Plot," "You're Going to Love the Lavender Menace," etc.

Gay workshops followed on Sat. and Sun. afternoons and Sunday evening the Lavender Menace struck again. A plenary session was in progress, with much discussion of present resolutions drawn from the workshops. The gay workshop was not to be represented, it seemed, because it had been formed ad hoc, by force. So, dig it! The Lavender Menace entered the time once again, the women tacitly in charge at the time saying resignedly, "Here we go again."

The women presented resolutions beginning with "How the Women's Lib movement will in the future affiliate, not deny, that it is a Lesbian plot," and putting forth Lesbianism as the most effective means of birth control.

Three GLF women attacked the WASP character of the Congress, and women from the recently-formed Class Workshop declared the need for consciousness of class oppression. In an effort to facilitate this, it was decided to hold a multiple-group workshop upstairs.

As the evening progressed the fears gradually diminished and people relaxed, allowing themselves to have fun. They forgot the world outside for a little while. No male entered to remind them of it. And this was good, for the entrance of any male, no matter how gay, served to reinforce the image of panic and forced the emergence of false actions and acceptable distances.

There is still a very powerful anti-lesbian reaction in this country. If a woman a lesbian an leads to an artificial woman. (No one seriously knows what it is to be a woman. Years of negativity, anti-washing, make-up and clean clothing have cut us off from the very core of our being).

Irreversibly, in order to be born again into a new consciousness one must reach the center, die and be resurrected again in the light of an expanded consciousness. Women are groping their way inward to this center—reaching for the time of emergence into the new realities of identity, personality and union.

When the Congress was nearly over and the auditorium was taken over by the Lavender Menace the reaction was almost entirely favourable. There was an instantaneous transformation in the women's faces—reduction to relaxation, anger to peace and from boredom to interest. They were expectant, they were anxious. It was as though they were looking to the Lesbians for an answer—a reaction to their oppression.

But have we the answer? Have we any answer? I felt myself inadequate to the task. Who has solutions? Who is really more than a searcher? Learning and unlearning.

—Judy Carstairs
Lavender Menace

photo by David Meyers

There followed an unusual confrontation between blacks & whites, gay & straight, middle-class and working class. It was the most valuable meeting possible, in which movement groups, which may become insular, have another's biases challenged. Curtailed after an hour and a half only by the closing of the building, the group of about 125 planned to meet again.

By the end of the Congress women were referring to the Lavender Menace in all seriousness, as a visible concern, and in transgression from negative to positive, in a politicized camp (and when Susan Sontag said it couldn't be done) it was a force to be reckoned with.

A spokesman proclaimed our weariness of stigma-

Vol I, #9, p 15
Interview with
JAMES BALDWIN

by Karen Waid (LNS)

[Editor's Note: The following interview with James Baldwin was conducted after his recent visit to Huey Newton, minister of defense of the Black Panther Party, in prison. Huey is serving a 2-15 year sentence for manslaughter — the murder of an undercover policeman.]

Q: YOU WERE JUST DOWN AT THE CALIFORNIA MEN'S COLONY IN SAN LUIS OBISPO VISITING HUEY NEWTON. CAN YOU TELL US WHAT HIS TRIP WAS ABOUT?

J.B.: Huey is one of the most important people to have been produced by the American chaos. His fate is very important. And not one person in white America, if they read the mass media, knows anything about Huey, what produced him or what produced the Black Panther Party.

A black people have always played, in this country, a tormented role in the white man's imagination. They prefer to believe him to be King Kong, or whatever it is which is the most abject and the most uncivilized to them, because it says too much about the republic, I think, that the Black Panther Party was originally called the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. And it was thought as a reaction to, and I'm a witness to this because I was born in the ghetto, to the expressionlessness of the police force. It didn't come out of nothing, it didn't come out because Huey and his cohorts are some kind of weird anti-social monsters. It came out of the very real need to invest the black community with a certain kind of morale, which cannot be found in any American institution.

Q: HAVE YOU SEEN CHANGES IN HUEY SINCE YOU FIRST MET HIM?

J.B.: In much the same way that events of the last two years have caused everybody to rethink the situation, Huey has gone through some changes himself. I think that oppressors always make the same mistake. They think that they're going to break you by the degree and the nature of your punishment. But they always miscalculate, because you may be able to break ten people, but there's always one person or two people or three people on whom it doesn't work, who use it to find out something and to become, in a sense, more dangerous than they were before. More dangerous than if you'd left them alone — more dangerous, that is, to the status quo. I think Huey is changing that way.

Q: WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO COMMENT ABOUT SOME OF THE CHANGES YOU, YOURSELF, HAVE BEEN GOING THROUGH IN THE LAST TWO YEARS?

J.B.: I think that no one any longer can be fooled about the intentions of the American government because they've made it perfectly clear. And that may be the most healthy thing that has happened in this time. Because after all, can anything for the present administration. It represents the American illusion that it's a white country, that it's a white world and that they can make it a white universe — the moon is our first colony.

Q: ELDREDGE ONCE SAID THAT THERE WERE BASKETS IN THE BARK OF THE ASLEEP TREE. WHAT DOES THAT SUGGEST YOU WANTED TO DO WITH THE VIOLENCE OF THE WHITE OPPRESSOR — DO YOU STILL SEE CHANGES IN THE WAY YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS?

J.B.: My enormous concern has been, and still is, that I don't want to see a generation grow out of the streets and die. On the other hand, I was also forced to realize that the only way we can handle our present situation except that generation itself. We don't have the helicopters, we don't have the tanks, the weight against us is enormous — which demands of the people in the situation that they find a way to respond. Some very respectable people in this country, respectable in the ordinary sense, are aware of what is happening. This has made very peculiar bedfellows — the position of Justice Douglas is not that different after all from the position of Huey Newton. Some of the people are beginning to see what has happened to the civilization, what has happened here, as a result of the fantastic greed of the corporatized system.

One of the reasons for the Nixon-Agnew business about the silent majority and the whole claim that people who are against the war are really really real ugly American boys, is in the hope that somehow they can unite the whole country around a series of really bloody contradictions. Which is not possible.

They can't put thirty million black people in jail in secret, and in any case there are many more than thirty million — black people aren't the only dissenters here. This country does not really understand is something very simple. That Huey is right when he says that as long as there are black people, there will be Black Panthers. Malcolm was right when he asked about the maintainable strength of the Black Muslims — anyone who knows won't tell you and anyone who claims to is a fool. The truth is, any black person in this country at the time of the Muslim movement was at its height, was a Black Muslim. Any black person in the position of the people at this hour is in some way a Black Panther.

And even if he were the fact that the cop isn't going to ask me my name and address before he shoots me, and the only difference between me and any other black cat in this country is that if they shoot me my name would be in the papers. We all know many people have died, none of us knows how many, but I know that because of every one of me there would be twenty people dead.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS THAT THE NEW YORK AND NEW HAVEN CASES ARE FRAMEUPS?

J.B.: Until it is proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, unfailingly in the halls of the U.N., that it is not a frame-up, I will believe that it is a frame-up, because I am part of a people who have been historically framed-up.

Q: WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ABOUT THE CONSPIRACY TRIAL?

J.B.: I think that is simply too obscene to be discussed.

Q: WHY DO YOU THINK THEY INCLUDED BOBBY SEALE, WHO HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE DEMONSTRATIONS, IN THE CONSPIRACY TRIAL?

J.B.: Quite apart from all the illegalities involved, Bobby was just some goddamn bad nigger and hadn't been publically, as an example to all others who would be bad niggers.

Q: HAVE YOU OUTSIDE OF THE YOUNG BLACK AND WHITE MILITANTS YOU'VE TALKED TO, A STRONG REACTION TO THE MURDER OF FRED HAMPTON AND MARK CLARK IN CHICAGO?

J.B.: I don't know how to answer that, you put it the wrong way — Hampton and Clark are only the latest examples. The show has become monotonous.

Q: WASN'T THAT SO MUCH MORE OBVIOUS?

J.B.: It's amazing to me how difficult it is for people to see when they don't want to see. Black people see, but how many parents of white children see it, that's another question. The difference between my experience and that of white America, even the very best of white America, is that they have difficulty believing that the police can act this way. And that is not my problem at all, I've always known it could, it always has in my experience and I'm no longer young.

Q: WHY IS IT THAT GROUPS LIKE SCLC, NAACP, URBAN LEAGUE, AND GROUPS LIKE THEM ARE JUST BEGINNING TO COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF THE PANTHERS?

J.B.: The whole black situation in this country from the start has been very complicated. The battle between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington was almost the battle in microcosm. There's always been something very closely resembling a hoax, the very heart of the American dream. And, it applied to black people in great force, because for a while it was very useful to what is called the power structure to have certain niggers in the window. To prove to Americans that they were really what they said they were, and to prove to black people that they were what they told they were. And the nature of the bargain was that the nigger in the window could be at the edge. Some reason the status quo, in return for the tranquility of the nationals.

But the table on which these people operate has variously been the Martin Luther King was shot, thought, some people think it was so long before that, it was perfectly clear that there was no way to be a good nigger. And that's not even pejorative because Uncle Tom played a very important role historically. But the role that he played is no longer possible to play. The defenders of the status quo have in effect given as much as they can, given an enormous. The most respectable black cat is very much, whether or not he likes it or whether or not he wants to admit it, no matter what his behavior is a target of the network. It doesn't matter how many or how rich he is.

We are all the Viet Cong, none of us can really be trusted from the point of view of the defenders of the American power. Not even the most agile Uncle Tom can hope to have any meaningful discussion or dialogue with Attorney General John Mitchell.

here in my own generation. But they don't understand about the Viet Cong. My brother put it this way — we are the first Viet Cong.

Shooting people in their apartments in the middle of the night creates exactly what they would not like to happen, this does something to people who ostensibly don't care, wouldn't care — something begins happening to the American consciousness — it's not just happening to black people. It's also happening to me. When society becomes that anarchic, it's not only black people that are massacred, it's everybody else. So they create a resistance that wasn't there before.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE PANTHER 21 CASES IN NEW YORK OR THE SUPPOSED MURDER IN NEW HAVEN, WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THOSE CASES?

J.B.: I see all those cases as harassment, as intimidation. Even if I were a very different person than the person that I am, I see it is no way for me to really murder the police or the government says. Unless I am really in a position to check it out myself. I've seen too much. I don't care what the white press says about the exaggerations of police brutality, I've lived with it all my life. I know, whether the New York Times wants to believe it or not, I was there and the New York Times was not.
Gay Youth began in late February in response to the desire expressed for an alternative to predominantly adult Gay groups. Those who suggested the group's formation felt it would bridge the gap between their attitudes and those of other homosexuals on various sexual, social and political issues. One prime guideline is the avoidance of rhetoric and the constant view of Gay Liberation obscured by varised, and often conflicting, political ideologies.

Gay Youth's functions began with a mixer on May 2nd. On May 3rd we came to enjoy dancing, food and refreshments in an atmosphere free of drugs, alcohol and adult control. Such mixers will be continued throughout the summer.

Gay Youth invites all young homosexuals men and women to join.

MEETINGS every Sunday, BPM, 300 9th Avenue.

GAY YOUTH LIBERATION PAPER

In our high schools for years we have been living in a society controlled by teachers maintaining bis-
tantly sexist attitudes towards homosexuals. We can-


 REPORT CHICAGO GAY LIB

by Martha Shirley

The City of Chicago is covered by a giant glass bell which makes even the brightest day seem slightly grey, and the air always slightly stale. A news blackout contributes to the strong impression of passivity under glass (all of us -- I am not trying to imply that Chicanos are more provincial, but that we are all peasants under the ruling class); and the New York Times seems like radical journalism out there. Maybe Daley keeps the city clean (except for the garbage) and, I'm sure, makes the trains run on time.

I was in Chicago on April 16 and 17, a guest speaker at a rally in Grant Park called by University of Chicago Gay Liberation. Two hundred fifty people attended, and though we didn't have a permit, the cops seemed different to us. There were four speakers -- a fellow from A.C.L.U., the President of Mattachine Society Midwest, Lee Weiner of the Conspiracy Eight, and myself. Lee Weiner called himself a certified member of the Fraking Gay Revolution, but didn't seem too aware of what gay revolution is all about, though it was clear to him that we are oppressed. I don't remember what the other fellows said, as I had just let out of jail and hadn't had sleep for three days, and I'm so sorry that. I did rap about what GLF was doing in New York, and about the jail experience, and the common bond of oppression that unites Women's Liberation and Gay Lib-
eration.

Then we all marched down the street, chanting "ho, ho, homosexual!" and "out of the closets, into the streets" and singing "we're here because we're queer..." and generally freaking out the solid citizens of Chicago.

We marched to the jail, where one of our men was being held for solicitation or some other ridiculous charge, and chant and in front of the jail. A fair-haired young cop was there, officer Rafter (Big 10), a member of the vice squad whose favorite vice is queer-beating. People sang out, "You, too, Officer Rafter," and screaming out of his mouth, "I'm the jailer of the gay people!"

Afterwards, we went home, talked and talked, and I was really allowed to pass out. The next morning we talked again, and ran around trying to get insurance to cover the rent of a half for a GLF dance.

GLF in Chicago has somewhat different problems than GLF in New York. Chicago is a city of neighbor-


 BANDERSNATCH'S AGAIN

by Lois Hart

Ya gotta do it -- read Jerry Rubin's handbook of social revolution and world change. He is a shifty, buckled heterosexual-homosexual pig supremacist and he hasn't looked around to see the revolution that's nipping at his tail -- but it's O.K. cut it's a dandy book that delivers the viewpoint and attitude that is going to hold up in the clutches and postures of the MONSTER CULTURE. If you haven't seen the show from where he's standing you are still in the woods and besides it's a good guide to the periphery for the public mind and you might get some good ideas for some actions. So DO IT STEAL IT READ IT ONLY bear in mind you will be chowing over the biggest-as-usual on the ten dollars at a dollar. He sees a world for men to be children in and women are to deliver the chicken soup (Nancy, for goddam!?)

IAN EDELSTEIN

tight about their own assigned identity. Smashing that trick mirror which reflects the beauty of the society that's been structured.

As a radical Homosexual I no longer demand toler-


 Gay Student LIBERATION!

We of GSN/NUY actively support the 3 resolutions of the Student Strike:

1. U.S. out of LAOS, CAMBODIA, VIETNAM NOW

2. Free all Political Prisoners

3. War Machines Off Campus

Free all Prisoners; Strike crimes without Victims (Homosex-


VOL. 1 #4, PG. 17
THE TRANVESTITE IN AMERICA

The homosexual community and women's liberation groups at long last have started demanding the rights and privileges the rest of America enjoys. They have begun to achieve a small degree of success. One oppressed group, however, has not yet launched anything resembling a demand for recognition and acceptance—the transvestites. Transvestism, unfortunately, is a practice frequently misunderstood by nearly everyone, including gay people, and this misunderstanding has bred much intolerance. The time has now come to change this.

First of all, the psychiatric profession generally agrees that transvestism, in all its various forms, is a phenomenon occurring almost as frequently as homosexuality. Nevertheless, very few people know much about it and informative literature on the subject is rare, generally unavailable to the wide reading public, and frequently these sources are full of unhealthy assumptions and prejudices. There are very few books that contain the knowledge and understanding of Dr. Harry Benjamin's Transsexual Phenomenon. In addition, there are almost no popular publications on the market about transvestism; even Times Square that remarkable repository of exotic books, has only one bookbinder that regularly carries books and magazines on the subject.

The quality of these publications is generally quite poor, except for Transvestia, and its future is very doubtful right now.

Socially, transvestites do not fare much better. Aside from a few private social groups, and the occasional correspondence club whose chief aim appears to be that of fleecing people for a few dollars, there are no permanent organizations to help and enlighten transvestites either socially or politically.

The result of all this is mass ignorance on the subject, which in turn has produced enormous anxieties, guilt feelings, and a terrible sense of isolation in many transvestites, and has also given rise to oppressive laws and attitudes in our society. In short, this is the familiar profile of all oppressed minorities. But to the situation in New York by providing some information on the practice of transvestism, a series of three discussions took place in October and November at the Christopher End Cafe. The West Side Discussion Group also featured an excellent program on the topic of transvestism. (This same topic was also treated fairly well in the Journal of the American Medical Association in the 27th edition of Look.) Unfortunately neither of these discussions was intended as a permanent forum on transvestism, so most of the people who came are now back in their closets. Nevertheless, the information revealed during these discussions appeared to confirm some general theories explaining and describing the phenomenon of cross dressing.

There seem to be two essentially different categories of people who dress as members of the opposite sex: transvestites and transsexuals. Transvestites are those who so completely feel as if they are members of the opposite sex that they remain unhappy until their gender is changed physically. To simply dress like their other sex is unsatisfying and frustrating for them. Transvestites, however, are those who receive a psychic and physical thrill from wearing the clothes of the opposite sex. But the variations of attitudes within this group are quite numerous and complex. Many are heterosexual oriented and these are the ones who seem to receive the greatest thrill from the clothing itself; it is the same persons that the word "transvestite" is most appropriate. Some cross dressers are homosexual and they are frequently called "drag queens." Their interest in cross dressing is a desire to complete a basically feminine attitude towards things and to be treated in a special manner by men.

It is essential to realize, though, that these categories are at best tentative, for there can be a lot of movement by an individual within this entire range. Many transvestites in the heterosexual group have found that they grew to be homosexual or transvestite as time went by. Many find themselves increasingly attracted to the idea of taking hormone injections to alter the secondary sexual characteristics. The reverse of this occurs when a person who has undergone the sex-change operation suddenly finds they are very unhappy with the change and wish they had not done it; these are frequently people who were not genuinely transvestite but were confused by the mazes of feelings they had and the variety of opinions that the subject. Many true transvestites never have the operation, though, because of the expense and danger involved.

Also, the varieties of personalities among transvestites and drag queens are quite diversified. Transvestites are too introverted and quiet, although many are quite opposite while drag queens tend to be more exhibitionistic. Both groups have their fair share of neurotics, as all individuals involved in cross dressing undergo great changes in personality as well as appearances when drag.

Theories explaining the origins of the transvestite personality are as elusive as those explaining homosexuality. In fact, the theories are very similar. So in this final analysis the transvestite is left to his own will to try to find some relative happiness and understanding. He is a difficult task when such persons feel alone, so mystified by their own nature, and harassed by the law and society as well.

Solutions to some of these problems will be difficult but some things clearly can be done now. Politic pressure groups such as those within the homosexual community are probably vain wishes for the transvestite right now, but at the very least some strong social organizations must be started so that a sense of identity can be established. From this, political action could start. It is likewise time for everyone else to begin realizing that transvestites, homosexuals, blacks, women, etc. must be taken as the various components of society at large and must be allowed the same rights or dignities as the "middle American."

Anyone interested in information on the possible development of a discussion group for transvestites in its N.Y.C. area, please write to the author of this article: care of COME OUT.
SEPTEMBER SONG

Yuri Oleske, the well-known Soviet writer in his Not a Day Without a Time recalls walking down the street one day and turning around when someone calls out: "Boy, where are you going?" He was addressing me but he turned around anyway. He wonders, however, whether he would turn around now if someone were to call him back. This raises the question of what cause he would not want to go to? No - simply because of his diabetology, his astonishment that it has come so slowly. He is really a very diplomatic form.

Getting older is really a very diplomatic process. From quantity to quality. Like water put over heat reaching its boiling point then evaporating into steam. The years go by, truly so rush by - and there you are getting older. It is sad to realize that the physical, the mental, the spiritual (physical desire) has been lost. But it is surely a lot sadder not to realize this. But of course all of us, men and women, homosexuals and heterosexuals, share the same common problems of "aging". Does anyone need you? have you reached a point of non-productivity, non-creativity? are you suddenly without emotional, physical, economic security? is time only a looking back, not a looking forward anymore? I am not quite sure of what age I go or places frequented by homosexual men of all ages, bars, dances, parties - all social centers of a kind. I look around. I find perhaps even more people with whom I seem too old! trying so hard to look young, to act young - dressed in the latest hippy fashion, even sometimes in mountain clothes - anyway, it's not just "searching, searching, searching - alone, occasionally in twos or threes, but so alone, so lonely - hoping some- one will notice you, that you will notice them, be- come a partner. What about all the human being- ing out, touching one another in ways other than physical?

I do know from my own experience that you cannot prepare for this aging partly because you don't believe you are going to age. Are you not looking at the faces of old friends whom you hadn't seen in years. It was almost exciting rediscover- ing it as first, remembering the characters as they came back. At least to me it was a beautiful experience to remember how I had come to see the first time and then I realized how extremely ugly the play seemed to me; not that the play was bad, but it was a beautiful play for the time it was written (1953), but that I had changed and not this old friend.

When I was in, in my first year of high school, a very sensitive English teacher of mine recommended that I read the play and write a book report on it. We were reading Shakespeare. I remember that even though the way of the play. Mama Mine did not want me to read this book. She probably promised not to show the copy of the play, which was hers, around the school. I did read it and the effect it had on me was indescribable. I remember that I didn't like Mama Mine and once this teacher at a New England boarding school. He resembles himself in the last act by going to bed with the com- passionated wife of one of the housemasters. The play was easy one of the most shocking plays of the early fifties, first because the housemaster's wife accuses her. All American husband of having more than academic interest in the boys he spares every weekend with climbing mountains. and, second, because it revealed that genuinely het- erosexual males in America could also be sensitive and tender, as the boy Tom Lee is. The whole play absolutely reeking with a kind of liberal com- promise, the text of which is a kind of "black is white" of the 1950s. It shows just how far we have come since Tea was written - all the 'straight' men are overbearingly straight. Tom is sicken- ing, he is sicken- ing and he is sicken- ing. The house- master's wife seems like one of those Hemingwayesque nurses who give themselves to dying men in hospitals. It is not the image of a woman's passion showing that a right are going to come one at all, there will be no homosexual 'offences' committed by the good people, that the good people do not care. All America- 10s and will their just rewards in the end (1) that infrumates me at this time. And yet I know that all of us at some point or another are the object of an order to "prove" his or her 'normality', his conformity, his straightness to a world that is really very willing to believe that deep inside you are just like everybody else, that is, you are a good boy and a 'regular' fellow. Tom's father only is interested in his son's sexual保密, a good-looking, well-built, very successful and creative person (he even plays tennis like a fox instead of like a bear) and were more of a 'regular guy'. And in the end, the play, Tom does prove that deep down inside he is a real man, that he is a regular guy. He is not the sort however, though he does act like a 'fairy', that is, he likes classic music, plays the guitar, and refuses to wear a crew cut. In the fifties this non-conformism alone could make him a commie neurtic. Eight years of living behind the veil that homosexuals have to wear most of their lives - no matter how liberated I might think I am, eight more years of America's highly enlightened liberalism that makes not only for the delights for homosexuals to be sexual (that's what we're here for) and even now het- erosexuals can stop acting like John Wayne just as long as you don't drop it, I have very little sympathy with Tea and Sympathy. In its own way it is the forerunner of The Boys in the Band, where the open but not yet win out and the bad people always lose out and every- body knows that the way's is fully. Tea and Sympathy can prove his 'masculinity' by taking the housemaster's wife to bed and if The Boys in the Band did not appeal to some heterosexual life which is stable and honorable, then the mask is right back towards Tea and Sympathy. It feels very good to the touch. It is just what the bourgeoisie wants to see - that although you might be an artist and a crease, the image of the guitar, at least deep down inside you're a regular guy, just like they are.
The Boys in the Band—one more time...  

I can't get over the abundance of guilt and anxiety expressed in The Boys in the Band. It's terribly depressing. But I'm part of the oppressed minority and it troubled the story is not meant for my enjoyment anyway. I'm still for the American people; for them, East Side Swingers. I picture them in the Chinatown-Eastern Embay East Theatre on Third Avenue and Elizabeth Street, with a group of gay young men dancing and drinking. They succumb to the music and sing along. They are enjoying themselves.

Crowley presents homosexuals as security-seeking people with a sort of rebellion for their own way of life. Revolution is not to be had in The Boys in the Band. The title, Michael in the form of theicks. Many homosexuals suffer from incapacitating feelings of shame, guilt, bizarreness, and alienation. This is why they destroy themselves. That's some, certainly nothing of my appreciable size. Crowley paints a distorted picture. Everyone suffers from guilt, but they are not to be pitied. It's not a Mr. Wilson, it's not a pills, or liquor, or some similar, these words are emotionally charged.

Homosexuals have it legislated in them. They're sick, evil, criminal, sinful. Sinful, there is good one. You're fourteen years old and you've just gone down on a friend. As you walk home alone through dank, rusty streets, you turn over things in your mind. You remembered what Father O'Halloran said last Sunday, and especially what your old lady's been drumming into your head since you were young. One that fire and brimstone always, you can see the Virgin Mary descending from heaven in a slave chariot. It's pretty gruesome. How can you adjust to this kind of society? How can you maintain your value attitudes all around you, and now, after this play reinforcement?

The really odd aspect of the whole situation is how the male homosexual is treated in The Boys in the Band. Of the stage version, The Times said... The reviews of the film version are a little more depressing. In the Times this is probably because of its censorship. The film is censored, and therefore pleasant, however, about a play that seems to have been created in an inspiration of late- and that finally does have something to exploit its (alas) sincerely conceived stereotypes.

The Daily News, reviewing the new film with Mark in its title, was very much about it and objectified, first of all, to the use of... even, repellant language. It is the audience, the host, who is still fighting his homosexuality, as if he hoped that it was a nightmare that would someday go away. The 'purer' is just pointing out the same thing. The Wools go on: "There is much truth and compassion in this film... They really eat that shit up. It's not my kind of film, but I'm just not sure."

The audience is a sum total of the undermining of society. Crowley's 'publishers' tell, believe, like it must be for the homosexual. Crowley should be shut...
IS GAY GOOD?

Here, at last, is a novel that dares to be completely honest about homosexuality. There is no sensationalism, no subterfuge, no apologies. There are no stereotyped flaming faggots. The “sexual offenders” do not commit suicide at the end. The Lord Won’t Mind is, if you will, a love story—a happy homosexual novel. It is also the most outspoken, most extraordinarily graphic book on the inner workings of the gay world ever written.

There will be some who bitterly condemn The Lord Won’t Mind. There will be others who applaud its publication as a landmark in the continuing fight against literary censorship. No one—but no one—will be neutral.
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