

Fag Rag

#40



AIDS EXORCISM

Suck toes!

By Jim McNiel

The AIDS panic has reached epidemic proportions. Our lives are threatened by the Right and now our sexuality from all sides, Right and Left.

Here in Boston a doctor takes out a full page ad to tell us:

To reduce the risk of AIDS the most important step you can take is to limit the number of partners with whom you have sex. Have as much sex as you like, but have it more for the quality of partnership than for the quantity of partners.

Fuck him!

Doctors have never given a damn about our health. They're not starting now. Why don't these professionals with enough money to rent full page ads remind us of all the things sexual we can do that involve no risk at all: tit-licking, ass-whipping, nudity, toe-sucking, jerking off in groups, tribadism. I mean the man exhibits all the creative thinking of Coach Denoia in 9th grade health class.

All the gay politicians and doctors are jumping out of the closet to cash in on AIDS. Their real concerns are all too obvious. A shrink at an AIDS rally called us adolescent which he defined as rebellious and obsessed with sex, and told us to grow up. They have simply found a new way to preach sexual repression. If growing up means being like him, who needs it.

Faggots have faced plagues before. The pois and priests are persistent if nothing else. We have been attacked by the scourge of Hepatitis

B, an incurable and deadly disease. As a community we have developed a remarkable immunity to this virus that eats livers. It's a fact that fewer faggots who get the disease die than straights who get it. Would that we were so resistant to the effects of those who wield authority.

AIDS is terrifying, but there's no reason to believe that by running back into the suburbs and voting booths we will buy a longer life. The terror eats at us anytime we see people ravaged by something there's no cure for. Something we do know is that the last ones to trust are those who stand to make money or careers from saving us. Or agencies like the CDC whose commitment to anyone's well-being has never been demonstrated.

Amy Hoffman, at this year's Boston Lesbian and Gay Pride March, summed up our feelings well:

...a gay man with AIDS explained how he's realized he knows more about his body and sickness than his doctors do. This is certainly an area where lesbians can care for and support gay men since this is a lesson we as women have learned well in this society where doctors can mutilate us, drug us, sterilize us, sicken us. AIDS challenges us to create a community which cares for us (clearly no one else is going to do it) and in which there is a dialogue about sex, gender, family, friendship, power, health, strength, and pride...

Are You Ready To Die For Sexual Liberation?

By Charley Shively

Recently Jerry Falwell brought his M & M road show to Cincinnati and demanded that the gay baths be closed immediately because of AIDS. (As it turns out, no gay bath — although advertised for years — has ever been able to open in Cincinnati.) His call coincides with some elements in the gay community — who seek repentance and forgiveness for what they understand as their sexual sins. They believe that they can sacrifice their sexuality and be granted everlasting life. Such nonsense. Everyone is going to die; giving up sex will only make the remaining life less joyous. During the bubonic plague of medieval times, crowds would do penance in the streets and whip themselves and promise to be "good" if only their deity would remove the plague. Or the Greeks before Troy believed their plague was brought on because their commander fucked a priest's daughter.

Even supposing that the pagans and the Christians were correct that sex causes AIDS, I would then ask, why should people not be ready to die for sexual liberation. Better dead than locked in our rooms, terrorized by the doctors, the priests, the politicians. There are risks in sex — think of all the rapes and queerbashing — but gay liberation should struggle to remove those risks, not succumb to our enemies.

Many gay "leaders" are now calling for us to put our faith in the medical profession, but that profession itself must bear major responsibility for making our sexuality more dangerous than it need be. They tell us to send our hundred million dollars to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), but that center does more to maintain than to control disease. Look at their history. In 1932, they began an experiment on six hundred Black men, which was only discontinued when the press uncovered their crime in 1972. (Caspar Weinberger was then HEW Secretary.) Four hundred of the Black men were watched to see what the effects of untreated syphilis would be on their mortality rate; the other two hundred were used as "control subjects." Even after the "experiment's" rapid termination in 1972, treatment for the surviving men was delayed almost a year. The Centers for Disease Control, as one newspaper reported, "sees the poor, the black, the illiterate and the defenseless in American society as a vast resource for the government" (James H. Jones, *Bad Blood, the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*, 1981).

But the CDC has been hardly more trustworthy in dealing with straight white people. In 1976 — after Gerald Ford had pardoned Nixon and needed to refurbish his own election campaign — the politicians attempted to restore faith in the government by creating a Swine Flu Panic. (They had planned an epidemic.) When their flu vaccine began killing people, their political ploy flopped and the Swine Flu Crusade dropped into the dustbin of history with the Ford. But in the process, the drug companies who manufactured the vaccine made a good profit, which they shared with the Republican Party.

There is, however, a frightening likelihood that AIDS has been funded all along by the federal government. If the theory of Jane Teas (Harvard School of Public Health) is correct that AIDS is caused by a virus related to the African Swine Fever Virus, then there is evidence that the CIA itself is responsible for introducing the disease in the western hemisphere. A *Newsday* article reprinted in the *Boston Globe* (1/9/77) reports that CIA operatives received the virus at Ft. Gulick (a CIA biological warfare training station in Panama) then travelled to Navassa (a U.S. controlled island just off the coast of Haiti) and then to Guantanamo — the U.S. naval base on the island of Cuba — where the virus was spread to Cuban pigs. From there it spread to the Dominican Republic (1978), to Haiti (1979) and reappeared in Cuba in 1980. According to James E. D'Eramo, the African Swine Fever Virus in Haiti initially "killed 80 to 100 per cent of the pigs in a given location, but as it spread from one pig feeding lot to another the mortality rate of the pigs decreased to a mere 3 per cent." Currently, according to Dr. Teas, "the Canadian, Mexican and U.S. governments are in the process of destroying the pig population of Haiti in an attempt to con-

trol the current African Swine Fever Virus infection, with the United States footing the 18 million dollar bill." (N.Y. *Native*, #64) Would it be possible that — given \$100 million — the doctors would just decide to kill all the queers, Haitians, and IV drug users exposed to AIDS?

The African Swine Fever Virus theory would suggest that the CIA effort in Cuba got out of control, spread to Haiti and then to people. A newly published book — Robert Harris and Jeremy Paxman, *A Higher Form of Killing, The Secret Story of Chemical and Biological Warfare*, 1982 — suggests a more sinister possibility. In their epilogue, the authors point out that chemical and biological warfare and research continue in the United States under the Department of "Defence" — known as the "Department of War before 1947. The current one and a half trillion dollars allocated for war leaves plenty of room for circumventing the rules of international law. In testimony before the House Committee on Appropriations in 1969, a military spokesman explained: "Within the next 5 or 10 years, it would probably be possible to make a new infective micro-organism which could differ in certain important respects from any known disease-causing organisms. Most important of these is that it might be refractory to the immunological and therapeutic processes upon which we depend to maintain our relative freedom from infectious disease." Further a 1975 military manual promises forthcoming "'ethnic chemical weapons' which would be designed to exploit naturally occurring differences in vulnerability among specific population groups" (pp.240-41). AIDS sounds just like such an ethnic weapon which knocks out the immunological defences of the individual. Certainly if such research has been pursued in the Department of War/Defence, they must already know a lot about how to turn on and off the immunological defences. The U.S. military attitude towards lesbians and gay men should be well known: they claim we are unfit for service.

Agent Orange (with its dioxin component and relatives) should be studied closely for parallels or links with AIDS. The U.S. government has certified that Agent Orange is harmless — an excellent example of manifest dishonesty and unreliability in medical research. The International Symposium on Herbicides and Defoliants in War (Ho Chi Minh City, January, 1983) found that dioxin toxicity includes "1. chronic hepatitis; 2. disturbances in immune function; 3. disturbances in lipid and porphyrin metabolism; and 4. neurological abnormalities, sometimes associated with a toxic neurasthenic syndrome." One of the significant discoveries of Vietnamese scientists has been that dioxin causes damage to the sperm similar to nuclear radiation. Sperm has, of course, been suggested as an agent in AIDS transmission; also one of the primary effects of Agent Orange is rapid and premature aging, another part of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

The difficulty with AIDS is only superficially medical. True, we don't know the cause or the treatment for the disease. But for syphilis we do know the cause and we do have an effective treatment and have had since the 1940s. For religious reasons the disease has been retained in order to punish people for their sexual liberties. We allow this because too many people feel that what they call "promiscuity" inevitably leads to its own punishment — death, disease and destruction. The CDC doctors (all white men) called it "Bad Blood" and some even after the revelations of 1972 believed they had been smeared by the press despite the good work they were doing.

Instead of checking out the CIA, the CDC or the medical-pharmacological establishment, too many gay people readily surrender to the lie that our sexuality is crippling us. They say our sex is adolescent, compulsive, retarded, irresponsible, sinful, and dreadful. Such teaching has encouraged the spread of syphilis and such teaching will surely impair our struggle against AIDS. We must not trust doctors, politicians or other professionals to do for us what we must do for ourselves. We cannot let others (however well-intentioned) speak for us.

STAFF

Jim McNiel

Jim Madru

S.H.

Peter Gonzales

Freddie Greenfield

Mike Riegle

Charley Shively

Mitzel

John Wieners

(Pres. Fag Rag Corp.)

Fag Rag Subscriptions

Individual	\$10.00 / 5 issues
Foreign	\$15.00 / 4 issues
Institution	\$10.00 / 1 year
Prisoners	FREE

Name

Address

City / State

Zip

Send \$\$\$ to: Fag Rag, Box 331 Kenmore,
Boston MA 02215.

Procedure for submitting your work . . . All manuscripts must be unpublished.

Writers:

Send an original or copy of your piece, mimeos are *not* acceptable. Your work should be typed, double-spaced and be enclosed with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

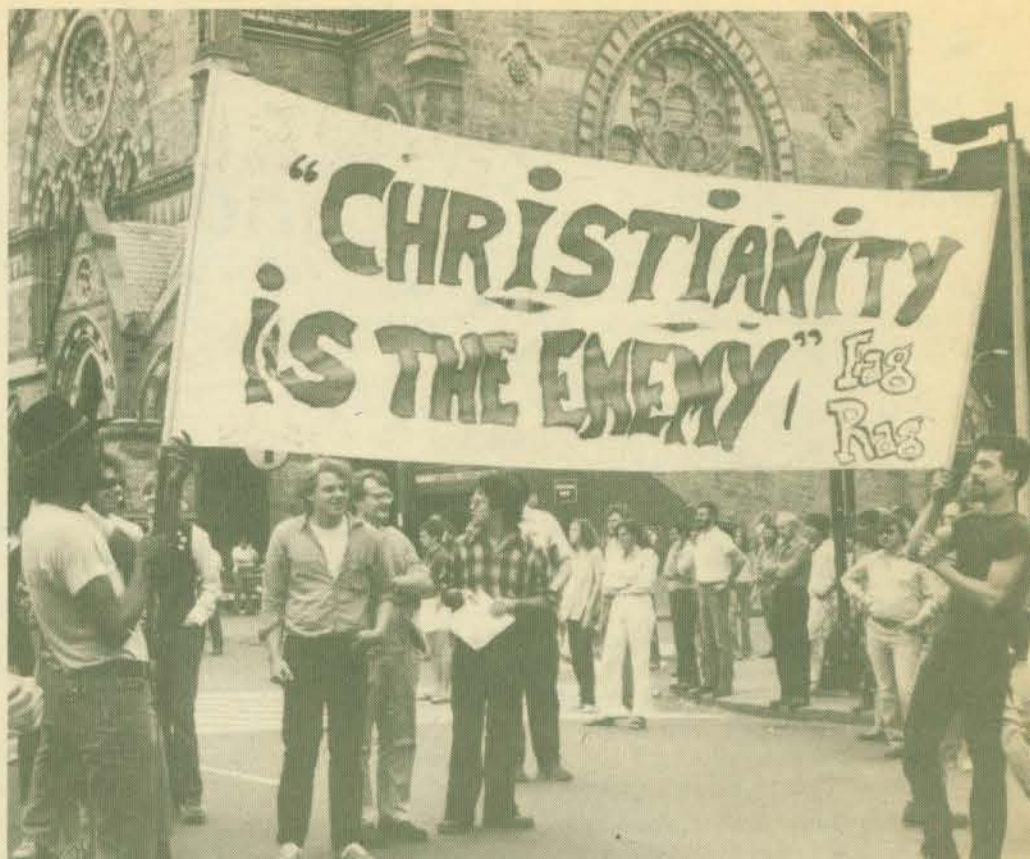
Poets:

Your work should be typed, double-spaced. Send no more than three poems each time. If you want your poems returned and/or want to be informed of their acceptance you **MUST** include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Artists:

Submit your work in Black & White. Each graphic must have your name and address on the back. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish the work returned.

All authors and artists receive 2 copies of the issue their work appears in.



FIRST THE BAD NEWS...

This was the last public appearance by the famous Fag Rag "Christianity Is The Enemy" banner at Boston's 1982 Gay Day Parade. First debuted in 1977 as Fag Rag's analysis of Anita Green and her cohorts, this popular banner has been carried by Fag Ragers in New York City and at other demonstrations against churches, etc. Just days after this 1982 demo, Fag Ragers and 300 others marched to the Headquarters of the Boston Police and demanded the immediate liquidation of the Vice Squad. We carried our popular "Fag Rag Cocksuckers etc." banner then (see cover of our 12th Anniversary Issue). Just days after denouncing christianity and the police, arsonists smashed into the Fag Rag offices and set off an incendiary device or devices, torching the place. Gay Community News and Glad Day Bookshop were also totally destroyed in that fire of 07 July 1982. Religionists and police tell Fag Rag they have no idea who would want to do such a thing—or who did! Well, we had our turn at burning down. Now it's *their* turn. Break a leg!



NOW THE GOOD NEWS....

Fag Rag was back in the Boston 1983 Gay Day Parade. Sassy and well-dressed as ever! After years of showing up at the parade with popular and controversial banners, the question buzzes from lips to lips: "What's the Fag Rag banner this year?" This year, in keeping with the tone of the times, the banner was tasteful, demure and discreet. Back to Basics.

NAMBLA and Gay Liberation

An Anarchist Perspective

by James Madru

A disingenuous attempt on the part of the FBI to link NAMBLA with a media smear engineered with certain members of the so-called responsible straight press sent paroxysms of fear down the spines of most Americans, gay and straight alike. This is a political issue: The government's overzealous attempt to identify NAMBLA as the source of "evil" disguises the political repression, and the media's vengeance against NAMBLA (and by extension, against all gays) has effectively ended discussion of the issues around age. In fact, the bunker mentality and reactionary panic can be found even in the gay press: evidence the *New York City News* article "The Case Against NAMBLA," by Damien Martin: It [NAMBLA] publicly advocates the most dangerously effective charge brought by the Far Right, that gay people and the Gay Liberation Movement promote sexual relations between adults and children...I do not feel [that] NAMBLA and its goals are a legitimate part of the gay movement. Nor do I feel that it is a separate movement with which we can join forces....NAMBLA is antithetical to gay and lesbian liberation, representing neither a logical nor a moral element in our attempts to achieve equality." Such reactionary tripe stifles discussion and cuts the legs off any liberation movement. Fear of repression is no reason to join hands with our oppressors, no reason to confuse liberation with equality: Equality with the oppressors equals more oppressors. Gay Liberation has more to say than this. Let us examine the logical and moral implications of NAMBLA's position for the Gay Liberation Movement, and let us do so not in an attempt to protect ourselves from some outside oppressor, but rather to expose the oppressor within ourselves, to ferret out the collaborator handcuffed to our spirits, and to give fair play to the vision that is our liberation, and by extension, Gay Liberation. I propose three points: (1) the threat to children presented by NAMBLA, (2) the threat to society presented by NAMBLA, and (3) the threat to the Gay Liberation Movement by NAMBLA.



Choose one: Two Boys on the Beach, by Paul Cadmus.

NAMBLA's Threat to Children

The uproar over NAMBLA revolves around children. Damien Martin says, "The crux of the matter is the refusal to differentiate between prepubescent children and postpubescent young people (adolescents)." In a society where more and more children (as well as adolescents) are disappearing, running away, committing suicide—where increasing numbers of children are bringing weapons to school, committing crimes, damaging property, costing lives—in such a society something has gone awry. Instinctively, the response is to blame something viewed as outside the society. Moreover, our society's approach to the problem, as in any society large enough to quantify such losses, is typically two-pronged: (1) come down as hard as possible on any person or group seen as actually or potentially threatening children or seen as threatening the classical view of children as chattel (an investment), to be owned, controlled, managed, and ultimately brought into productive use; and (2) heighten the societal control over children: quantify them even more, fingerprint them for their own protection, keep a file on every one of them if necessary, and so forth. No one can deny that these things are happening, but let us probe a little deeper into why.

The statement made by these actions is in effect, "Look, if you can't keep track of your children, if you can't control them, then we will have to find a way to 'protect' them. We will take them away from you if we must." An unfortunate corollary to this is the rising rate of physical abuse inflicted on children, much of it in misguided attempts at controlling them. Looked at in this way, it becomes apparent that NAMBLA is being used as a smokescreen to cover a systematic attempt to centralize the control of children. This scheme, however well-meaning or cynical its motivation, is obviously *not* working. Maybe the real problem is the classical view of children (to which NAMBLA is assuredly opposed). Maybe the real problem is that you can't quantify children, can't control them, can't own them—and I might add, can't trust them. Any attempt to quantify and contain childhood actually has a destructive countereffect. Look at the result: All you have to do is walk down any city street when school is out and watch how nonrelated adults react to children. People are pulling away; they don't want to be involved; children intimidate them; some are even afraid of them. Our children are being abandoned by the people in their lives and eaten up by a bureaucratic machine—the schools, the church, the government. And still the problem gets bigger. So every day we blithely create and pass more laws that continue to widen the gap that already exists between us and our children.

I repeat: Maybe it is the classical view of children that needs to be changed. In this light, NAMBLA's position with respect to the rights of children becomes increasingly "logical". NAMBLA strives to preserve the essential element of childhood—its freedom. And NAMBLA stands opposed to any encroachment on childhood by institutional authority. It is ironic, I suppose, that the members of NAMBLA should understand better than society's institutions that what children want and need is to be reached out to, excited, taught, played with, touched—in other words, loving acceptance by living, breathing, free human beings.

Many would say that NAMBLA's sexual orientation constitutes an ulterior motivation that is potentially damaging. However, the issue of sex with children is only another smokescreen issue. People (adults) have been having sex with children as long as there have been children (as well as with various other animals, inanimate objects, and even certain plants)—and vice versa. Sex, in a person's life, begins at conception (or perhaps even a little before), and it does not cease to exist at birth, only to be rediscovered at some arbitrarily determined age, say, 12 to 14 years, or 18 to 21 years. It is a continuous natural process—sexual development—you cannot control it with laws. The being (child) is sexual, continuously; it knows what is sexual and what is not; and it accommodates itself, to the extent of its own desire, need etc., to that which is sexually presented to it. It (the child) learns and grows, but most of all, it is a part of what is going on—all that is going on, not just what the controlling institutions think it should be let in on.

No one in NAMBLA would condone tearing open a young boy's asshole in order to fuck him, although anyone of them (as well as many others) would suck a young boy's cock, if it were appropriate, and pleasurable. The difference is obvious: There should be no doubt that the abusers are the abusers, not NAMBLA. Physical violence, rape, mutilations do occur, but laws enacted to prevent them may well be creating the repressive atmosphere that encourages them. Moreover, such an authoritarian approach to children may be the cause of even greater problems—the alienation and loss of our children. Nowhere is there a strong body of evidence to support the contention that free sexual expression among children and adults is in any way harmful to either. In fact, if we really sat down and examined our own lives closely, we would all probably have to admit that our own childhoods were richly, and illicitly, sexual, with no great harm to any of us, except where our sexual practices cast us into disfavor with the prevailing

societal institutions.

Sex is *not* the issue. The issue is *violence*: (1) the violence of those who are wont to physically harm children—the abusers—and (2) the violence of those who would attempt to quantify and control children from birth until they become mature, productive adults—the destroyers of childhood. NAMBLA is opposed to both these forms of violence. In fact, anyone who actually knows anything about NAMBLA knows that its members have been instrumental in protecting children from both. If, as Damien Martin suggests, there is a moral side to this issue, NAMBLA's position is pretty strong. So the question really is: How do we get to the root of violence against children, and how do we preserve the essential freedom of childhood and still protect the child from harm? This brings us to the second point I wish to develop.

NAMBLA's Threat to Society

It is readily apparent from the preceding discussion that NAMBLA presents no real threat to either children or society. NAMBLA clearly stands for the freedom of children, and the protection of children by caring, open individuals. NAMBLA is just one small group with a specific point of view with regard to sexual expression with children—homosex. As such, this is no big deal: To the child, there is no homosexuality, no heterosex—just sex, and pleasure. The labels come from adults and their authoritarian institutions, and the difficulties derive from the repressive stance these institutions employ to control this unregulated pleasure. One has only to read the contemporary psychiatric literature, Masters and Johnson, *S.T.H.*, or even *Ms.* magazine, to realize that sexual expression in childhood (even with adults) is far less damaging (if at all) than the trauma of the institutional response. NAMBLA's stance is to approach the free child freely, not hiding its agenda, to share pleasure. In this direct approach the child sees directly the limits of his freedom (in this one situation), learns of the give and take of life, is nurtured and protected, and is pleased. There is *no* violence here.

The issue, therefore, is clearly that NAMBLA's position is philosophically and conceptually opposed to that of society's institutions. NAMBLA's real threat is to the government, the FBI, the military, the church, the schools—all institutions failing to either protect or nurture children, and all claiming that to do so properly they must have more control. This translates to "more repression to maintain civiliza-



tion as we know it or once knew it." British anarchist Tony Gibson has a stunning reply: "The sort of civilization which is maintained depends on the authoritarian repression of childhood and the defeat of adolescence by denying the facilities by which ripening sexual instincts may achieve maturity. I will agree...that this control is essential—if we want to perpetuate the kind of society we now have. If, however, we want to alter our social pattern... there is no valid reason for this repression."

NAMBLA is unique in addressing our society's problem with children in a nonrepressive, human manner. NAMBLA's threat is not to children, and not to society, but rather to the institutions of repression. If we were to succeed in removing the laws that repress and diminish childhood, and if we could tell the institutions to back off, we would still be presented with the difficulty of protecting children from the abusers. How do we accomplish this? For this is indeed the real issue. And here, too, I think that NAMBLA has a clear grasp on the only solution: by reaching out to children directly, with no hidden agenda, no masterplan for their maturity, caring for them, pleasuring them, and *sharing* human life with them. This is no easy task, for children are essentially self-centered and demanding, but when legions of people are turning away from children daily, NAMBLA is one group that is turning toward them (and not, right now, without great risk). If more people could model their approach to children after NAMBLA's, we would have come a long way toward solving our problem with children and a long way toward creating a freer, healthier world. Violence, after all, can only occur when a child is *not* cared for, *not* protected by someone who loves him or her. We will not stop abusers in one day, one year, or maybe even one lifetime, but we must start sometime. It is precisely because NAMBLA has been so successful at reaching some of our children now that it is despised so much by the institutions. There is a lesson here for us, and this brings us to my final point.

NAMBLA's Threat to Gay Liberation

It would be difficult at this point to argue that NAMBLA presents any direct threat to Gay Liberation (or cares, for that matter). However, it does present an indirect threat—by association. That is,

NAMBLA's threat to the authoritarian institutions is so feared by them that they may choose to oppress all gay people in order to stop NAMBLA. However, Damien Martin takes care of this; he says, "NAMBLA, by its own definition, [is] an organization for pedophiles rather than for the homosexually oriented." This is one of the neatest bits of technical side-stepping I have ever seen! At best, it is a cop-out; at worst, it is collaboration—perhaps Mr. Martin has worked for the institutions so long that he has forgotten what it is like to look out the windows, smell the fresh air, feel the sunshine (before they bricked them up).

The members of NAMBLA are homosexual men who have chosen to challenge a fundamental misconception of authoritarian society. And they are going to get plenty of "heat" for their stand. What they do not need is to be abandoned by Gay Liberation, a "human rights movement by and for gay people." Indeed, we should share the "heat." We should be proud that such free-thinking and creative people are associated with us. It may well be our unique vantage point as gay people in a straight society that permits us the vision to lay open the lies of authoritarian repression. NAMBLA has helped us with our task, and as such, deserves a place among us. As more and more of our people reject oppression and answer only to the clarity of their own vision, we may all be able to look the Anita Bryants and J. Edgar Hoovers in the eye and, twisting their own words, say: "We procreate; you and your repressive, authoritarian, bible-belt blatherers merely reproduce!" Not only are members of NAMBLA part of the Gay Liberation Movement, but they are at the cutting edge of liberation itself—and we should be there with them!

A Bird in Hand

I sit, as every day, in a posture of feigned nonchalance, waiting for Willie to appear with his satchel of newspapers. Then (ask, and it shall be given unto you) he appears.

"Seen any good birds today?" he asks in his cheerfully piping voice, approaching from across the lawn.

With a lame smile, I hold up the binoculars strapped around my neck. "Not much today," I reply, casting a token glance at the patch of woods across the road.

"You really like birds, hah?" the boy asks. He poses before me in yellow T-shirt, red shorts and dirty sneakers, a baseball cap turned backwards on his curly mop of blond hair.

"They're beautiful, some of them," I say, still smiling, and letting the binoculars drop back against my chest. "I like beautiful things."

"That's neat," Willie says. He moves closer—walking with a jaunty, slightly pigeon-toed strut—and hands me my newspaper. His nose, small and upturned and reddened by the sun, wrinkles in a smile. "That looks good," he says, pointing to my lap—and I realize after a flustered moment, to the beer can resting there. "Wish I had some of that."

"I'd say you're a bit young," I point out.

"Almost thirteen!" he protests, raising his spunky little-boy hackles.

"Well, you do look hot." I stand up, trying to control my breath. (Don't blow it, old boy, I think to myself—then, smiling, wish that I could.) "I have some soda inside. You want some?"

"Sounds dynamite!" the boy says, his cheeks dimpling in an excited grin.

"Come on, then... come inside. See what kind you like."

Willie nods, sets down his sack, and steps past me into the house. I follow him, my heart beating a tachycardic tom-tom in my chest. His T-shirt is wet with perspiration, and clinging to his back. I breathe in the sweet tang of his sweat, savoring every pungent whiff of young BOY. "Take your pick," I say, pulling open the refrigerator door. "Cola, orange, ginger ale."

Willie bends over as he makes his selection, presenting me (considerate lad!) with a fetching view of red shorts stretched tight over very firm little... Then he straightens up, cola in hand. "This'll be OK," he says.

by Kevin Esser

I watch him wander with a lazy grace to the table, where he sits, slouches, sprawls out his legs. His knees are dirty, his left shin nicked with a tiny scratch. "My cat got me," he remarks, and I realize I've been staring too intently. I look up at his face—still damp with sweat, ruddy with sunburn, lit by a gleeful smile. "Cats eat birds," he says.

"True enough."

"I always wanted to be a cat," he goes on, taking a sip of his soda, then setting down the can. "Cats are cool, man. They look so great!" He stands up—moving to some sort of odd, feline rhythm—and begins a slow shimmy around the kitchen. I gaze, enthralled, as he dances past me, gliding with languid undulations of his head, shoulders, hips. Then he stops, turns, looks at me with his dimpled grin. "I gotta go," he says, eyes asparkle.

I try to speak, clear my throat, try again: "What about your soda?"

"Gotta go," he repeats, not to be swayed, already bustling past me out the door. "I got more papers to deliver. See you!" He grabs his sack and rushes off, striding away across the lawn like a sprightly little colt.

I hoist my binoculars and watch him disappear through the maze of houses, then turn away with a sigh, feeling a bit—I suppose—like Napoleon after a hard day at Waterloo.

I content myself, as the afternoon dimly passes, with the recollected image of Willie performing his Cat Dance. I sit at the kitchen table with eyes closed, recalling the sight and sound and smell of him, conjuring him, it seems, by sheer power of imagination—for he stands suddenly outside the screen door, rapping it with his knuckles.

"Willie?" I murmur, not quite trusting the reality of this delightful apparition.

"I'm done with my route," the boy announces, sounding very real indeed. "You got any more soda?"

"I suppose I do."

Sweatier than before—but no less cheerful—Willie lets himself in and sits down in a charming sprawl of sun-browned arms and legs.

"What about your soda?"

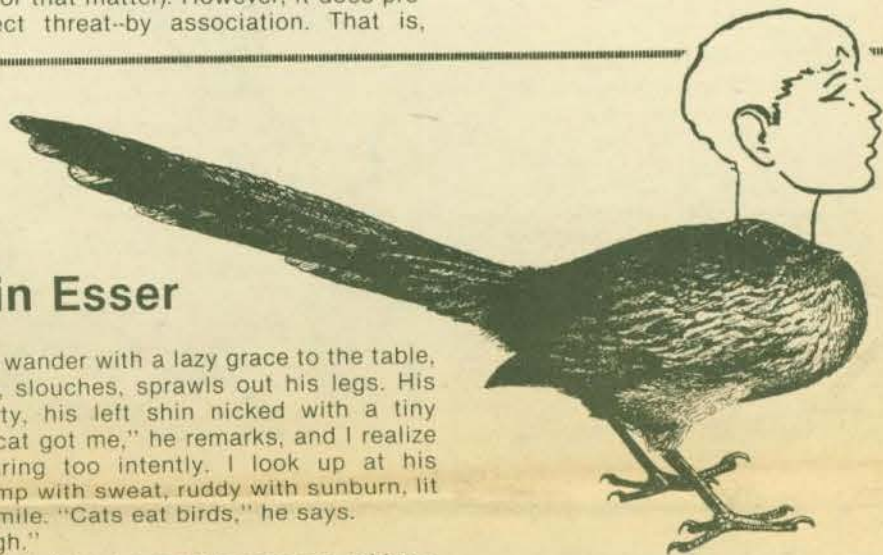
"Maybe later," he says.

"Later?"

"I'm too hot to drink anything right now."

"You'll get cramps?" I offer vaguely.

He shrugs. "Somethin' like that." He kicks off one sneaker, then the other. "That's better," he smiles, wiggling ten very pink toes.



"Mi casa es su casa," I chuckle.

"Say what?"

"It means—roughly, mind you—'make yourself comfortable.'"

"Thanks," Willie says, and, taking the Spanish proverb very much to heart, removes his baseball cap and tugs off the sweaty yellow T-shirt. Then he flips the cap back onto his curly head and stands up. "Feels better."

I pick up my binoculars in a supremely incongruous gesture.

"Gonna watch birds?" the boy inquires. A bead of sweat trickles down his glistening chest. "What kinda birds d'you like best?"

"All kinds."

"Little ones?"

"Little ones are nice—my favorites, in fact."

"I figured," Willie says, roaming about the kitchen. He slides a finger beneath the elastic band of his shorts and pulls in and out, in and out, giving himself air. The kitchen becomes fragrant with his rich, sweaty scent. Quickly, his manipulations produce an unexpected—and wholly delightful—side effect, which he unabashedly notes with a downward glance and a wrinkly-nosed grin. In my excitement, I raise the binoculars halfway to my eyes before stopping short.

"I'm still hot," Willie says, the front of his snug red shorts poking out in eloquent confirmation.

"Su casa es mi casa," I erroneously drone, remembering the proverb's earlier effect, and chanting it as a sort of incantation.

"That means...?"

"Make yourself comfortable."

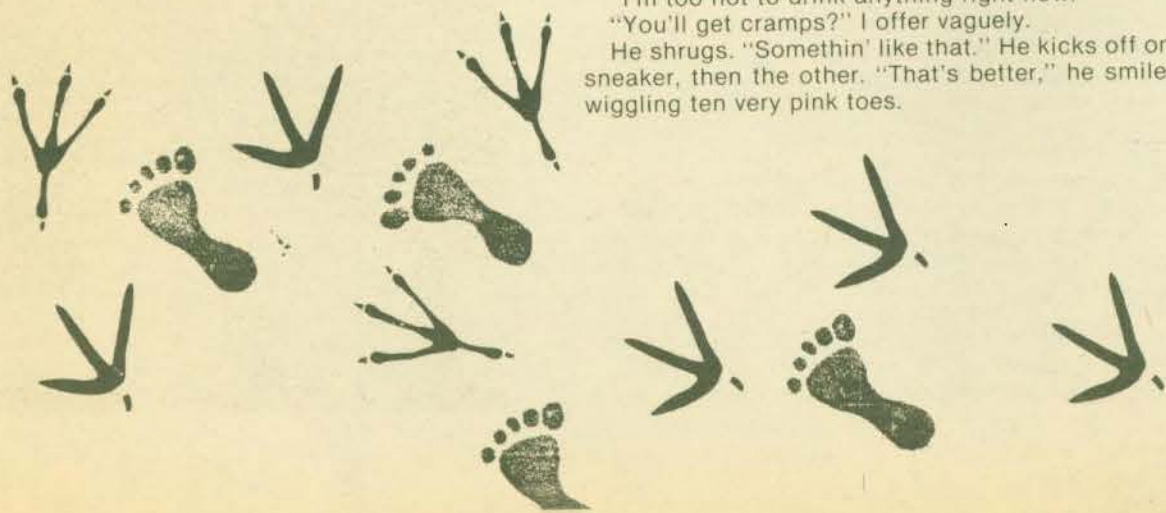
"Yeah, right," the boy smiles, facing me from the middle of the kitchen. "That's what I thought." He hooks his thumbs into his shorts and peels them down to his knees, then lets them fall to the floor and steps free. "Now I'm raw!" he giggles, running his hands slowly up and down his ribs.

"...as a jaybird," I interject, joyfully mixing our metaphors.

Wearing nothing but his baseball cap, his dimples, and a devilish little grin, Willie saunters across the room and steps in front of me. "You won't need these anymore," he informs me, taking the binoculars from around my neck. "You only gotta watch one little bird from now on."

"I think I can handle that," I smile.

And—to Willie's husky giggles of delight—I do...





A Las Sambrillas

Two policia were posted at Las Sambrillas*
to move the Locas on/a municipal eyesore
that/strait narrow myopic eyes
deplore/a malignancy/they pray
will go away/

/the economy is bad enough
without this flagrant disregard
for gravity/

But their vision cannot capture us
we change form faster than they blink
Guayaba and Carlos
link arms in dramatic poses
for imaginary lenses
like Polk Street
people/come for this magic
yet after seeing it are ashamed
at their own stoic/non-mythic
monolithic postures
and react as machos
are suppose to/

Ricardo, Leonardo and Carlos
exchange satirical events
in their daily lives/
exquisite mimes
they tell whole stories
with their lithe bodies
they are animated
and illuminate the night
outshine the electric lampposts
they so eloquently lean on
or astride the cement entrance
to an underground passage
beneath Avenida Juarez

the umbrellas salute them
billowing contrast and color

The trees/umbrellas and fountains
are mere props for these lovely locas
Paco, Oscar and Miguel
preen themselves/and jostle
over me/who do I love the most?
It's Paco but - I feign confusion
and tell each one in turn
what they long to hear/

Ricardo ask me if I like
feminine or masculine boys
I try to explain androgyny
you see/I like them both
he is bewildered by my answer/
in spanish everything is neatly
separated by gender
so many like Carlos
choose the feminine
because the other/machismo
is so drab/ugly and grey
I'd chose their way/
I'd chose to be a reina/as well †

the policia have never phased us
we mark their guns/repressed cocks
for what they are/we are visionaries

It is late/we're all held in one huge embrace
twenty or thirty/some singing romantic ballads
some parading for our entertainment
some sad but at home/
a head resting on another's shoulder
and I touch each arm/waist and hand
as many as I can/
as we each touch the evening magically/
giving a glimmer of love and light
to an otherwise cold/bleak night

David Emerson Smith

*Las Sambrillas means the umbrellas in spanish and is the official meeting place for Locas (queers) in Guadalajara. It is located in the center of the city across Avenida Juarez from Denny's Restaurant. A place where liberated queers are always welcome.
† Reina means queen in spanish.



Photos by David Emerson Smith



Willie

Peter, waving the money, nodded to a boy of about Gito's age. The boy stood up and sauntered forward. He was thin and wiry with long black hair plastered in sweaty strands across his forehead and ears. His dark green shorts were tattered and very snug, his white T-shirt slung around his neck like a boxer's towel. He stepped in front of Peter and flashed a gap-toothed grin. "You want me?" he asked in Spanish, reaching down and fondling his own crotch.

Peter nodded, patting the bench. "Sit down, friend. Here, have some wine." He handed the bottle to the boy. "What's your name, anyway?"

"Felipe," the boy said between swigs from the bottle. He regarded Gito with a leery glance, then sat back, took another drink, and wiped his mouth on his hand. "Go ahead and do it," he said, spreading his legs obligingly.

Peter slipped his hand inside the boy's shorts, where he found the penis already beginning to harden.

Felipe raised his hips. "Take my pants down," he muttered in an urgent, breathless voice.

"Here?"

"Take them down," he repeated, nodding. "Go ahead. Hurry up!"

With both hands, Peter gripped the elastic band of the boy's shorts and pulled them down to his dirty knees. Felipe's penis flipped out stiff, twitching.

"Farther!" the boy said, his voice an almost desperate mutter. "Down farther."

Peter grabbed the shorts again and slid them down quickly to the boy's ankles. Felipe, stripped clean to the skin, spread his legs wide. "Do it fast," he said. He took another hurried drink from the bottle, then set it beside him and slouched down farther on the bench. "Hurry up!"

Peter glanced at the other boys near the fountain, all of them lazing on the ground, chatting among themselves—and showing not a bit of interest in Felipe's business.

"Come on!" the boy said, impatient almost to the point of anger.

Peter reached down and ran his hand between the damp young thighs, then gripped the boy's hard penis and stroked it slowly. Felipe, squirming jaybird-naked on the bench, wiggled one foot free from his tangled shorts and propped his leg up onto the bench, letting his thighs open even wider. Then moaning something about his "eggs," he began fondling his own testicles—drawn up as hard as two tiny pebbles in their sac. "Suck it!" he muttered, lifting his hips. "Go ahead, suck it quick before it comes out!"

Peter hesitated; drunk as he was, he still could not bring himself to perform so recklessly in public.

Felipe pushed Peter's hand away and grabbed his

own erection. "Too late!" he groaned, turning his back to Peter and raising himself up on one knee. He bent forward at the waist—his pale brown scrotum nestled between his thighs, was visible from the rear—and with a final stroke of his fist, sent his semen spurting like ribbons of pearl onto the grass.

Grinning, he turned around and pulled up his shorts. "Sorry, but I didn't want it all over me," he said. Then he started to kneel. "I'll do you now."

"No, don't bother," Peter said. He handed the boy his money.

"OK," Felipe shrugged, turning and jogging back to his friends. "See you later."

Peter looked around: Gito was gone. Somehow, in the last few minutes, he'd slipped away. Peter leapt up, almost keeling over as he gained his feet, and started back to the hotel. After a few shaky steps, he turned to retrieve his wine, then thought better of it and hurried on his way.

The boy was already in bed, facing away from Peter; the sheet was pulled up as far as it would stretch, nearly covering his head. His shirt, shoes, and socks were thrown in a messy pile on the floor.

Peter sat down heavily on the edge of the bed. "You OK?" he asked, nudging the boy's hip.

Gito's shoulders lifted in a quick shrug beneath the sheet.

"I'm sorry," Peter said quietly, trying to control the tremor in his voice. "I don't know what to say. I didn't want to hurt you, believe me." He paused, staring at the back of the boy's head. "Or maybe I did. I don't know. . . . I'm no good at apologizing, I guess. But I'm drunk, so at least I can speak my mind, which I couldn't do before 'cause I'm such a goddamned coward. . . ."

He paused again; his hand, he noticed suddenly, was stroking Gito's hip. Still the boy did not respond. Peter tried again: "What I'm saying is that I'm sorry, dammit, and I love you, Gito. You're mad now 'cause of that kid in the park, but that's nothing. . . . less than nothing. Christ. . . . anyway, I'm sorry." Grinning suddenly, he leaned down and muttered into the boy's ear: "And listen to this. . . . I'm gonna say it again in case you missed it before. . . . I love you, kid. Whether you like it or not, I love you! So there!"

Gito turned his head slightly. "It's OK," he said. "Just forget it." There was no hint of emotion in his voice.

"I won't forget it," Peter said. He rolled the boy onto his back. "If you're mad or hurt, then cuss me out or do *something*! But don't just lie there."

Gito put his arm across his face, covering his eyes. "I just wanna go home, that's all."

"Talk to me, Gito!"

"I just wanna go home," the boy whispered again, a tear trickling down his cheek, from under his arm. "Maybe to Pilon's or somewhere."

Peter watched him, wondering what to say or do. He wiped his own eyes and cleared his throat. "Well, maybe you're right," he said finally. "Maybe you should go back to Pilon's. Well, anyway. . . . I'm sorry I couldn't help you like I wanted. And I'm sorry if I screwed up your life more than it already was. But that's over and done with. So. . . . I guess we'll leave tomorrow."

He reached out and wiped away the boy's tear with his thumb. "Don't cry, pal. You'll be better off without an old drunk like me."

"I'm not cryin'," Gito said, rolling back onto his side.

"I just wish I could understand you better," Peter said. "I wish I knew how to make you happy." Not quite sure what he was doing—or why he was doing it—he stretched out on the bed, wrapped his arms around Gito, and kissed the boy on the neck. "My little boy," he whispered smiling. "My beautiful Gito." He kissed along the boy's bare shoulders.

"Don't," Gito said, flexing his back. "It ain't right."

"Of course it's right," Peter mumbled, sliding his lips back and forth across the shoulders. He pulled back the sheet. Gito, still wearing his shorts, curled himself tighter and cradled his knees.

"Take them off," Peter said, reaching down to unbutton the shorts. "Please take them off."

Gito shook his head. "Not here, man. Not right now."

"But I've gotta do something!" Peter groaned, pulling down his own trousers and undershorts. "I'm too damned worked up. . . ." He pressed his penis against the boy's back and began sliding it up and down. "I need you," he breathed into Gito's ear. "I need you." Then, pumping faster against the smooth brown skin, he ejaculated. Feeling the semen splashing onto his back, the boy flinched and let out a soft gasp.

Peter lay still against the boy, letting his breath return, then stood up and fetched a towel. "I won't touch you anymore," he said, wiping the boy's back. "I promise I won't do that again."

"I'm splittin' when I get home, man," Gito said.

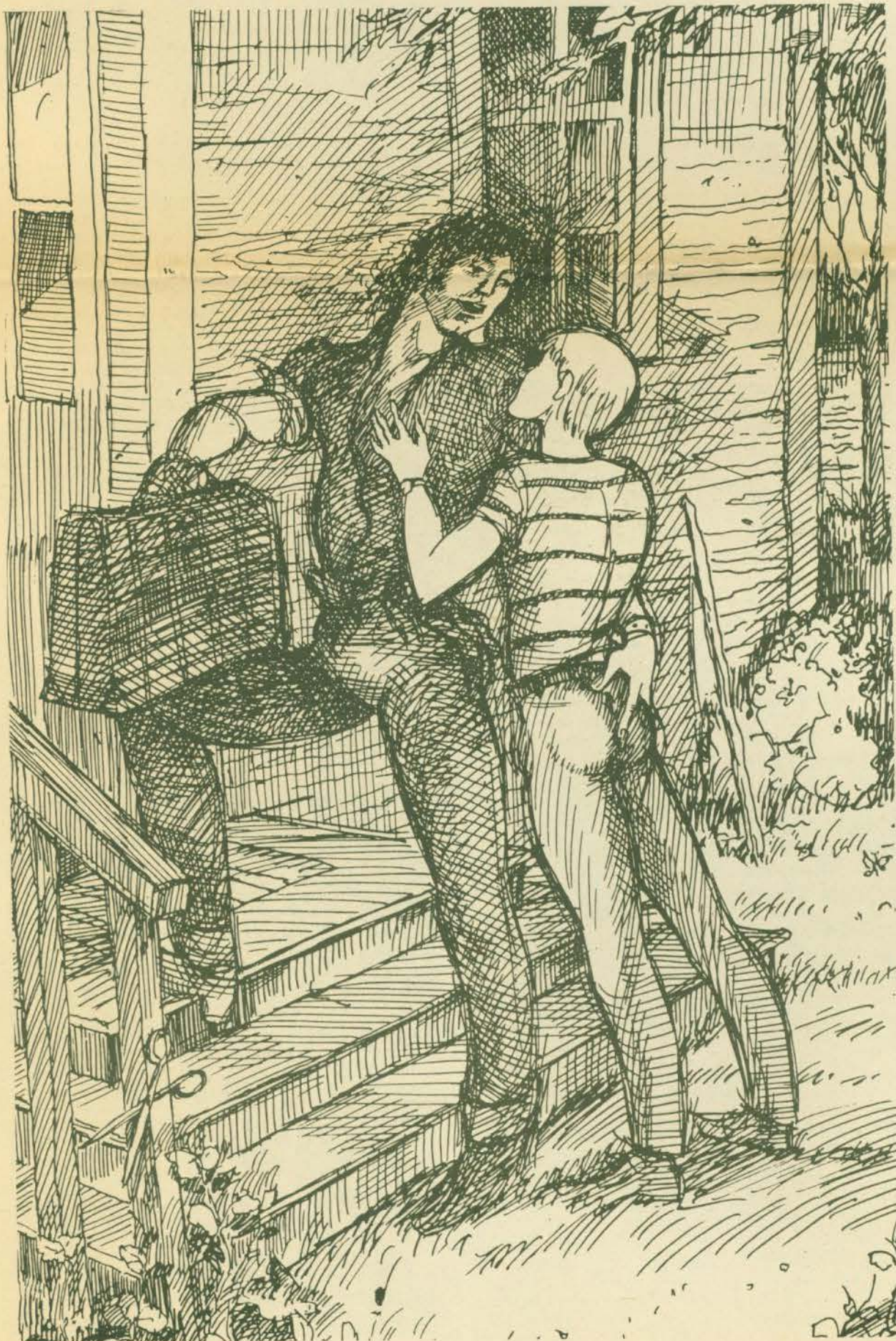
"I know."

"I just can't be what you want."

"I know," Peter said again. "I don't like forcing myself on you. I hate it. And I hate you, and I hate myself. . . ." He threw the towel on the floor. "And I'm done trying to get you to like me. So to hell with the whole thing."

"I'll split from the airport when we get home," Gito said, pulling the sheet back over his body.

"Yeah," Peter said, "I think that's probably a good idea." He stumbled back a step and fell onto his bed.



Felipe

"My name's Willie," the boy said, roaming around the apartment, inspecting every corner. "My ma calls me William when she's pissed at me, and some guys call me Bill, but I like Willie the best, so that's what you can call me." He walked with a bounce, snapping his fingers, fairly seething with energy.

(skip...)

He wiped his hands on his pants. "You ready to do somethin'? I can strip down."

"That's fine," Peter said, not sure what he wanted from the youngster.

Willie sat down on the edge of the table and took off his shoes and socks.

"You're going to undress in here?" Peter asked, more and more amazed by this boy's bizarre, impulsive behavior.

"Sure. I like to take off my clothes with somebody watchin'. Sometimes I get a hard-on just thinkin' about bein' bare-assed with somebody lookin' at me."

"No kiddin'," Peter said, slowly shaking his head, smiling.

Suddenly, Willie looked around at Peter with an odd, devilish grin. "You got a pool table?"

"No," Peter laughed. "But there's a Ping-Pong table in the basement. I haven't played in years, but I used to be pretty good."

"I never played Ping-Pong," Willie said, "but that's OK. Last week I was with some guy who had a pool table, and we played strip-pool. But Ping-Pong is OK, too. Where is it? Can we use it? You wanna do that?"

"Strip Ping-Pong? I don't know... it's not my basement. I mean, there could be other people from the building down there."

"Well let's find out. And let's take some food, too, 'cause I'm still kinda hungry."

"Sure, OK, I guess so," Peter said, still a bit uneasy, but determined to finish what he'd started. "Whatever you want is OK—like I said." He found a plastic bag and put in some food.

The basement was empty. Peter flicked on the light and set the bag onto a chair near the door. "Well, we're in luck," he said, forcing a nervous grin.

Willie, padding barefoot across the linoleum floor, stepped up to the Ping-Pong table. "This is gonna be great!" he said. "Come on, show me how to play."

Peter crossed to the table and picked up his paddle. "Well, it's pretty simple. You just hit the ball back and forth on one bounce, or on the fly, and the first player who gets to twenty-one wins. And, of course, I guess we're adding your new rules, right?"

Willie, bouncing lightly on his toes, picked up his paddle and nodded. "Yeah—every three points, whoever loses has gotta strip. Go ahead."

"OK, boy, I'm gonna beat the pants off ya!" Peter snarled. He rolled his shoulders, took a deep breath, then served. The ball zipped past Willie, untouched.

"Wait a minute!" the boy laughed. "That's too fast." He retrieved the ball and tossed it back.

"Tough," Peter said. "Get ready." He served again, sending the ball in a skidding slur past the youngster's paddle.

"Come on!" Willie yelled, pounding the table and laughing harder. "Gimme a break!"

Peter picked up the ball bouncing near his foot. "OK, this one is going to be a little slower." He cocked his arm. "Now get ready." This time, Willie managed to slap the ball back; but it arced long, and missed the end of the table.

The boy set his paddle down. "OK, I go first," he said, rubbing his hands together. He unfastened his trousers, pulled them off, and threw them onto the floor. "OK, let's keep goin'."

"I get two more serves," Peter said, "then it's your turn." He held up the ball. "Ready?"

"Yeah, yeah, come on," Willie said, standing and grinning in his cap, T-shirt, and underpants. "I'm ready."

The boy, though showing improvement, lost the next two points, then sent the first of his serves bouncing into the net. "Well, my turn again!" he announced with a gleeful clap. He removed his cap, tugged off his T-shirt, then put the cap back on. "OK, here goes!"

He sent a crisp serve over the net; Peter, easing up, returned the ball gently. Gaining a feel for the game, Willie managed a nice rally before finally losing the point.

"You're gettin' there," Peter said.

Bouncing in his backward cap and underpants like a boxer waiting for the bell, Willie nodded in happy agreement, then served again—but carelessly, sending the ball skipping with a pitiful clip-clap-clip into the net. "Nuts!" he yelled, grabbing the ball back. He poised to serve again. "OK, here it comes."

This time it was Peter's turn to be careless; with a sloppy, overconfident swing, he rifled the ball errantly past Willie's hip.

The boy whooped and threw up his arms. "Your turn to strip! Hah! I did it!"

Peter laughed, then shrugged and took off his shirt. "OK," he said, picking up his paddle, "go ahead. You have one more serve."

Willie lost that point, as well as the next. He was a nimble boy, gaining in skill with each rally, but could never muster quite enough finesse to defeat his older, and vastly more experienced, opponent. Yet losing seemed to faze him not a bit, and his eager, cheerful grin never waned.

"It's ten to one, my favor," Peter said, bouncing the ball on the table.

Willie nodded. "Yeah, come on, I'm ready."

Peter drew back his paddle. "All right, here we go." He served the ball sharply, caught a crisp return from Willie, then another, sent a lob back, then a low volley—and finally, with a skidding return that the boy couldn't quite handle, won the point.

"Nuts, nuts, nuts!" Willie cried, beating his fist on the table. He tossed down his paddle and looked up smiling. "This goes next, I guess," he said, throwing his cap beside his T-shirt and pants. He glanced down at himself and snapped the elastic band of his underpants. "Not much left."

"No, not much," Peter agreed. He retrieved the ball from beneath the table. "I've got three more serves. Then it's your turn again."

Photo by Mitzel



Willie fought almost frantically for the next two points, but was terribly overmatched, and lost them both in rapid order. "Come on," he said, grinning and bouncing. "Come on! One more!"

Peter nodded, cocked his arm, and served. The boy snapped the ball back—once, twice, again—then, trying for a winner, sent a low linedrive into the net. "Oh no!" he yelled, bending over and laughing with his head on his arms.

"Go on," Peter said. "Take them off."

"OK," the boy smiled, "here goes." He gripped his underpants and, with a coquettish shimmy, peeled them slowly down to his knees. He pulled out one foot, then the other, letting the shorts drop to the floor. "Now I'm raw!" he said, giggling as he ran his



hands up and down his ribs. His small, thin penis was partially erect, dangling at a crooked angle beneath his hairless belly.

"You want to keep playing?" Peter asked, his heart thumping.

"Sure!" Willie said, still bouncing on his toes, his penis bobbing between his legs.

"Go ahead and serve."

The boy nodded and whacked the ball across the net, then swung and missed as it flew back in a white blur past his hip.

"Aw, darn!" he cried, turning to retrieve the ball, his little butt jiggling as he loped across the room. Panting softly, he returned to the table with a very stiff, very excited penis. "I'm really gettin' hard," he grinned, staring down at himself. "I don't think I wanna play anymore. Here, watch me!" He cupped his scrotum and let it slide loosely around his palm. "You like my nuts?"

"Very nice," Peter replied, feeling rather foolish.

"Keep watchin' me," Willie said, still massaging himself, and walking slowly to the door. "I like it when you watch my dick." He licked the fingers of his free hand and smeared the saliva onto his erection, turning it a glistening red. At the door, he stooped and emptied the plastic bag, then carried it back across the room, his penis sticking out straight and bouncing with each step.

"OK, now watch me," he repeated, glancing at Peter with a grin, and climbing onto the Ping-Pong table. "Keep watchin' what I do." Kneeling, he began to masturbate himself with slow, easy strokes. He leaned back, rocking slightly at the knees, his rump bouncing up and down against his calves.

"I'm gonna cum pretty soon," the boy gasped. "Pretty soon... Now watch! Watch it come out!"

Peter wandered forward, nodding. "I'm watching," he murmured.

Stroking faster, Willie arched his back, then grabbed the plastic bag and slipped it over his penis. "OK, here it comes!" With a violent buck of his hips, and a loud groan, he ejaculated into the bag.

"Did you see that?" he asked, trying to catch his breath.

"Yeah, I saw it," Peter said. He leaned down and started collecting the youngster's clothes.

Grinning proudly, Willie held up the bag, the pale ooze of his sperm pooled at the bottom. "Look at it," he said, his penis drooping skinny and red between his stark-white thighs.

"Here you go, little friend," Peter said, handing the boy his clothes. "I'll take the bag."

The youngster gave it to him. "Is that all you want me to do?" he asked, climbing off the table. "Don't you want me to do anything else?"

"No, that's plenty," Peter said, holding the bag of Willie's sperm.

"Well, OK, if that's what you want, then it's OK by me." The boy pulled on his T-shirt, then his underpants and trousers. "I had a neat time, though. I really got my rocks off good. Did you like it?"

"Yeah, it was great."

"You don't look very happy."

"I'm just fine."

The boy picked up his baseball cap and pulled it down on his head. "I need my shoes and socks, then I'll go."

"Yeah, fine," Peter said, following Willie to the steps. He paused, tossed the plastic bag into a garbage can near the door, then continued upstairs.



Oscar Wilde Without Whitewash

by Thomas Bell

Here is his own evidence from *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*.

Wilde's Individualism

In 1916 Frank Harris came into the field with his book, *The Life and Confessions of Oscar Wilde*. It proved an extraordinary success, in America at least, for the warning of Douglas that he would prosecute for libel any book-seller he caught selling it put a stop to its public sale in Great Britain. But it was read, of course, by everybody much interested in Wilde, and many of the best men in Britain, as well as in America, have spoken of it very highly.

Over 40,000 copies of it have been sold in America, and it has been translated into French, German, and Spanish. It has been declared by many good judges to be "the ultimate biography of Wilde," and one of the greatest volumes of its kind in our language. Robert Ross, Wilde's intimate friend, called it "a classic biography," and declared it to be a terribly faithful portrait. Reginald Turner, the other man present at the deathbed of Wilde, considered it also one of the best biographies of Wilde and one of the best books in the English language. H.L. Mencken, of the *American Mercury*, pronounces it "the best biography ever written by an American, an astonishingly frank, vivid reconstruction of character."

Harris himself thought it pretty good. When Upton Sinclair wrote to Harris that the book was one of the half-dozen best biographies in English, Harris replied, "Name the other five." Sinclair says, "In fairness to Frank Harris, when I sat down and thought it out seriously, I could not name the other five. Here is the story of a terrific human tragedy, told plainly and completely, with profound insight and deep pity. How could the man who wrote it not know it was great?"

T.W.H. Crosland, himself almost as clever a journalist as Harris and almost as clever a poet as Wilde, declared: "The work is at once the best picture that has been painted of Oscar Wilde and also the most intimate account of the versatile man's life."

"It was conceived in strong friendship and was born in the love that knows no bounds. The story of Wilde is told with the devotion of a true friend."

And George Bernard Shaw wrote to Harris: "You have written the best life of Wilde. Wilde's memory will have to fall or stand by it."

Harris has since written a biography of Shaw. Shaw must think himself fortunate, I imagine, that after all it is not by a Harris biography that he himself must stand or fall.

I have protested against the book as shamelessly bad. Poor Wilde throughout is presented as a wretchedly spineless creature, without one trace in him of those aspirations toward a better society about which Harris, in his later years, was talking so sweetly and so constantly.

Here, for instance, Harris:

It was not his views on art, however which recommended him to the aristocratic set in London, but his contempt for social reform, or rather utter indifference to it, and his English love of inequality. The republicanism he flaunted in his early verses was not even skin deep; his political beliefs and prejudices were the prejudices of the English governing class, and were all in favor of individual freedom, or anarchy under the protection of the police... he was hailed a prophet, partly because he defended the cherished prejudices of the landed oligarchy... by talent and conviction he was the natural pet of the aristocracy whose selfish prejudices he defended and whose leisure he amused.

This outrageous nonsense does not merely show that Harris never understood Wilde, it shows either that he never cared to understand him or he was never capable of understanding him, no more on his ideas of social reform than in his conception of Mr. and Mrs. Davenport.

Wilde did once appeal to the protection of the police when he started legal proceedings against Queensberry. But here is what Wilde has to say for himself about that (from *De Profundis*):

My ruin came not through too great individualism in life but through too little. The one disgraceful, unpardonable, unto all time contemptible action of my life was to allow myself to appeal to society for help and protection... I was constrained to appeal to the very things against which I had always protested.

This talk about his English love of inequality and the prejudice of the English governing class is applied to a man who took into him on his mother's knee the aspirations of an Irish revolutionist, the hope of Ireland free from that English governing class. The son even after he had broadened out far beyond nationalism still frequented his mother's salon, a center of Irish republicanism.

These accusations against Wilde come very badly indeed from a man who left Social-Democracy for

Tom Bell, born in Edinburgh, Scotland, author of many anarchist articles, books and pamphlets, will be best remembered for his *Oscar Wilde Without Whitewash* and *Edward Carpenter, the English Tolstoy*. He was a champion of labor and an excellent stenographer.

Bell met Wilde on a few occasions. His impressions were strong: "I remember... the friendly relationship into which Wilde and I fell at once, for our immediate acceptance of each other... It was the acceptance of each other by two men between whom there was no need of discussion and explanation, who knew that they had the same general attitude to the problems of life and society as opposed to that of the hostile outside world."

The following chapters are taken from his book on Wilde. They have been edited mercilessly. In order to make the information on Wilde more accessible to those not well versed in obscure 19th century British anarchist thought, I have removed much of Bell's personal reflections. Bell's view of Wilde and presentation of his writing is uncommon and worth more attention.

Jim McNiel



Thomas Bell

Toryism because it paid so much better, who edited Tory papers, who made a fortune out of a Tory review, and sold it to an English Tory Lord for continuation, a man who would have been a Tory member of Parliament himself if his political opponents had not exposed his previous radicalism, a man who boasted so much about having been the mentor of Lord Randolph Churchill, the Tory leader, and who would fain have been the mentor of his son, the present Winston Churchill. They come very badly from a man who in his "society" paper talked about his acquaintance with King Edward, from a man who ceased to be a Tory only when his dodge of writing clever Tory speeches for dumb Tory members of Parliament and then blackmailing them on threat of exposure was brought into court, and with other similar scandals drove him to the United States and to open "radicalism."

I have already declared that Wilde held very strong views. His views as an Anarchist were quite as decided as those of Shaw as a Socialist, and were certainly very much stronger than any possessed by Harris on anything. No, I do not mean that he had always been an Anarchist. But in his maturity he was undoubtedly an Anarchist, an Anarchist of the type of Edward Carpenter or Elisee Reclus, an Anarchist philosophic and humanitarian, though avoiding the use of the term Anarchism itself as one likely to cause misunderstanding in the minds of his readers.

The man of whom he considered himself a follower was Peter Kropotkin, and he accepted Kropotkin's views in full, "Anarchist-Communism." Wilde, when he wrote on the matter, wrote not in regard to economics, but upon aesthetics, but he is as clear and decided as Kropotkin himself.

It is much more easy to have sympathy with suffering than to have sympathy with thought... But the remedies do not cure the disease, they merely prolong it... They tried to solve the problem of poverty, for instance, by keeping the poor alive... but this is not a solution, it is an aggravation of the difficulties. The proper aim is to try to reconstruct society on such a basis that poverty will be impossible... If a frost comes we shall not have 100,000 men out of work, tramping about the streets... or crowding around the doors of loathsome shelters to try and secure a hunch of bread and a night's unclean lodging. Each member of society will share in the general prosperity and happiness of prosperity.

Good Socialism, but Wilde was not a Socialist only. He says:

On the other hand, Socialism itself will be of value because it will lead to Individualism.

Socialism, Communism, or whatever one chooses to call it, by converting private property into public wealth, and substituting cooperation for competition, will restore society to its proper condition of a thoroughly healthy organism and insure the material well-being of each member of the community. It will in fact, give Life its proper basis and its proper environment, but for the full development of Life to its highest mode of perfection something more is needed. What is needed is Individualism. If Socialism is Authoritarian; if there are Governments armed with economic power, as they are now with political power, if, in a word, we are to have Industrial Tyrannies, then the last state of man will be worse than the first.

This is, of course, that synthesis of Socialism and Individualism, which makes up Anarchism, just as Kropotkin has put it and other Anarchists. As Wilde goes on, he uses the word "Individualism" instead of Anarchism, but his meaning is quite clear.

Disobedience in the eyes of anyone who has read history is man's original virtue. It is through disobedience that progress has been made, through disobedience, and through rebellion... No, a poor man who is ungrateful, unthrifty, discontented and rebellious is probably a real personality, and has much in him. He is, at any rate, a healthy protest. As for the virtuous poor, one can pity them, of course, but one cannot admire them. They have made private terms with the enemy, and sold the birth-right for very bad pottage. They must also be extraordinarily stupid. I can quite understand a man accepting laws that protect private property, that will admit of its accumulation, as long as he himself is able under these conditions to realize some form of beautiful, intellectual life. But it is almost incredible to me how a man, whose life is marred and made hideous by such laws, can possibly acquiesce in their continuance.

...Agitators are a set of interfering, meddling people who come down to some perfectly contented class of the community and sow the seeds of discontent among them. That is the reason why agitators are so absolutely necessary. Without them in our incomplete state there would be no advance in our civilization.

Yes, there are suggestive things in Individualism. Socialism annihilates family life, for instance. With the abolition of private property, marriage in its present form must disappear. This is part of the program. Individualism accepts it and makes it fine. It converts the abolition of legal restraint into a form of freedom that will help the full development of personality.

Individualism, then, is what through Socialism we are to attain to. As a natural result, the State must give up all idea of government... All modes of government are failures. Despotism is unjust to everybody, including the despot who was probably made for better things. Oligarchies are unjust to the many and ochlocracies are unjust to the few. High hopes were once formed of democracy; but democracy means simply the bludgeoning of the people, by the people, for the people. It has been found out. I must say it is high time, for all authority is quite degrading. It degrades those who exercise it and degrades those over whom it is exercised.

What are called criminals nowadays are not criminals at all. Starvation, and not sin, is the parent of modern crime... When each member of the community has sufficient for his wants, and is not interfered with by his neighbor, it will not be an object of any interest to him to interfere with anyone else. Jealousy, which is an extraordinary source of crime in modern life, is an emotion closely bound up with our conception of private property, and under Socialism will die out.

Wilde saw clearly that when authoritarian Socialism, fanatical Marxism, came into power the result was bound to be just what it has proven to be in Russia—an abominable political tyranny and a wretched economic muddle. I quote John Cowper Powys:

What we note here is an affiliation in revolt between the artist and the masses. And this affiliation indicates that the hideousness of our industrial system is far more offensive than any ancient despotism or slave owning tyranny to the natural passion for light and air and leisure and freedom in the heart of man. That Oscar Wilde, the most extreme of individualists, the most unscrupulous of self-asserters, the pampered darling of every kind of sophisticated luxury, should thus lift up his voice on behalf of the wage-earners is an indication that a state of society which seems proper and inevitable to dull and narrow minds is, when confronted not with any mere abstract theory of Goodness or Political right but with natural human craving for life and beauty, found to be an outrage and an insult.



Oscar

Wilde the Rebel

It is not in *The Soul of Man under Socialism* only that Wilde has written as an Anarchist, against governmentism; his *Ballad of Reading Gaol* is the most splendid presentation of the humanitarian and libertarian viewpoint in regard to the governmental treatment of the erring individual.

Paul Jordan Smith, in his *Our Strange Altars*, says: "The *Ballad of Reading Gaol* has given the world something that will forever grip the heart."

Harris himself says:

The Ballad of Reading Gaol is, beyond all comparison, the greatest ballad in English, one of the noblest poems in the language. . . . It is the noblest utterance that has yet reached us from a modern prison, the only high utterance indeed that has ever come from that underworld of man's hatred and man's inhumanity.

I know not whether Laws be right,
Or whether Laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in jail
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.

But this I know that every Law
That men have made for Man,
Since first Man took his brother's life,
And the sad world began,
But straws the wheat and saves the chaff
With a most evil fan.

.....
The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison air;
It is only what is good in Man
That wastes and withers there;
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the Warder is Despair.

The world has gained a little something by his suffering. Thousands, I suppose hundreds of thousands, in reading the poem must have received some glimmering of the truth that if such abominations are indeed necessary to maintain our present society our present society is hardly worth maintaining. More and more the number is increasing of those who see that to make society safe we need, instead of a system which seizes upon the erring individual, tortures him shamefully, turns him into a criminal and then turns him loose again upon society, we need a system whereby each individual is ensured a real education developing what is valuable in him and stimulating him into a real personality, a system whereby he is ensured a fair start in life in a society of free equals organized to see that he shall not be exploited, in a society so arranged that it will not be difficult for him to satisfy his primary needs.

Here are extracts from those famous letters of Wilde's, written to the *Daily Chronicle* after his release:

People now-a-days do not understand what cruelty is. Ordinarily cruelty is simply stupidity. It is the entire want of imagination. It is the result in our day of stereotyped sentiments of hard and fast rules and of stupidity. Wherever there is centralization there is stupidity. What is inhuman in modern life is officialism. Authority is as destructive in those who exercise it as it is to those on whom it is exercised. . . . It is supposed that because a thing is the rule it is right. . . . But the only really human influence in prison is the influence of the prisoners. Their cheerfulness under terrible circumstances, their sympathy for each other, their humanity, their gentleness, their pleasant smiles of greeting when they meet each other. . . . are all quite wonderful. . . . I am merely pointing out that the bad influence on children is not that of the prisoners but is and will always remain that of the prison system itself.

. . . it is not the prisoners who need reformation. It is the prison. . . . The way that children are treated at present is an outrage on humanity and common-sense. It comes from stupidity.

The chief reform proposed is: an increase in the number of inspectors and official visitors. Such a reform as this is entirely useless. . . . The visitors arrive not to help the prisoners but to see that the rules are carried out. Their object in coming is to ensure the enforcement of a foolish and inhuman code. And as they must have some occupation, they take very good care to do it. A prisoner who has been allowed the slightest privilege dreads the arrival of the inspector. And on the day of any prison inspection the prison officials are more than usually brutal to the prisoners. Their object is, of course, to show the splendid discipline they maintain.

. . . The most difficult task is to humanize the governor of the prison, to civilize the workers and to christianize the chaplain.

I do not mean, of course, that Anarchism or any other serious thought can be read in all Wilde wrote. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is just delightfully witty fooling and nothing else. Nor is his serious work always good. His early work *Vera*, a drama of Russian Nihilism, is weak stuff; for the real revolutionary interest he has largely substituted love and romance. It is just about equal to that story of Harris's, *Sonia*, dealing with the same theme in much the same way. But in his plays, though his ideas in our day are no longer to be considered bold and defiant, he is always on the right side, enlightened, sympathetic, wise. And the *Happy Prince* is indeed "the sweetest tale of modern times."

Wilde's mother, the much-loved "Speranza" of the Irish movement, was evidently quite a brilliant and exceptional woman. She wrote the famous *Jacta est alea* and proudly claimed its authorship in court when Gavan Duffy was being tried for it. She wrote ably not only on the Nationalist question, but on such subjects as the freedom of women. From the beginning Wilde must have been in touch with revolutionary ideas. He was amongst the revolutionaries at any rate whenever he settled in London. The poets whom he most admired were Swinburne and Morris. His friend Sherard, who was himself in that environment, says: "One of the strong appeals that Swinburne always made to us youths was that he was an Anarchist living in defiance of the law, secular or divine." For Morris, Wilde had both a great admiration and a deep affection. George Bernard Shaw says that: "Morris, when he was dying slowly, enjoyed a visit from Wilde more than anybody else." Shaw tells also that when he tried "to get some literary men in London, all heroic rebels and skeptics on paper, to sign a memorial asking for the reprieve of the Chicago Anarchists, the only signature I got was Oscar's."

There may be perhaps among my oldest readers some who can recall the Anarchist who on some special big occasion fired a pistol against the Houses of Parliament. On being arrested he explained that he had done it to show his hatred and contempt for what the Houses of Parliament represented.

The shooting was not altogether such a foolish thing as would first appear; Barlas got an opportunity for some bold and outspoken propaganda. He left behind him a number of unpublished works, among them several novels, essays, criticisms, short stories and poems.

As a specimen I quote some characteristic lines from his *Ballad of Freedom*, in which the influences of Swinburne and of Wilde are evident:

By the silver and star-spangled beaches
And the great green waves of the sea;

On the crags where I climbed with the cloud,
I first felt the joy to be free.

In the fire-flame of passionate speeches;
In dreams of great things to be;
In the old pagan wisdom that teaches
The spirit to dare and to see;
In the poets whose light is of thee,
I learned to be lonely and proud,
And I grew like a deep-rooted tree,
And the thunders reechoed aloud.

Here is how Barlas saw the man to whose pagan wisdom he refers there:

You may have heard that I knew Oscar Wilde pretty well at one time. He was and remains my ideal of a man of genius in this generation. His words were as splendid as his writing, turned and spoken with exquisite grace and half concealing under an appearance of sportive levity unheard-of profundity, perception and thought.

Douglas, though he fails to follow Wilde's social ideas and speaks of him as accepting "a species of Socialism which looks very revolutionary but which is really designed to benefit the rich rather than the poor," yet confirms what I say when he declares that "Wilde was always a rebel in his heart." Anarchists understand quite clearly that a revolution to put an end to exploitation must be made in the main by the class which suffers most from it; yet Anarchism is not a class movement but a humanitarian one, and its revolutionary success would be not the mere ascent of another class to power but a step forward in human history. The present "upper" class would not have to be trodden revengefully into the dust, but on the contrary more likely invited to take those active and important parts for which their education and experience should have fitted them, parts in which they could have a fuller use and better display of their best faculties than any they have in the present society.

The Anarchists have always recognized Wilde as one of them and spread his teachings as part of their propaganda. Charles T. Sprading, for instance, in his book *Liberty and the Great Libertarians*, quoting at length from Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tucker, and Tolstoi, puts Oscar Wilde with them in many pages.

Emma Goldman in her book *Living My Life* tells of the arrangement made for her to see Wilde, evidently just a while after my talk with him, when she was in Paris, an arrangement which very sorrowfully she found herself unable to keep.

But it is not merely that Wilde was an Anarchist; it is that the tragedy of his life cannot be understood without understanding that.

Wilde did not feel his life ruined because he had been exposed as a homosexual. Before the disaster, I have been told, he hardly concealed his homosexuality. Queensberry's card referred to his "posing" as such. He was never ashamed of it, then or afterwards.

He was not so terribly concerned about having gone to jail. Many good men before him, he knew, had gone to jail—a great many, from Socrates to Kropotkin. It was not that of which he was ashamed. Had Wilde, summoned to court and accused of homosexuality, boldly acknowledged the truth of the accusation and asserted his right to live according to his nature he would certainly have been denounced furiously by a considerable section of the public, but he would have retained the respect of quite a number of people nevertheless, the people whose respect he valued. And more important, he could have retained his own self-respect intact.

But the course he drifted into so foolishly became one of mean and silly hypocrisy. Oscar Wilde attacked Queensberry for accusing him, when the accusation was true, seeking, apparently, to put Queensberry in jail by bold perjury, pretending indignation. Oscar Wilde, the rebel, appeared in court to protest that he was a respectable citizen, whose respectability was not to be attacked. He came presumably ready to lie shamelessly—not to lie like a gentleman who is forced into court to be questioned on his relations with a woman, but coming into court of his own will to lie, like a damned deacon caught in lechery.

NO - GOD

NO GOVERNMENT

Boston State House

Take note of how he felt himself:

I have said that to speak the truth is a painful thing. To be forced to tell lies is much worse. I remember as I was sitting in the deck on the occasion of my last trial listening to Lockwood's appalling denunciation of me... like a piece out of Tacitus, like a passage in Dante, like one of Savonarola's indictments of the Popes at Rome—and being sickened with horror at what I had heard. Suddenly it occurred to me, how splendid it would be if I was saying all this about myself...

Let me set before you here again what he has said about it himself:

The one disgraceful, unpardonable, unto all time contemptible action of my life was to allow myself to appeal to society for help and protection.... I was constrained to appeal to the very things against which I had always protested.

That is why he thought his life ruined. Had he been brought into court against his will, boldly declared the truth and held his head up, he could have felt all through that he had lived his life as a genius should. It would have remained a great picture despite the discordant splashes. But no picture of genius, he knew, can appear truly great if smeared with the slime of hypocrisy.

"Well, what you have been giving us is all right, no doubt, but after all, you know, Wilde died a Catholic. Harris in that book of his on Shaw rather sneers that 'Wilde died a Catholic in a state of grace.'"

That tale about Wilde dying a Catholic I happen to know very well. It is true that a priest was called in before Wilde was dead and it is true that it was given out that he died a Catholic. That was done for two reasons. One of them was that Robert Ross, the friend who was taking care of him, was himself a Catholic. They will try to save us, those religious people. You readers will remember that last year Edward Carpenter was buried according to the rites of the church he had repudiated. The tale of the atheist who turns to Christ at the last moment is going to last as long as Christianity. Ross did not have the nerve to say to me that Wilde was conscious when the priest arrived. And the excuse he gave me was quite a reasonable one. Wilde had been living at his hotel under his assumed name, Sebastian Melmoth, and a hotel-keeper in France who knowingly permits such things is liable to severe penalties. An odor of suspicion attaches itself, moreover, to the death of anyone under an assumed name. Ross told me that he was afraid of a further scandal over Wilde's death. The final horror in Wilde's misfortune would come if some stupid official insisted on a post mortem examination being made and on the body being taken to the morgue. It was, he said, to avoid the danger of this last scandal that Ross thought of the more respectable Catholic death with the priest attending the dying man. The statement of Reggie Turner that Wilde, who died on Thursday, "from Monday on had been almost continuously insensible" is evidence sufficient.

"But surely in *De Profundis* there is religion?" you say. I decline to accept *De Profundis*, made up by Ross, of pieces chosen by him, a confirmed Catholic, as a book by Wilde, a book authentic in the sense that the others are. But even taking it as such, what he says is plain enough:

Religion does not help me. The faith that others give to what is unseen I give to what I can touch and look at. My gods dwell in temples made with hands.... When I think about religion at all, I feel as if I would like to found an order for those who cannot believe.... Everything to be true must become a religion. And agnosticism should have its ritual no less

than faith. It has sowed its martyrs and it should reap its saints....

Sometimes he chaffed his friends in an affectionate way. From Bernaval, where he stayed first after coming out of prison, he wrote to Ross: "But you and More, especially More, treat me as a Dissenter." ("Dissenter" in England has about the same associations as "Methodist" in America.) "It is very painful and quite unjust.... You conceal your religion in a monstrous way." This jollying in itself shows that there was no serious discussion of religion between them. If Wilde sometimes declared to these Catholic friends, as he may well have done, that should he ever accept any religion it would be Catholicism, he said merely what is quite often said by well-read intelligent free-thinkers who know that there is no secure halfway house between the two ends.

About *De Profundis* Powys points out: "It is altogether a mistake to assume that in *De Profundis* Wilde retracted his classic protest and bowed his head once more in the house of Rimmon." And again: "It is a mistake to regard *De Profundis* as a recantation."

"But with all that," I think I hear you say, "even if Harris did fail to grasp the views of Wilde, it is true, is it not, that before Wilde's downfall he spent his life among people of the upper classes? After all, is there not something true in that statement of Harris's that Wilde was 'the natural pet of aristocracy whose selfish prejudices he defended and whose leisure he amused?'"

There is no doubt some truth in that. There is here in Los Angeles a good friend of mine, Rudolf von Liebig, who was at one time a friend of Wilde's. Rudolf taught music to Wilde's children and French to his wife, and as he is a striking personality and a delightful companion, Wilde evidently liked to have his companionship and Rudolf saw a good deal of Wilde at that time. It was on Rudolf that Wilde got off a well-known bon mot. Rudolf, in some conversation, had attempted to bring up in support of his argument a quotation from the poets. He did not recall it very successfully, and Wilde, a while afterwards, in introducing him to some new friends, explained: "Charming fellow, Rudolf, and very original. Very original indeed! He is original even in his quotations!"

I protest against that view which represents Wilde as a man insensible to human suffering till he suffered himself. Symons puts it: "The unbiased scorn-

ful intellect to which humanity has never been a burden comes now to be unable to sit aside and laugh." That view of Wilde is disgracefully untrue. Where, to take only one example, is there anything more tender and sympathetic in any language than *The Happy Prince*? Think of the Wilde who protested against the execution of Anarchists in Chicago and bailed out Anarchists in London.

Wilde might well have been more often serious and he might have spoken more seriously much more often, I grant you. No, I am not proposing that we should dismiss the picture of Wilde as a pleasure-loving man of the world for one of him as a constantly ardent propagandist fighting ceaselessly in the good cause or pondering always on the great question of What is to be Done? He was not insensible to the misery; but he loved luxury and was self-indulgent; he was amiable and pleasant instead of being firm and determined; he was no fighter in any cause, even his own.

My very dear friend Babushka (Catherine Breshkovsky, the Little Grandmother of the Russian Revolution) after reading *De Profundis* speaks in one of her letters about the difference between Wilde's state of mind in prison and her own. She was writing from Siberia, where she passed in all thirty-three years, some of them in conditions very much worse than those of Wilde; but she recognizes, nevertheless, how much easier all that was for her, supported by the love of comrades in the struggle for freedom. The same thing can be remarked in the *Russian and French Prisons* of the man Wilde admired so much, Peter Kropotkin. And in many, many more. Wilde was terribly unfortunate—not in being sent to prison, no, not at all—but in what he was sent for and how he was sent.

I have told of his friendship for William Morris, but he took no active part in the social struggle as Morris did, and comradeship was therefore unknown to him. How beautifully Morris puts it in *John Ball*, that piece in which he says: Fellowship is life and lack of fellowship is death!

Ah, my brothers, what evil doom is this, to be content from the church, to have none to love you and to speak with you, to be without fellowship! Forsooth, brothers, fellowship is life and lack of fellowship is death; and the deeds that ye do upon earth it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them and the life that is in it, that which lives on and on forever in each one of you part of it while many a man's life upon earth from the earth shall wane.... Therefore I tell you that proud despicious rich man, though he knoweth it not, is in hell already because he hath no fellow; and he that hath so hardy a heart that in sorrow he thinketh of fellowship his sorrow is soon but a story of sorrow—a little thing in the life that knows no ill.

In prison Wilde felt himself so terribly alone. There were no devoted comrades outside, with hearts beating in unison, proud of him, thinking of him all the time, who would be there at the gate when he got out to welcome him with admiration and affection. We rough, coarse, ignorant, fierce and fanatical men in the radical movements had been alien to him; he never could get over that difficulty; to him it must have been like the difficulty of the gently nurtured women of the Russian nobility when in their devoted

propaganda among the peasants they first had to live with the lousy. He had stayed therefore with the people among whom he was at ease, the people who appreciated him so highly, the people highly educated and keenly intelligent who loved beauty as he did, who lived in literature and delighted in art. That soft and balmy clime was his natural habitat; he had never tried the harsh but bracing atmosphere of openly defiant struggle.

He did not go into the cold boldly with head up and set resolution; he was thrown into it and he suffered accordingly. But it can be said of him that when once he came out of prison he did not whine any more about his own sufferings but rose nobly to the occasion and did what he could for others.

Things Move Forward

Why do things always sink
To the lowest common denominator?

To hear them talk of
Issues of Power in Relationships
You would think they clamour
For the blandness of Heaven

Me, I get tired of couples who look like twins.

Does same-sex love also have to mean
The same color hair
Equal median incomes
Intra-generation. An all-round power balance
Is this the homo-erotic?

Surely top and bottom always mingle
Each asserts and retreats
Claims and releases
They change themselves and each other.

Why, my friend and I
We do not speak the same accents
Things move forward
Through contradictions

S.H.

Some Guys

Some guys ranged along the bar
let you read their intentions in their eyes:
they won't ask you to dance.

Some guys wear their shirts open to the navel
like Latin lovers
tho they are only blond-headed wimps
with bracelets on their wrists and a touch of rouge.

Some guys have gentle, caring faces.
They talk about flowers and work in Nursing Homes.
They dance with other gentle, caring guys
and make dates with each other for after 2 A.M.

Some guys are mean, evil brothers.
They wear their key chains on the left
and black spurred boots for stomping.
They cluster at the far end of the bar
where it's always dark,
cigarettes dangling from tightly clenched lips.
Those are the guys you want to dance with
and call each other stud.

Vincent Fitzpatrick



For a Shanti Project Brother

At that meeting
we talked about dignity and dying; pain;
the truly dubious rewards of making
one's own final arrangements.
We exchanged hospital horrors
and discussed past-and-future Hawaiian vacations.
Some fidgeted while others reclined.

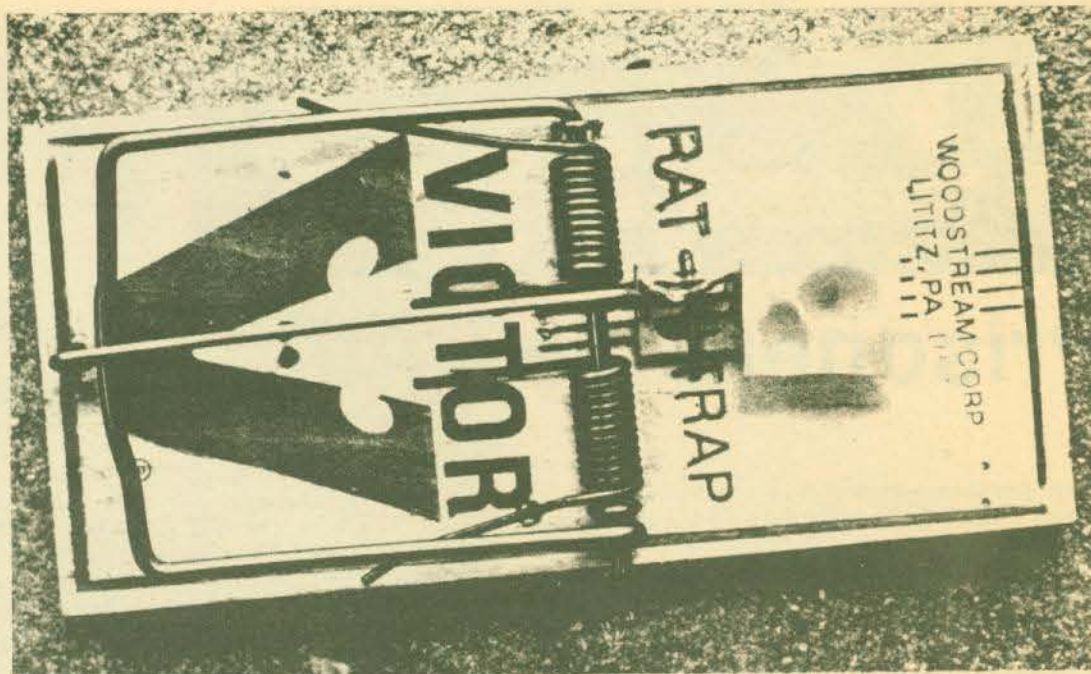
Jim (I don't know his last name) was concerned
about what to wear to hide ks lesions.
We suggested Hawaiian shirts
—not thinking short sleeves and telltale arms—
and light, loose-fitting pants, and left it at that.
(A hat, of course, was taken for granted.)

Walking out of the meeting
—north on Castro, four or five of us together,
cicerones and clients,
pausing at the corner of 18th Street
for parting hugs and goodbys—
I don't recall what was specifically said
except for "enjoy your vacation... later."

Now that promise of a later
was what we most gave Jim that night.
That something to come back to.
That assurance that he'd be recognized
as part of our continuing parade of days
for as long, at least, as we marched.

"Later, Jim."

Kristenberg



Philadelphia, PA

for Victor

British Empire schooldays
Brought me here to
Philadelphia
Birthplace of soul music.
Former British Empire
Schooldays lost in tedium
Lost to grammar, lost to pronouns
Grammar/Composure
Say thank you, it's my pleasure
Say kneel down, I'll be grateful
Say your prayers in the morning
Missionary position at night
Love the white man or you'll be sorry.

Love a white boy in Philadelphia
(I'm not sorry.)
He gave me his love
He played me New Poetry
Played John Giorno
Played Giorno
He played me Giorno in the morning
Gave sweet loving at night
I'm not sorry.

Born child of the sixties
Child/Philadelphia
Sweet child born in sixties
Hippie mother commune sixties
Peace Panther Motown sixties
While I dream
Dream escape, dream the future
Jerked off, dream of wonders
Pulled off, dream America.

Dream escape, found America
America in the seventies
Petro-chemical/FBI/thermonuclear America
ITT/MIT/New Empire America
Recession/Reaction/No desire America.

No desire for the eighties
No desire in the eighties
Until Philadelphia
Birthplace of music.

He gave me his love
He gave me New Poetry
He played me New Music
Sweet hints of the sixties.

Gave me his love
He gave me his asshole
Sweet asshole I tongued
Gave tongue for his pleasure
Gave tongue to New Poetry
My native tongue drilled in English
Thrilled to the taste
The text of his asshole.

Lay tongue-tied in desire
Lay tongue-tied in sweet asshole
Lay tongue-tied in our pleasure
I gave tongue for his pleasure
He gave tongue to my poetry
Gave tongue to my yearnings.

Leave behind British Empire
Say goodbye, Britannica's dead
America's dying, I'm not sorry
Say thank you, it's our pleasure
Say we cum it's our pleasure
Say we cum in desire
Say we cum little deaths
(Farewell British Empire)
Say we cum Philadelphia
Birthplace of soul.

S.H.



Three Haikus

Speaking on the phone
I was stroking my hard dick.
Was he there also?

Not asking his name
I sucked him off in the toilet
None in the bar saw.

I am a black fig
Ripe, ready to indulge you!
Let your lover wait.

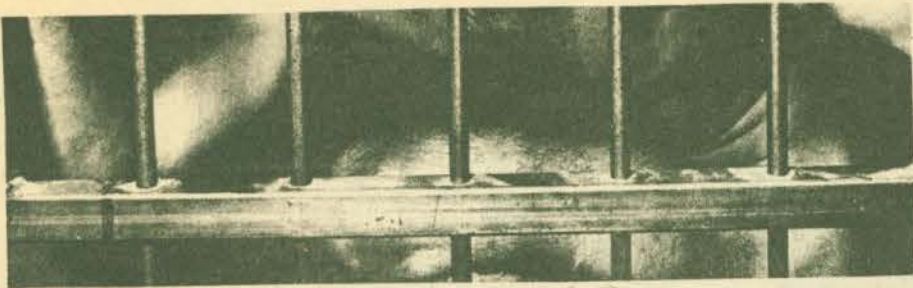
Aubrey H. Sparks

Corn(y)

Fall in Boston brings each year
A fresh crop of corn-fed American boys
Homegrown in her Mid-lands
They sport unblemished complexions
Clean-scrubbed from mama's apple-pie kisses.

Boston's hallowed-halls welcome them,
These clear-cut homegrown youngsters
Corn-bred sons of America's Future.
Hair the color of ripening
Corn-flower blue eyes
Dreaming of those secret places
Where they long to be violently
Cornholed.

S.H.



Prisoners Tell All

Proud Jewish Faggot

Look, I'm jewish myself, how can I be called anti-semitic? I have. When I needed help the jewish welfare organization met my needs without me having to be overly aggressive, demanding. A case in point, prison; when I was in prison.

I was doing 5 years for next to nothing. For a victimless crime. What are you, jewish? The classification officer assigned to me typed an H in the box for hebrew. What kind of work are you accustomed to doing on the outside? You mean in the free world? Licensed masseur, interior decorator and a member of the laborers union, construction. And a homosexual. No, I tried denying it if only because of the shit end of the deal homosexuals get in prison. This was a southern prison, Florida. The jew label was bad enough now I had to contend with double hostility from rural biblebelt prison guards.

"Hey, boy, what are you?"

"I'm jewish."

"Say it right, boy?"

"I'm jewish, boss."

"You're a jewish fag, boy."

"That's right, boss, I'm a jewish fag."

"What's a nice jewish fag like you doing in our prisons, boy?"

"I guess I don't know the answer to that one, boss."

After being here two years the jewish welfare agency started sending one of their representatives from Jacksonville down to see me. First thing I did was report these above anti-semitic conversations I was having with the guards. Gave me the old yiddish shrug, shoulders and all, 'what else is new.' I could care less. My idea telling him was maybe I could cause a little trouble among the guards if the JWA had any influence. What I mean is I'm a pretty good slurer myself. I knew how to slur better than any of these ignorant Florida tobacco farmer guards. These holy roller baptist kooks couldn't rankle me. Probably bothered this jew from the agency that my eyebrows were plucked so thinly. So how do you expect to be treated if you pluck your eyebrows. The way he looked at me the first time he saw me you knew that was on the tip of his tongue. I told him it was a false accusation, me being labeled a homosexual, because I thought maybe he could help me get transferred to the main section of the prison. As it was they had us prison fags segregated from the bulk of the prison population. I told him in the outside free world I'd been to a psychiatrist so that my homosexuality was a thing of the past, trying to evoke a sympathetic ear, manipulate his mind a little into a little positive activity on my behalf, besides the routine matzoh and gefilte fish packages that they give you for passover. Nobody likes to go to jail. Agreed? Yes, but yet once there you adapt, make the most of the situation. Alright, the way I figured it, if they're

going to label me as a homosexual I should go all out. I'm talking about all out in a loose sense faggot wise. You have to know up until the Florida prison scene I've been a butch male type by appearance although as far back as even when I was prepubescent I had a strong desire to let my hair down. By my hair down I mean act the part of whatever is the current stereotype image of what a homosexual is supposed to look like. What is now referred to as gender-fuck drag but which I grew up with as common place has been the rage in various prisons for ages.

Finally I could let my hair down, what a relief. This is getting away from the point, the jewish welfare agency worker. You can't report these guards to the anti-defamation leagues I wanted to know? Well there are other jewish people in this prison and you're the only one that's complained. He really meant that I was the only out front jewish faggot here and it would be embarrassing to admit that a jewish community harbors your kind. The short of it is that I got my matzoh/gefилte fish packages annually for three and a half years. When you're set free come to the agency in Jacksonville and we'll see what we can do for you. Probably thought when I got out he'd never have to contend with me again. I know a little about class structure.

My release date came. A bus ticket north and a ten dollar voucher for food. Dressed me in a cheapo-cheapo chainstore suit and I was on my way. Jewish welfare agency here I come.

Hello, I'm in Jacksonville, the jewish inmate from the prison, remember you gave me your card? How do I get to where you're located? That was fast, here I am. A building, the marble front of it, recently vandalized by anti-semites. The marble being in a state of repair by a stonemason. I have no money, no clothes just what I'm wearing and a bus ticket north. He gave me a thirty dollar check. He'd give me some shirts and pants, what size did I wear? Let me see what you're going to give me? Can't I pick it out? Put that way he didn't have much choice so we went into a room full of donated clothing. He wanted to give me some rags, rush me. Take your time, let me look around. I saw a black silk narrow lapelled mohair suit looked like it'd fit me perfect. It did. His jaw slackened when I tried it on, feebly he protested that I should choose clothing from the other side of the room some kind of a rigamarole about the suit wasn't part of the clothing in this room that was slated to be given away which of course I didn't pay much attention to. Again, I know a little about class structure. I left my cheapo-cheapo chainstore prison special on the hanger and waved him goodbye wearing the jewish welfare agency special, a smug smile of contentment on my face. Just goes to show you being a proud jewish faggot pays off.

Freddie Greenfield

On the Receiving End

Dear Mike,

Hello! My name is Jay Walter Pitzer and I'm a gay inmate at the West Virginia State Penitentiary. I would like to get your newsletter. Tom (Tommy) Blankenship and I are rather close if you know what I mean honey. Well anyway the pigs here at the prison mess with Tommys mail, because he is rather open about being gay, so he asked me to write you for him, and to send you his letter to you for him, alright sweetheart. Oh I hope its OK if Tommy writes you, using my name on the outside and his on the letter. Could you put me on your penpal list, I like guys, hunting, fishing, camping and weaving, and I like to go and Dress Drag.

Would you believe they got me here on first degree sexual assault, but actually I was on the receiving end. What happened darling was I was in a bar drinking, and well I got rather drunk, I always do when I drink gin. Well, this young man started buying me dranks, well anyway we went to my van, and I gave him head, then he wanted to fuck, so just as it was getting real good to me, someone peeked in the vans back window, it was the law, well let me tell you, that was embarrassing dear, come to find out the guy was only 14 years old, and well here I am, he looked 23 or 24, but let me tell you that was sure good. Tommy filled me a writ on my conviction, Tommy's rather good at the law. Well I will go for now. (write soon)

Love,

All you sweet
Boys-Gays-Love
Always Love
Jay

I Hope You Don't Mind My Being So Graphic

Dear Mike,

You asked me to write something about my sexual experiences before coming to prison so here goes. I had my first sexual experience with a cousin. He was baby-sitting me. He was thirteen at the time and I was five. He was playing with me and I wet myself, so he stripped me and put me in the tub and put my clothes in the washer. It is easier to wash a five-year old if you are in the tub with him, so we played in the tub and somehow he ended up buttfucking me. I liked the feeling. I just remembered that incident. He fondled me as he was doing it. I remember my first sex with another boy. I was seven and was on the Y swim team. My first day in the shower with all those naked boys got me excited. I didn't go directly home. I went to the hill overlooking the marshland. There was an older boy about to enter and I yelled to him. I ran up to him and said "You new around here?". He said "Yes, I'm from Philly." Well, his name is Andy and he was twelve at the time. There is a special place in the swamp I used to go all the time. There were five trees, this long thin grass, and it felt like a deep cooling rug, if you lay in it nude. I'd go there and take my shorts off, roll them up and lay my head on them. Then give myself a hand job while watching the clouds go by. You would have to be a young boy to enjoy it. I took Andy to my haven and did what I'd do if I were alone. He, like me, wore a kid's outfit: shorts, no underpants, sneakers, no socks and no shirt. Well it was then and is now what boys wear when it's hot out. Well, when I put my hand on my cock, he took it off and put it in his mouth. Then I went into sexual ecstasy, waves of pleasure went through me, I knew when he was sucking me I would suck his. When he finally got off mine, he lay down and opened his legs.

I kissed the head, ran my tongue through his foreskin, then put it in my mouth. I liked the feel of his cock against my tongue. I could feel his cock muscles and veins with my tongue and I enjoyed the feeling. When he started jumping, I had an added joy. I tasted my first boy juice. I hope you don't mind me being so graphic.

Well, Andy became a best friend. A boy who is into same sex doesn't have many friends. The next boy was a nine-year-old named Danny. I was still seven and I met him in the boys room at school. One day we went to a sort of club house in the woods and while we were playing these two big kids came in. The smaller one was plain looking, but the tall one was beautiful. His name was Bart and he asked me "Do you suck?" and while he sucked the other boy off, I made love to his cock and after licking, kissing and sucking on it was finally rewarded with three thick floods of his warm sperm. So at seven years old I was a pretty good cocksucker!

Well, Danny was watching me and when Bart's cock jumped into my mouth and spermed, it was the first time I came without anyone touching my cock. When I got up I said to Danny, "Wow, that was good!" Danny asked me how I could take such a big one and I guessed that I must have taken a deep breath. Danny said "I can take the big ones too. In fact, we can both make some money if you want. I'll show you at the movies on Friday night."

Well, I didn't have much of a home life. I was sleeping over friends houses all the time. My mother was a stage pianist and she was on the road a lot and my eldest brother could easily be sweet-talked. So I said I was staying over with Danny. When I went with him to the movies we waited in the parking lot and these two high schoolers came in in a pickup. He said, "Those two." Since he was nine and I was only seven, I figured he knew what he was doing. He followed them and I went with him. He stayed a little ways from them and they went into the men's room and we followed. I wondered what he was going to do or say. At that time I had a little problem talking because I had lost my front teeth and hadn't grown the permanent ones yet. He watched them piss and said, "I'll bet you get a lot of juice out of that one," pointing at his cock. "It does if it's sucked out." "How much," Danny asked. He said, "Three." Danny said, "Five and you've got a deal." The one I got was sixteen and on the plump side with sandy colored hair and blue eyes and a nice voice. He wanted to hold me on his lap as we watched the movie, just to hug me. I remember he had a nice smell. After the show ended we drove to a secluded spot where the dark-haired driver took two blankets out from behind the seat and left with Danny. The other boy put his back to the side and pulled his pants down. His was smaller than Bart's cock, but fatter. He had some heavy balls. I pulled his foreskin back, licked the head, and went down on it. I liked the feel of it because it just filled my mouth. He had a thin, watery, slightly salty tasting juice, and afterwards he sucked on mine and then his got hard again and I did him again. He was rubbing my ass and put a finger up my hole and finger-fucked me as I sucked him. I never tasted such watery cum. Andy was only twelve, but his was thicker.

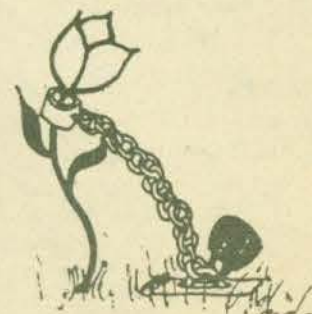
I became sex happy. I couldn't get enough. Sleeping over with Andy I would drain his first two loads and then lay on my belly and enjoy him inside me. He was the best kisser I ever met. He would surprise me sometimes and kiss me all over my body. I would be floating on a cloud. He would make me feel so good that I would do anything for him.

So if you want to know about my sex life, at eight I was going into hustling almost full-time. One day when school was closed for the flu and Andy was working with his father, I went to the movie house by myself. It was almost empty, so I sat in the middle. When the show started a man sat next to me and started to make small talk. He put his hand on my lap, trying to feel my little cock. I turned to him with an open hand and said, "Three dollars." He counted three bucks in my hand and I took my school jacket off and covered myself. He opened my pants and fondled me. I had one finger and thumb cock hard. Out of boyhood curiosity I reached over and felt his cock. He had it out and covered by his coat. It was big as I put my hand around it and I whispered, "Make it five and I'll do yours." He did and after he shot his load and left I knew I had found a new way to make money.

I was a boy prostitute at the age of nine. I could take a five incher up my ass. What do you think of that?

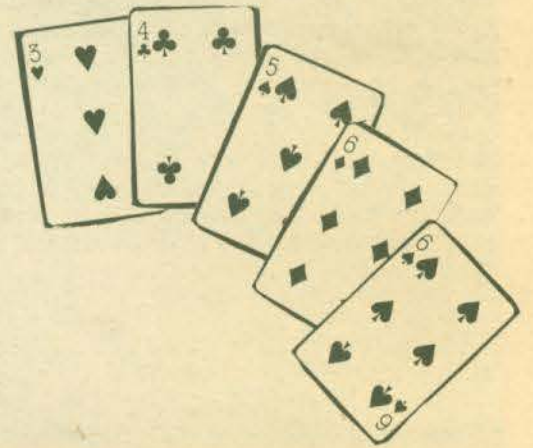
Yours in gay sexlove,
Robert Jude

p.s. please excuse the cross outs and the note paper.





Pilgrim Plentitude

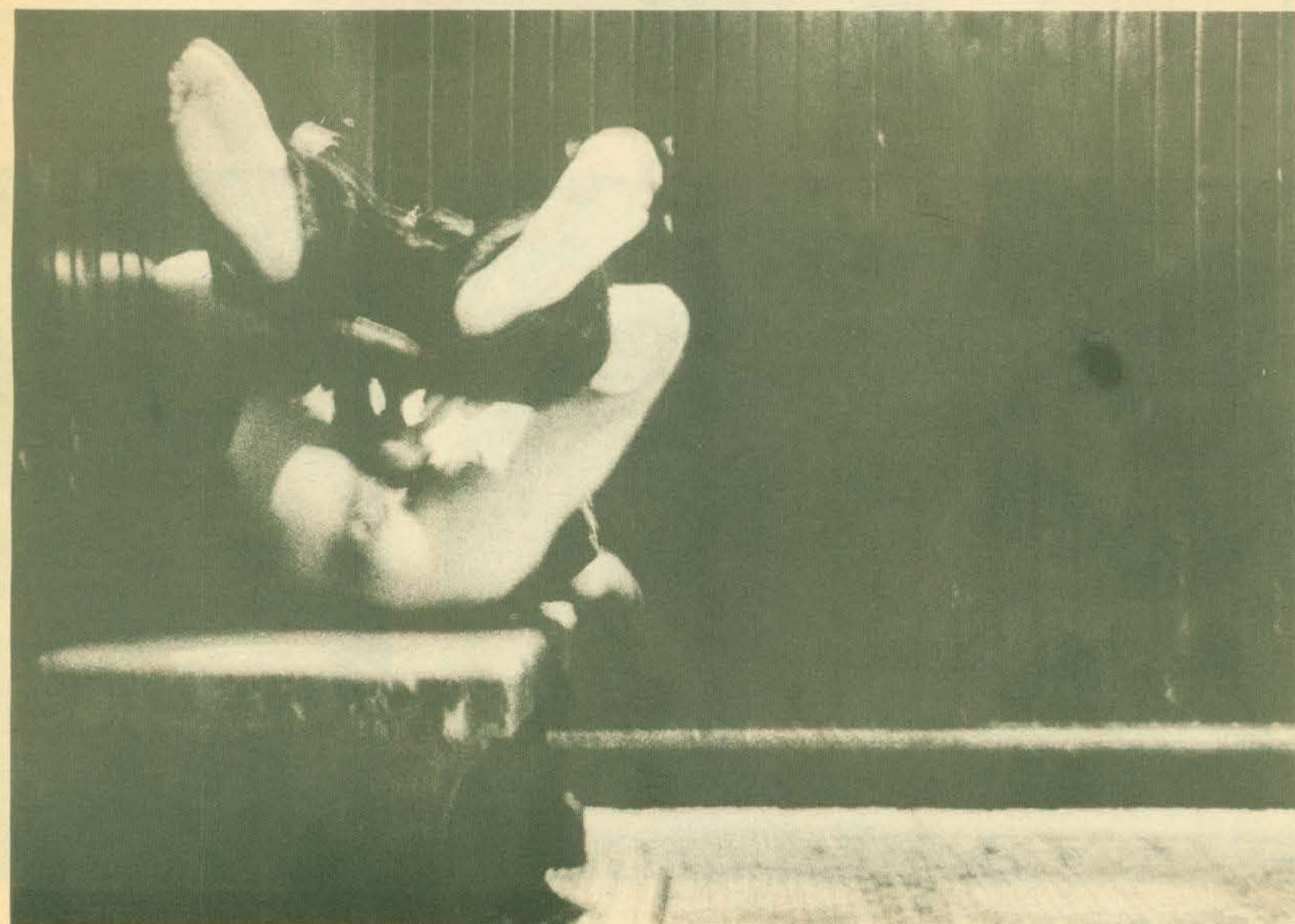


beginning is always
so difficult
cut
turn
cuffs
coat
outstretched
boats waiting
their lines
to lift off
so they say
sailing away
each pin feather
cushions an eye needle



Photos by Christian Walker

Poem by Charley Shively



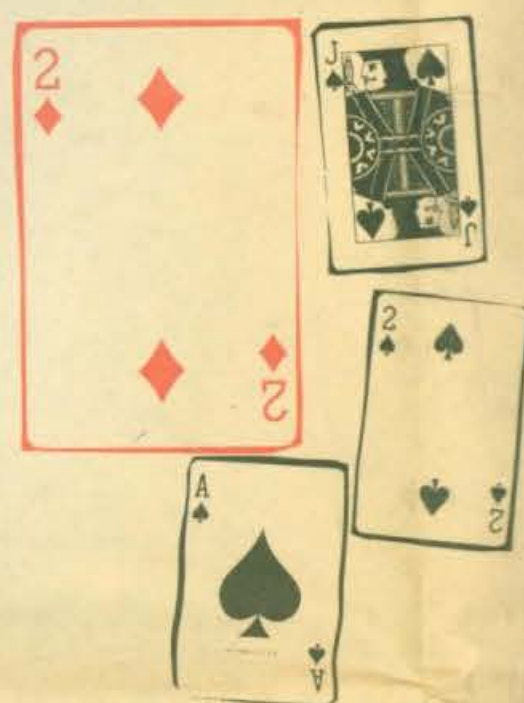


2.
five coins thrown
into water tables
turn belly back
fuck me on stage
sic semper tyrannis
they stir only at
half frames stars
asshole bent over
curls circled knob
peach fuzz mous-
tach attached come
fly away from
here everyone
looks deceive
they really are sleeping

4.
seven sisters
silent system-
atic feather
fans imported
each stem sewn
padding
panting
matching
painting
jewelry woven
chosen finger
neck ankle
ear ringing
sound of rain
dropping
polishing
chromium drains

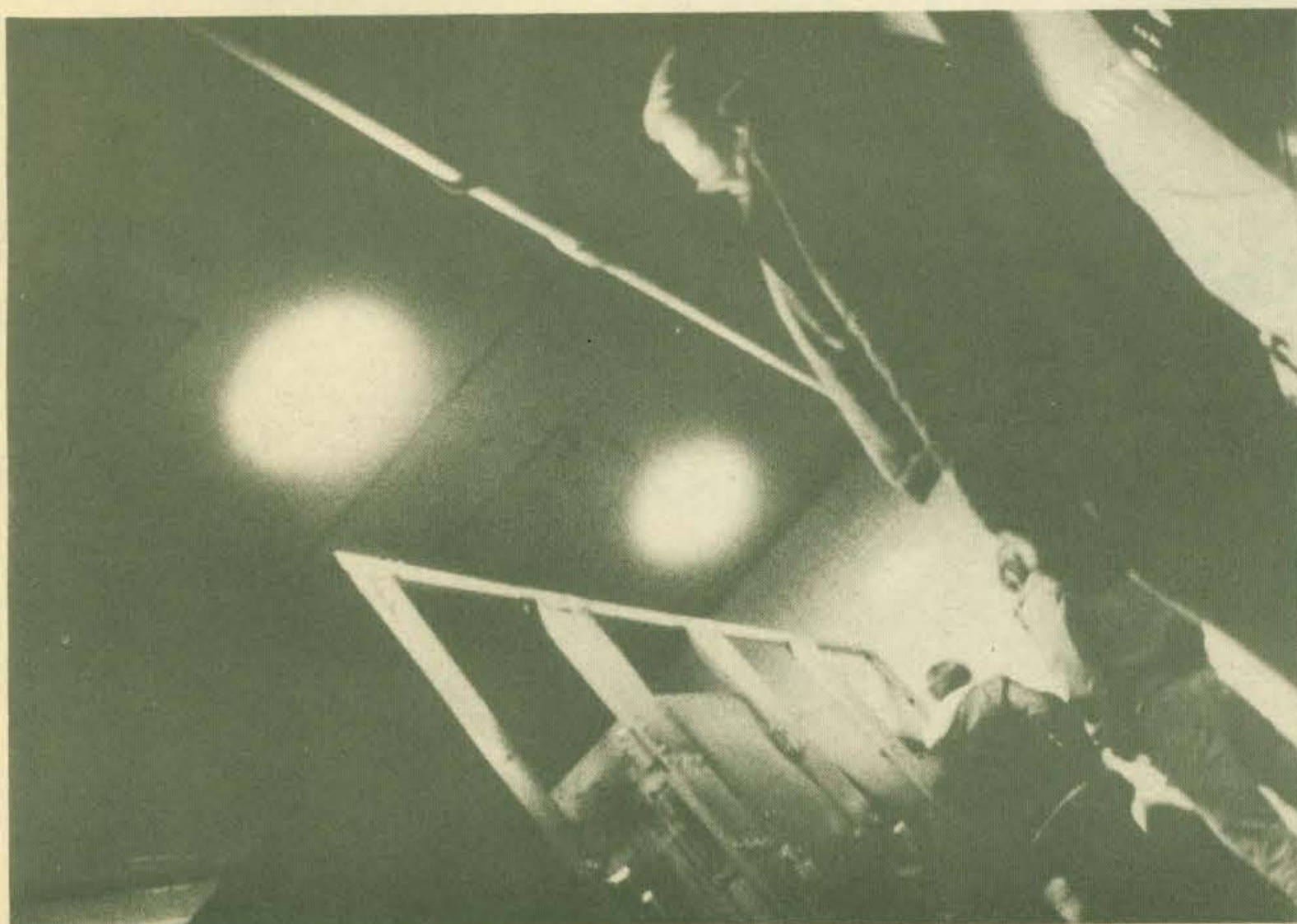
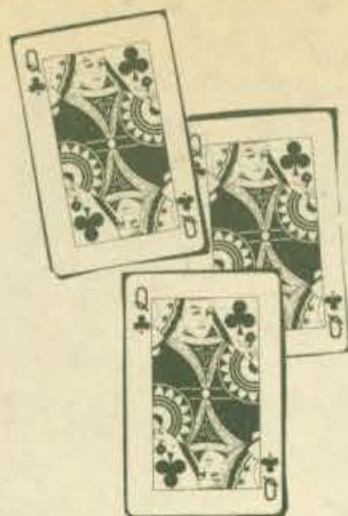


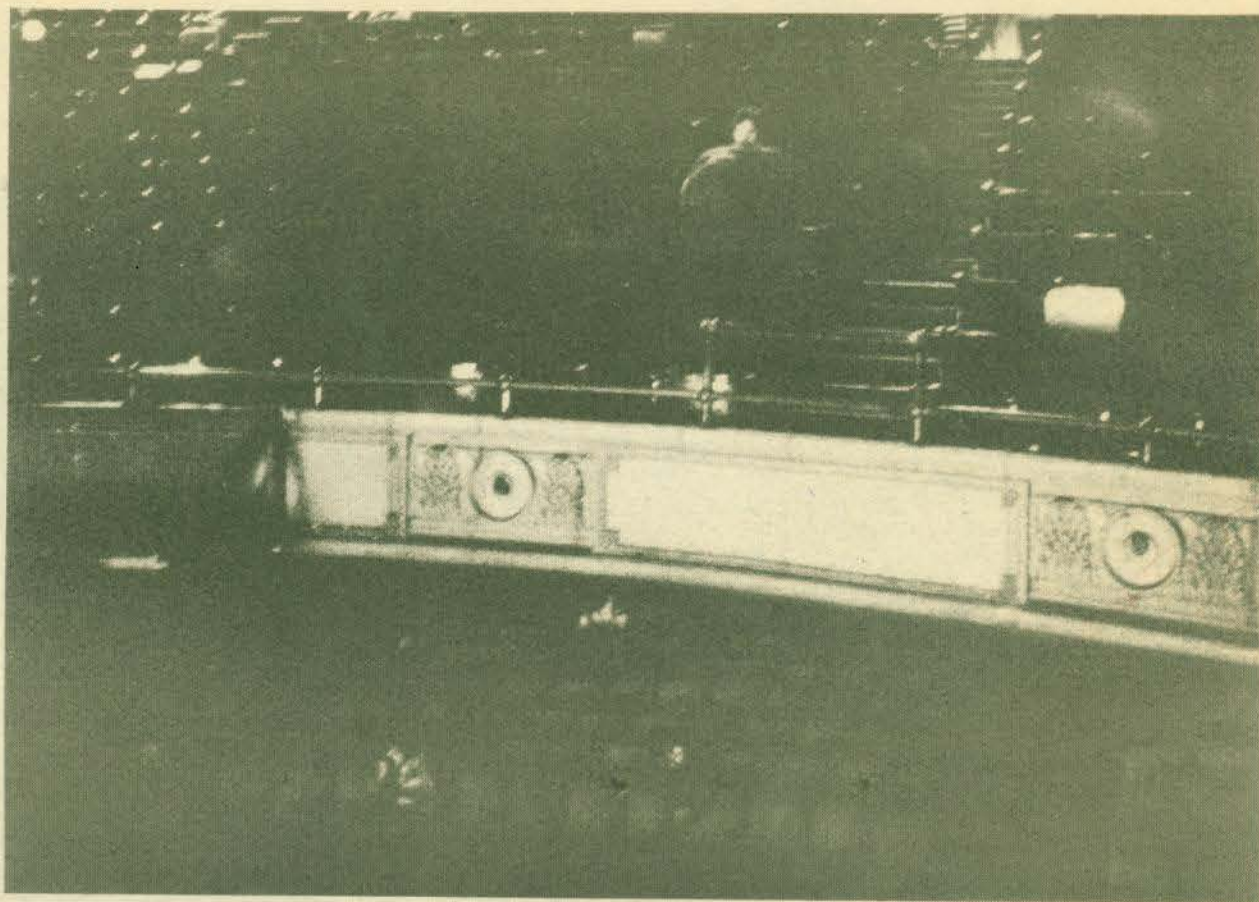
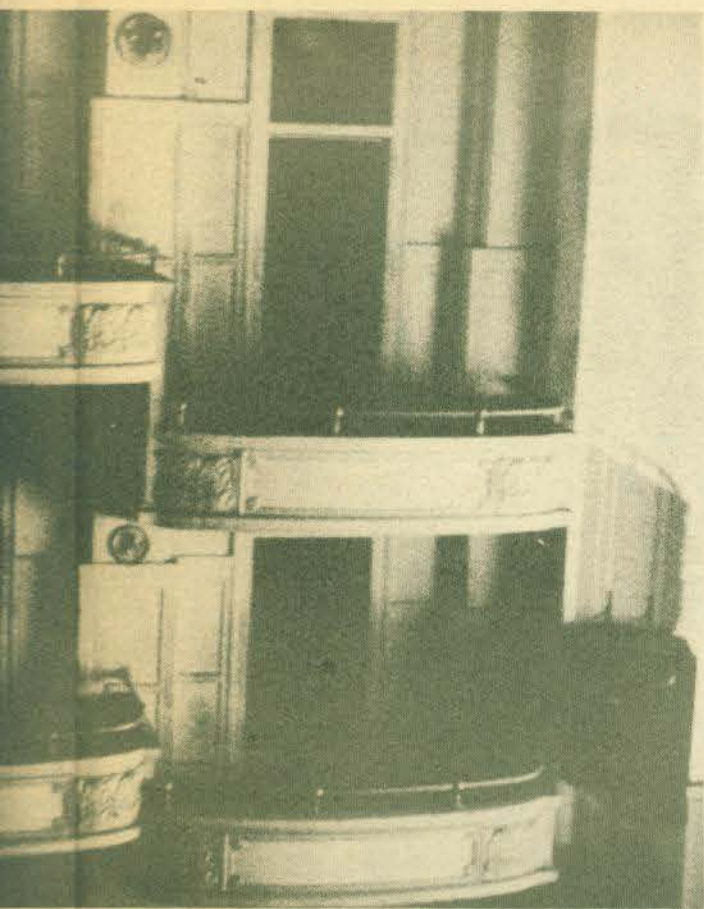
5.
halfway come
play toys with
tags games bags
foot peeling toes
coated can open
hearted jester
joking much about
his inches wash
up eat my ass
belt buckled
looking to get in



6.
upper class
lower ladder
climbing up to
some interwoven
level success
dressing every
day to please
fashions change
casual clothes
approach nothing
is what's hidden

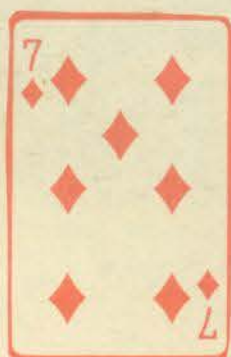
3.
positive authority
rubs away with just
such appearances





7.

magic dick
train track
throat choke
skin marked
keep out wire
pulled through
staying open at
all times climb
to give up wall
attachments roll
away with ball
bearings let go
round lubricant
eyes surround
brown down
town types



8.

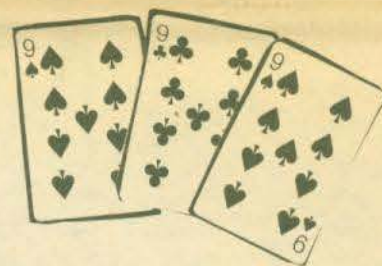
these strokes
apple petals
pink skin seed
eaten
orchard
white dust
so many grains
cups pups pap
sap lap labels

laughing
foliation
pollination

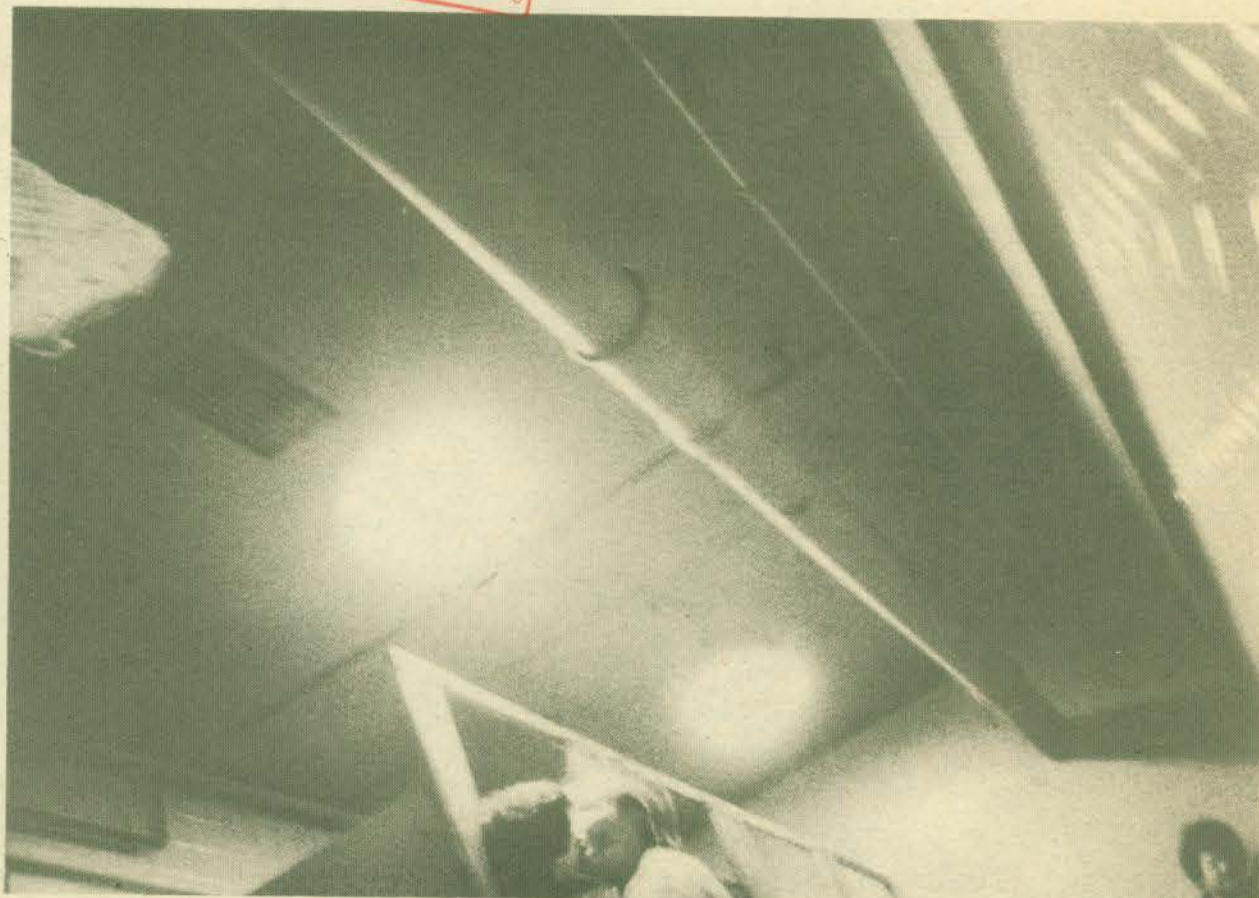
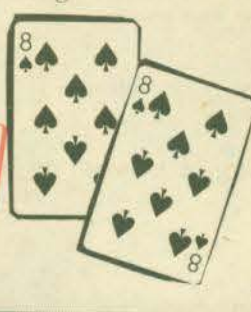
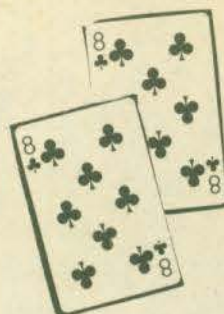
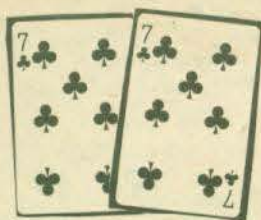
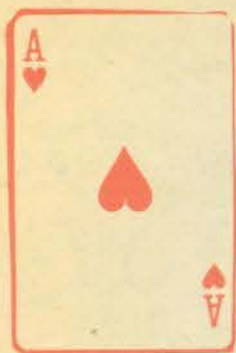
light too transparent
to shadow transported
through counting not
to know how many
but to pull off in
eight stroke rowing out
to semen
squirting

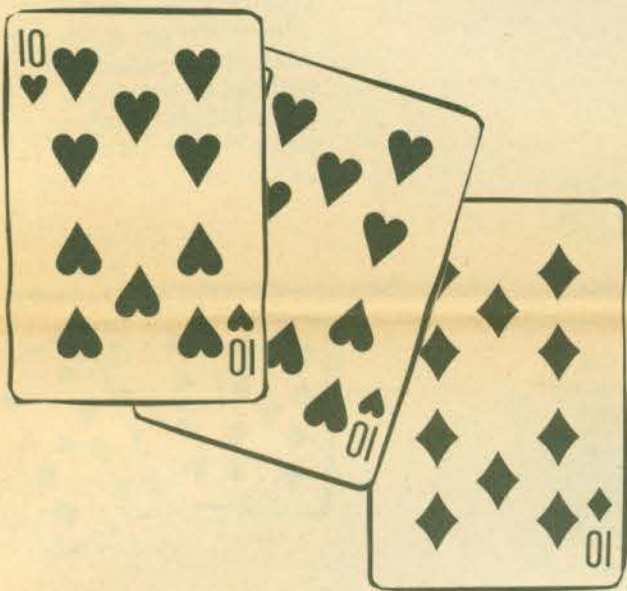
9.

change rose patterns
into moths designed
wallpaper wings fade
without directions
toward lights stagger
when music starts
all sorrow is forgotten

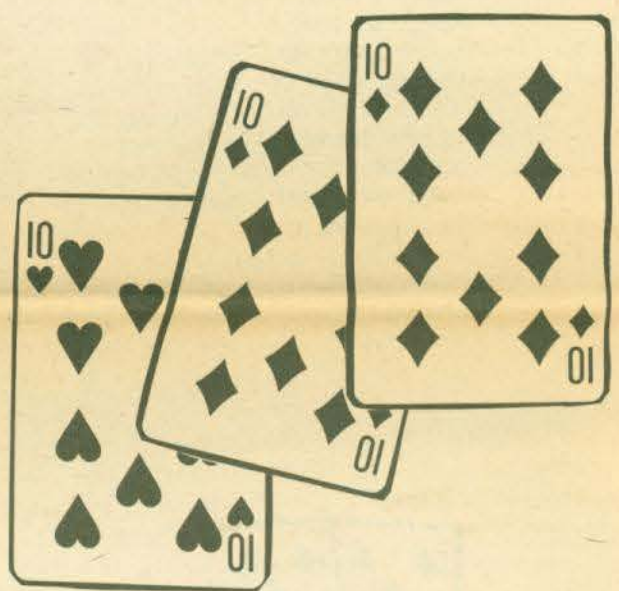


lass
adder
g up to
terwoven
ccess
g every
lease
s change
clothes
h nothing
s hidden





10.
lucky in love
lucky in life



Two Poems by Ron Schreiber

forced to remember; forced to forget

I walked to the store & bought soup bones.
Otherwise it would be too thin, & bouillon
cubes are for broth (water is for frogs,
you used to say, preferring wine, prefer-

ing. . . . Lentils. Red & brown lentils.
But the cooking time is different. No
matter, add peas. Green & yellow peas.
Serve fresh peas for salad, or in the salad,
serve them cold.

Will it be thick enough?
Will it be too thick? This orange pan
(that's lasted all these years) is not
that large. Put in carrots. Put in

fresh tomatoes, two cloves of garlic,
thyme, a bay leaf, salt & peppercorns.
I've forgotten something.

(you've
forgotten the flavor, you said.

What? I said. What? What? (why
don't you do some of the cooking
yourself? —but that was years ago,
I have another lover. Finally, last

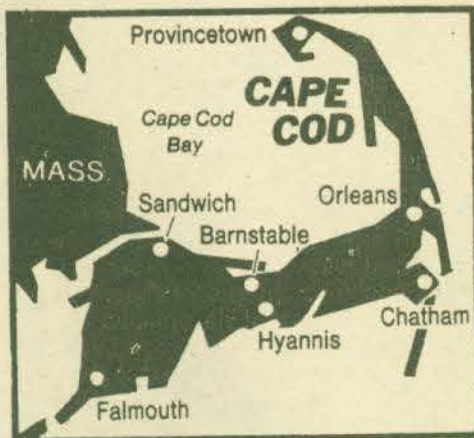
week, I told you to leave me alone.)
I nearly forgot the leeks. Peel them,
get the dirt out, dice them. Smoother
than onions more lemony (sometimes I

add lemon to get the tartness. I never
forget the flavor, I just don't remember
what flavor it was you liked. I didn't
forget the leeks. I added them, &

put the soup on the stove to boil fast,
then turned the flame down, so that it
simmered for hours. The longer it cooks,
the deeper the flavor becomes.

The pan holds enough for four people,
but you aren't one of them anymore.
Lentil, I said, lentil & split pea soup.

Ron Schreiber



distraction

we were driving to the shore for the weekend,
hope for cool breezes & still deeper tans—
lines like the little girl in the Coppertone ad

(but where could we find the dog actually interested
enough in us to grab our speedos & pull the brief suits
down?). when, suddenly, at the coastal interchange,

we were stopped by a highway patrolman looking for
dope smugglers, pulled over, searched from head to toe,
even the trunk of our car. he apologized perfunctorily

when he found nothing. but, looking at our glazed
morning eyes, he lectured us on the evils of hard drugs
& even the milder kind kids use constantly hanging out

on street corners now the parks & playgrounds have been
closed to save taxpayers hard-earned money. it took
a full hour. we, however, were used to be hassled

for the color of our skins now the sun had darkened us
& for the affectionate way we looked at each other,
side by side in the bucket seats. it was noon.

we bent along the coastal highway, looking, between
the landslides, for deserted beaches, when suddenly
we heard sirens, & police cruisers & two ambulances

sped by. a mile up the road we saw blazes of tangled
metal. a bus full of school children had collided
with a station wagon, pulling a family towards its

long-awaited July vacation, & eight tail-gating cyclists
had crashed into the wreck. we edged away from the fires
& drove by, but our appetite for lunch was ruined.

yet the sun was still shining, & we took our deepening
tans on down the coast, hopeful to avoid searches &
further accidents—those constants of modern progress,

that clutter the highways, & threaten the security
we've built so carefully, in our small car, without
children or July vacations, without even the confidence

that—come what may—our heirs will survive us on
these roads, if only they can find their tangled ways
from one place (our lost homes) to another.

Ron Schreiber

Praying to the Dead

So sweet and pretty you look lying there,
All dead and naked and marble-like and composed.
You can't yell faggot at me anymore in biology class
Like you used to do.
When my undertaker/daddy told me you ran dead drunk
Into a tree round the bend on Route 302, and
He'd be bringing you back here to the basement
In his big, black, shiny hearse; well, child, did
I ever get a roaring hard-on.
My cock got so long it almost touched Peking.
Oh, baby, you don't have a scratch on that
Football player body though your Subaru sure got mangled.
Just a snap of that pretty neck and you were without a future.
Your big muscles haven't gone soft since morning, have they.
Darling, you're a perfect work of art.
I'm going to feast on you till Daddy comes down
To work on you.
How you like it, baby?
Feel anything when I rub that gorgeous cock?
Guess you ain't gonna warm up much today.
Don't think I'll get much of a rise out of you now.
Wonder if I should slip a cum-stained jock on you.
Put you in the coffin wearing only that;
Sure would stir up this dead-ass town, wouldn't it.
Oh what a nice cock you got; even flaccid I
Can hardly fit you in my hungry, cocksucking mouth.
Turn over, siss; ooh, there you go.
God, that ass belongs in a museum in some
Big capital city run over by queers.
Now I'm in; you're loose, aren't you, honey.
Feel anything?
No, suspect you don't.
Just think; you had to die before you'd let a
Gay pecker up your sweet butt hole.
Baby, you're gonna look real nice tomorrow
In your blue suit, Sunday best, in that fine
Mahogany coffin your country club mama picked out.
You're gonna go out in high style, sweet prince.
Little lipstick on your pretty, surly lips.
Rouge on your cheeks and powder on that athlete nose.
Daddy promised me the whole damn town will think
You're a big time Hollywood star going to the
Bottom of the earth.
He's gonna really celebrate you; just between you and me
Daddy's got an eye for the boys too.
Yeah, Daddy's going to make whoopee over you.
Daddy promised me and what Daddy promises I always get.



Carl Alessi



Carl Alessi

Michael Swift

Two Stories by Freddie Greenfield

96th & Broadway

...it's a rough corner. In fact take the whole section from 84th to 103rd and it's all pretty rough. The police, though, concentrate their general harassment tactics here between 95th and 96th. To avoid trouble, if you want to know what's good for you and have been around like I have, before you go out walking the streets you're clean shaven and look fairly neat wearing presentable clothes, stuff that doesn't wrinkle. Call it a sixth sense developed trying to stay out of prison. Of course there is no guarantee, the problem being police minds and they aren't noted for possessing overly-bright mentalities. Minds, I'm getting at, so out of kilter with reality you have to be flexible, bend with them, their ideas of reality.

From nowhere two detectives pushed me and Rocco into a hallway vestibule on 95th Street giving us a fast frisk. Whatever they were looking for we didn't have any and if we did we wouldn't be loose enough to be walking around with it in that section. After calling me, 'you no good wop' and Rocco, 'you dirty jew' they punched me in the stomach and gave Rocco a few slaps in the face, even if they don't hurt you they like you to act as though you were, so I winced half doubled over while Rocco moaned holding both hands to his face then they told us we could go.

96th and Broadway

When I say, they, actually it's only one cop does the roughing up, the hitting. I mean it's an act they have, not that they aren't both alike, they are, but one plays at being nice and the other takes on the bad role. Anyhow, if you happen to be on the receiving end more than once you get to know these facts. Also, if you're on the receiving end, I've found it pays to be complimentary, comes natural. So, right before we were ready to leave, bowing my head slightly, I said, "thank you." Rocco followed my lead, saying, "thank you, thank you officer." Thank you's directed towards the one did the hitting as a safeguard for the future, this show of friendship, this show that you bore them no hard feelings. Later on, though, we both got a good laugh out of the incident. Why? Because I'm the one's really jewish, Rocco's the italian or wop they were calling the 'dirty jew.' That's something, isn't it?

Wait a minute, that's not entirely correct? Rocco is half and half. Father's a jew owns a bakery on a Long Island shopping mall. The italian half's his mother. But, right from the go, everything aside, as far as Rocco went, I inherited trouble. Corners of his mouth down, when it opened, he always had his morbid personal tragedies ripe and at the ready for me to listen to. Plus, straight to boot and I'm gay? The gay jew and the straight italian, partners in crime?

Rocco was married and had a wife and baby. It'd been a week since he'd gone home. That's when he took me with him and I inadvertently fell asleep while my lit cigarette burnt their new studio couch. One of those things nobody made a big to do about. Anyway, he'd lost his last job managing a movie theatre which made him more or less dependent on me for money. I did all of the actual hustling. He was the type of person I happened to feel sorry for, not that I needed him with me as a lookout. This was the second time he had had a wife and baby. His first wife and baby were killed in an automobile accident. Got himself lathered up pretty good when he spoke about dozing off behind the wheel showing me psychic scars as well as visual ones. Getting so I'd wish he'd pick up on another theme.

After the scene with the two detectives I was too limp, too unnerved to hustle. Earlier in the day we had made a few dollars. I suggested we quit for the day. Rocco agreed, yes, find a hotel, check in. It was our habit to find a different place every night.

Frankly, he was becoming a bore—I was getting tired of having him around me. Here it was a whole week gone by and I hadn't had any sex. If it's one thing I like it's having plenty of sex.

"No. Not for me. No, I'm not doing the hotel." Said as simple as that. "Look, Rocco, I know this place, this turkish bath on Madison off 125th Street where we can get a bed for the night." Abruptly, in my mind is made up fashion, I added, "That's where we're going. If you want to go with me, alright. If you don't want to go, that's alright, too."

Up until the present I hadn't elaborated on my sexuality. He knew I was a homosexual, I told him that as soon as he started telling me about his marriage. Homosexual, a word to him, nothing fancy, nothing he'd have to confront. "A turkish bath? Aren't they full of queers?" I don't recall him making those remarks. He didn't only because he was straight and straight people weren't supposed to know about such selective subject matter. Then again he was more or less dependent on me for survival, like I've said.

"Make up your mind quick, Rocco, I'm leaving." Muttered by me through semi-clenched lips.

"Yes but..."

"No, no yes buts." I answered, walking down the

BMT subway stairs at 96th street him tagging behind two steps making sure he wouldn't lose sight of me. What choice did he have? Home to the Bronx? Home to the wife and baby? "I don't go for that stuff." Was his answer to my questions on the platform waiting for a train.

"Rocco, tell me, didn't you ever have gay sex with a man?" adding, "Nothing like it." His feeble defence a mumbled wife and kid at home.

"Didn't I realize?"

This would be a first, introducing a neophyte into my private, until now, sexual sanctums. It had happened to me before because of the nature of street life I find myself associating with straights, therefore, out of necessity restricting my sexual needs. I was determined with Rocco to break through that barrier. I like to think I readied him up on the way to the baths by telling him, how, maybe I'm prejudiced, but I like a big black fat cock in my ass fucking the shit out of me; let me tell you, Rocco, cocks at this particular turkish bath are enormous as opposed to some of the same type of places downtown; wait until you see them it'll make your hair stand on end; you know what I mean, Rocco, whatever you ever heard about cocks in Harlem is believable on Madison off 125th street, true facts exposed.

I liked to think I revealed the above but the truth is I lacked nerve to be so blunt. Nevertheless it wouldn't be long before he'd see me acting it out in the flesh.

The baths are in the basement, one flight below street level, a huge dimly lit dormitory fitted with double tiered bunks, off through a swinging door showers and the sauna. I pay the cashier, we're given locker keys, towels and sheets. Leading the way having been here so many times before it's like the setting is a whole part of my being. Always exciting while at the same time, for me, comfortable. One of the few spots in the city I feel nakedly secure. Rocco is the opposite. He's mesmerized, eyes glued to me, watching my every action. So scared I had to prod him to undress. Undressed, he wrapped his sheet tightly around himself. "What now?" He whispered.

"What do you mean, what now? Take a shower, go in the sauna or find a bed or do whatever you want to do?" I wanted to add, whatever you're big enough to do, but didn't.

I left him for the shower and sauna as he hoisted himself to a top bunk under a glaring light bulb, the only glaring light bulb in the dormitory because it was located next to the entrance door. It was Saturday, 7:30 p.m. and crowded already, by midnight it'd be packed. If Rocco moved from his bunk he'd be hard put to find another. Until now, I believe he thought we spoke the same language. At the turkish bath I'd prove we didn't. This wasn't be bop alley jazz. This was the real thing, the acting out of straight male jailhouse slang. Rocco, cowering up on his perch, surrounded on all side by a roomful of cocksuckers, fags, sissies with exaggerated erections. He wants to know, seriously he asks me, what's he supposed to do if someone comes on to him? Watch me, I tell him, greasing my asshole with vaseline in readiness for anything comes my way. Statistically the baths clientele is 97% afro-american contrasted against 3% pale ass cheeks.

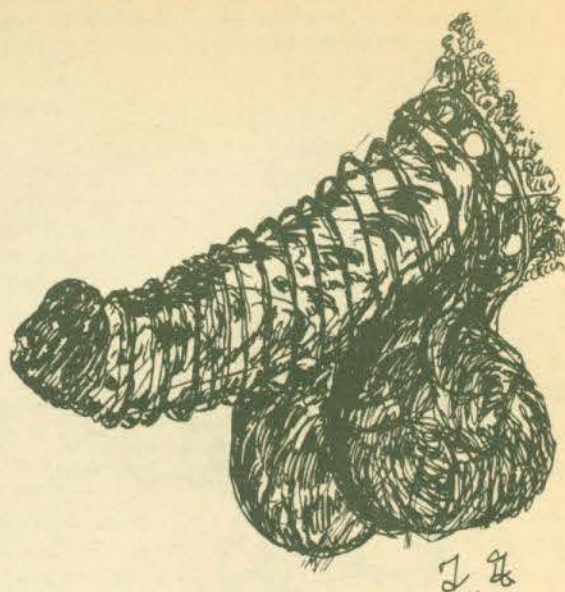
I lay below, opposite Rocco, on my back, knees bent, spread, an open invitation while he, Rocco, hides his head under his sheet. One of my routines, hand dangling, brush a passerby's crotch until I find something immense willing to take me for what I think I'm worth, my educated sphincter, my erotic muscle. Street wise, I score. To that date, truly one of the biggest ever up my rectum. Fact was with me on my back legs bent jackknife style it doesn't seem to

be able to get in all the way. We'll remedy the situation by switching positions. As I turn over on my stomach I catch sight of Rocco peeking out at me from his sheet. I give him, what can be termed, my best shit eating grin. Instantly he ducks back under his sheet. "Imagine," I want to tell him, "what those two detectives on 95th street would call us if they were watching?" Useless, though, addressing a mass of frozen jelly.

To make a long story short; I carried on all night—making up for lost time—the past week I'd been without; got fucked so many—lost count—sucked, remembering, "can you piss after you come, please?"

And for 12 hours he never moved from his top bunk? That's right, not once did he vacate his perch until, wide awake, the following morning he heard me say, "Come on, Rocco, let's get out of here."

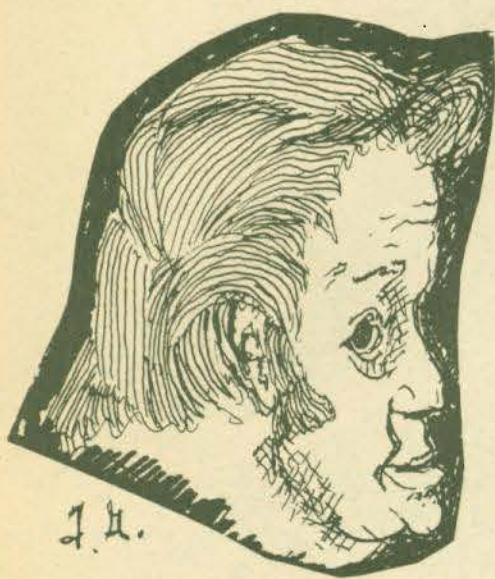
Freddie Greenfield



OH

Trying to find some kind of reality/cat litter box? Winterizing the house kitchen/sink? Underneath? Yes underneath the fucking and sucking going on/pouring through the cold cracks. Actually go out/downtown for urine drinks. For hot coffee before as an aphrodisiac after. Sex in the altered meridian strip/naked but wired home made steel leather stud chains for the funk of it. Can you imagine when I finished/graduated high school my mom and dad wanted/expected me to go to work/find a job? Whose reality? Storm windows? Plastic surgeons? Electroconvulsive therapy? Run around track/laps/twenty-eight cock erections in fifteen minutes. Two and three quarter miles of cock a week.

Buy ten yards of clear shear Woolworths. Woolworths? Yes. Do you want a slave? Do you want a sex slave? Do you want to take me home and whip my ass with a strap? Do you like to play scrabble on quiet nights? First I'd have to have a place to stay/bathtub full of piss/free. I wouldn't have to pay no rent/that's the agreement, remember? Here or there? Two months in the sun ducking the snow? Don't rely on people to feed you. I won't/thank you. Thank you,



sir, for your pee. Farfetched?

I had this guy, he wasn't rich, but he owned his own business. A knife sharpening business setup in a van/a big Chevy van. I was his weekend toilet/no shit. He'd park his van in an alley next to The United States Mint. He told me he jogged. He told me he swam. I believed him because of his muscle tone/similar to mine and because I wanted to. I also wanted to think for both of us it wasn't just another casual affair. His pee matched my own in taste/salty with a strong aroma opening the senses. Can a couple in their mid fifties find romance? How I abhor the thought. After we'd got it on he was the one that put out the feelers. Do I want to go along/a mans man/climb mountains, ski, dice, Lake Tahoe/poker, Reno, Nevada, boxing/championship fights. Nobody would ever know what we were/what we did in private bathrooms. And you would/and I would help with the business running the butcher shops getting meat cleavers for you to sharpen. One more reason all my stories are short hops to cruising areas is that I play a demure naive role/sir, I've never done it before/oh you're forcing me to drink it/oh.

Freddie Greenfield



Incident at Nashua, NH

Reported by S.H.



Photo by Mitzel

Frankie walked into Nashua, N.H., one day and found a church where a performance was in progress. It was the local Unitarian Church and the performers were a rag-tag crew of artistes, nurses, poets and engineers from Boston. They performed plays and read poems about prison, madness, cocksucking and revolt. Their last act was a poem about not turning your back on gays being hassled on the streets, which they read in unison. After the poem, Frankie noticed one of the performers descending the stage while the audience applauded.

"Are you Chinese, Korean or Japanese?" Frankie asked the man dressed in black.

"What are you?" he countered as he took in Frankie with a sweeping glance.

"I think I'm Irish, but I'm a kick boxer. I studied with Henry Chin. Do you know him?"

"Just call me S.H.," the other replied. "What are you doing in Nashua?"

"I left Syracuse because I did not like the violence on the streets," Frankie replied. "I'm looking for my friend but I can't find him in Nashua."

Frankie was wearing a small T-shirt which showed off the muscles on his shoulders and arms. So SH suggested, "Come with me. My car is parked outside."

On their way to the car, they were joined by two other members of the troupe, Peter and Jim. Frankie reacted with hostility toward Peter, whispering to SH, "I don't like that one. He's always a smartass with me." Peter had lived in Nashua, N.H., for a few months.

Once in the car, though, Frankie addressed Peter civilly and mentioned, "Billy will like SH I think if they meet."

As they were about to pull out of the lot, Billy arrived in a Toyota driven by his girlfriend, Marge. Frankie hopped out of SH's car just as Billy jumped out of the Toyota. They faced off for a minute before the shoving began. Frankie placed several well-aimed but gentle side-kicks on Billy's chest and Billy did his best to keep up with the kick-boxing by offering violent love-taps to Frankie's muscular shoulders and arms. Peter, sensing trouble, declared, "I don't want to be part of this scene." Jim too deplored the incipient violence of men and urged SH to drive off. So they sped off, leaving the combatants in the parking lot.

The remaining members of the performance troupe and the audience, however, had not forgotten the moral of the last poem of the evening as they left the church. They formed a circle round the sparring lovers to try to stop the fight.

Marge, too, was beginning to realize the true nature of male combat and the terrible truth that two men were fighting but not over her. With the wrath of a woman scorned and ignored she screamed at Billy:

"You're not a cocksucker, Billy. You don't suck his cock."

But Frankie turned to her and said, "He's had my cock many times and loves it."

As the true passion of homosexual relations emerged for Marge she became more and more enraged.

"You two get out from behind that dumpster. What are you doing. Buttfucking?"

Freddie, a poet from Boston, stepped out from among the onlookers offering to help.

"I'm gay, too," he volunteered to the entangled combatant-lovers.

Marge by now had had more than she could tolerate. She pointed at the by-standers and threatened: "All of you queer, too? I did not know there were so many queers in Nashua. Give me your names. Give me your address. I'll make sure all of you get turned in and kicked out of town."

She started toward the man closest to her and kneed him in the groin. Billy however had tired of Marge's new assertiveness. He pulled her away from the man, whom he noticed to be the same person he had once turned in for being a child molester and instructed, "Get in the car, Marge. You're acting like a dyke."

Frankie too had had enough of the situation, so when a boy in the fast-gathering crowd yelled, "Fag-got!" at him, he grabbed a two-by-four and swung. Said boy reacting in alarm proclaimed in his defense, "You can't hit me, I'm a minor."

Charley, a professor-cum-performer, tried to hustle Frankie to the safety of his Volvo when he saw police sirens appearing, but Frankie bolted for the side of the law, hoping to find justice with the Nashua constabulary. Nashua's finest snapped him up and drove off with Frankie in the back.

In the car going home to Boston Peter and Jim tried to console SH. "I never liked him," Peter said and Jim added, "I wasn't sure you knew what you were doing. I was going to offer to stay over at your apartment just in case." But SH was easily reconciled as he pondered the situation with only a touch of sadness. "What I really wanted was Victor," he sighed. "Was he dropping his definite articles again?" Peter and Jim wondered. SH also added, "He was just a poor Irish with a past."

The past was soon to catch up with Frankie. His wife who was in prison in upstate New York finally located him through her friend Jenny. She wrote Frankie a letter which Peter managed to procure and showed to SH several months later. In the letter she said, "I miss you so much, babe. I have only 18 days left and I am counting the days until I can be with you again. I've missed you so much. I'm so glad you are safe in Nashua. Nashua is a cool town. I've lived there before. Just try to stay cool on the streets and the cops will not hassle you. Stay cool and don't get crazy. I know a girl here who won't be out for another six months and she says we can stay at her apartment for free. I'm already making plans for us. Stay safe for me, babe. I can't wait before I'm in your arms again and my legs are wrapped around your back. Love, Carol."

When Carol got out of prison, Frankie and his wife moved out to the North Country to live. Marge and Billy, on the other hand, moved south to New York City where Billy wanted to pursue a career in modeling.

The performing troupe went on to tour other cities large and small, performing other plays and readings but always ending with the poem about not turning your back on gays being hassled on the street.



Fag Rag

Guilt

FAG RAG Tours, a division of FAG RAG Books and FAG RAG the magazine hit the concert circuit in the winter of 1982/83, without selling out as can be gleaned from the following program notes:

Baltimore (Gay Community Center) November 12, 1982
Philadelphia (Gay Community Center) November 13, 1982
Nashua, N.H. (U.U.C. Church) November 22, 1982
Toronto, Canada (MCC Church) January 27, 1983

PROGRAM

*Introduction: Commie's Tumescence

"How do these Fag Rag Bible-burners expect the police to like us if we cannot prove to them that, except for what we do in bed, we are just like them?"

*"Georgia Boy," prose reading by Freddie Greenfield
Proud Jewish faggot sucks off KKK member in Ralford prison, Florida.

*"On Contra/diction," poem by SH
Work in progress (current FR).

*Boston Sex Scandal and Allen Ginsberg's "Howl":
Excerpts by Charley Shively
... who were busted for eye contact in Boston Public Library Men's Room when a handsome youthful policeman flashed his Irish loins and winning smile over urinal.

*"The Trial of Kenneth Appleby" by Mitzel (FR 27/28)
Commonwealth of Mass. vs. Appleby. Steven Cromer testifies against Appleby accused of hitting him with a riding crop over a dish of melted ice-cream. One-act play starring:

Maya Silverthorne — Steven Cromer
Freddie Greenfield — Defense Attorney Nasser
Q: "With an 18-foot bullwhip?"
A: "The 6-foot one."

*"Self-indulgence as an Act of Revolution" by Charley Shively (FR 27/28): Excerpts read by Jim McNiel, SH, Freddie

"The opposite to self-indulgence is denial.... repress, put in the closet, postpone pleasure, shape up, clean up.... pretend we are normal, dead with those awful hollow eyes of the straight bourgeoisie...."

*"Harmonious Maturity," prose reading by Freddie Greenfield

"You mean you'd go into a booth and sit on the bowl without first checking if it had paper?"
"Did have a napkin in one of my pockets."

*Folie a Deux by Maya Silverthorne (FR 27/28)
Excerpts from a play about madness, electro-shock, and beauty.

Selma Raspberry's nose job gets botched through crashing into a blue Pinto. Mother Raspberry laments but the Haldols did survive.

Selma — Maya Silverthorne
Mother (Agnes) — Charley Shively
Harold Haldol — Jim McNiel (Baltimore, Philadelphia, Nashua, NH),
Jim Madru (Toronto)
Helen Haldol — SH (Nashua, NH),
Peter Gonzales (Toronto)

*"Boots," poem by Pat Parker: Group reading by Fag Ragers

ADDITIONS AND REVISIONS: Toronto, Canada

*The Family Bar by Robert Patrick (FR 27/28)
In the family bar, the hustler (Son) gets hustled by Mom ("the biggest hustler of them all").
Pop: "You can't just walk in off the street and use language like that. What if the Family Role Police are watching?"

Ninotchka — Peter Gonzales
Pop — Freddie Greenfield
Son — Jim McNiel
Mom — Charley Shively

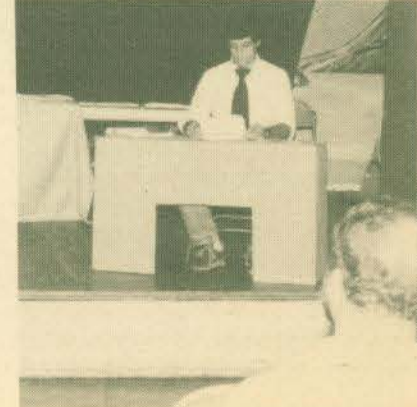
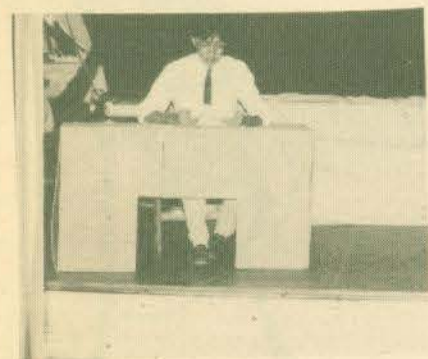
*Delicious Penis poem by Charley Shively
Group chant by Fag Ragers.

*Party with me prose reading by Freddie Greenfield (FR 12th Anniversary Issue)

"Don't get me wrong, please? Please, if there was a way I could have warned the party with me, and not expose myself, that the cop and the pharmacist were in the pharmacy, I wouldn't have hesitated an instant in doing so."

Relief

Tour



Photos by Mitzel

Available for Expense Paid Tours

In a 1975 peoples Volvo going south on 95. The driver out divining Divine himself as Mother Razzberry. Should we be stopped by police a flash of credit cards can get us free jam at any roadside rest area. Selma, Mother Razzberry's daughter with the safe hamburger haven stomach containing a brittle mind, an actual case history herstory of brother meeting sister on location, Chestnut street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—later they'd eat potato skins stuffed with seashells. Selma, in every day life a student nurse, upstages, finally, Mother Razzberry, by humming the facts that she has to cram for an exam, therefore, after the show will plane home. Had we a street van, the only gay way to travel, one of us would have been shocked into an electric ward leaving just that more room on the trip back to sanity.



I offered a plan for tomorrow. "Let's not eat until after we perform." As usual our cast jeered me into submission. Into submission, guilt ridden, again failing to consider individual tastes, forgetting Mother Razzberry's and daughter Selma's bouts with hunger. Recalling the white marble stoops of Baltimore, Baltimoreans proudly scrubbing, now looking very much a depressed area, time when I didn't give a second thought to robbing the supermarket chains. I do hope our cast understands my suggestion was a spoof, a revolutionary spoof?

That operatingroom stench, where? Here? Yes. Oh, no. All fingers point at the student nurse. Silverthorne offers a self-deprecatory explanation about kittens being born months ago in that blanket.

Now listen, listen, after traveling close to a thousand miles in our peoples Volvo, we have discovered Silverthorne blameless for the mildew odor, but, being a type of person easily capable of absorbing guilt, guilt for guilts sake alone, the overwhelming consensus of the cast is not to withdraw our reproofs.

What do they call them radios that everybody today seems to be walking around with wearing in their ears? Anyway, it belonged to Selma Razzberry, only property worth stealing, the part from a Scandinavian quean, and Selma still has it. It's my pet peeve that the plays moral message was sacrificed for celebrity status. The true villains were not portrayed.

It's wrong in my book to become a celebrity without proper financial returns, going as far to say, it is criminal. Losing my famous black leather cock harness that's another thing. Supporting preconceived notions about gay-master-slave relationships is another.

The state was employing plastic surgeons for rehabilitative purposes within the penal system. All I had to do write a letter. I wrote the plastic surgeon a tearjerker from prison attributing my problem filled life to the lack of a waspish nose; if my request for corrective surgery was granted I was sure it would enable me to reform.

To be sure I do have a story, yes. Yes, a realer than life drama acted out daily in dark theatre balconies.

Realism of a blue Pinto gas tank exploding. I was let out on the corner near the gay cafe, Mother Razzberry's thoughtful act, because of a light drizzle. Selma, getting a firsthand taste of Baltimore nightlife, chose to stroll with... what can you call them? stage door groupies. Selma is young. Selma will learn soon enough to earn kisses in dimlit hallways. I admit to my own pettiness of not ordering more than I could eat, of playing hard to get because I wasn't enebriated. Remain alert for the morrows show I had in the back of my mind.

In a movie version of 'our play' I'd want to act as a paid consultant showing Selma how to receive treatment lying on ones back, wires connected, foam rubber pad clamped in mouth, now. Now a switch thrown, wigs flying through the air as negative and positive poles meet in lightning arcs.

I was strapped down on a table, awake. I couldn't talk. The hypodermic needle used to administer sodium amytol had slipped from my faulty vein. Do you know what that means nurse Selma? A pleasant male attendant calmly stood over me.

They let me out. I escaped to formulate these notes. To suburban living surviving the moment I got a job hauling bricks, loading dump trucks. It wasn't long before, a week later in fact, I was back with the cast of Fag Rag performing artists.

"Doctor, I don't belong here. Let me go?" Those were my actual words. American chop suey dinner fed to us by our hosts in Nashua, New Hampshire. "What are you doing in Nashua, New Hampshire, Peter Gonzales?" Peter becomes the latest addition to the Fag Rag cast/staff.

"I don't know. Take me away?" "Think you can handle a Ninotchka role in our forthcoming Robert Patrick play, 'The Family Bar'?" "I'll do anything to leave Nashua, New Hampshire."

"Even go to Toronto, Canada with us?" "Yes yes, I love Toronto." "Ever been there?" "No."

So, anyway that's how come Peter Gonzales is with us. So, anyway someone had to give SH the low-down on handsome Frank, a member of the Nashua audience identifying himself after our performance as a kick boxer and trying to snatch center stage with a, I thought, boorish demonstration of just what he did to make his body attractive, muscles rippling the glazed look in SH's eyes. From what I gather listening to small bits of conversations, although everybody thinks my hearing is failing I do manage, Peter conveyed to SH that SH didn't want any part of handsome Frank, "but, oh dear I've invited him home." Events in the parking lot a half hour later bore Peters warning to SH out. Of course mingling with the audience is democratic. We were booked, though, for Toronto in a few short weeks. I gave those thoughts attention as I watched the fisticuffs in the parking lot. There was handsome Frank fighting for SH's benefit no doubt. No doubt in my mind at all that that's how these macho numbers think they're showing off their male mystique. Demented city police arriving, screeching patrol car tires with this handsome Frank number acting, now, so self righteous trying to, thinking he has the gay crowd with him, get someone arrested by the despicable enemy, must I repeat, police? Who all of a sudden is playing the cops part? Are we or aren't we legitimate members of

a counter culture group?

Legitimate members of a gay counter culture group telling me I'd be perfect for the Pop role in Robert Patricks, 'Family Bar'? Why not as the juvenile with proper makeup? Political ageist scum. I'm not focusing these later words at individuals. I'm focusing it at our collectives physiognomist oriented thought process.

Before going on to Toronto, Canada, the last segment concerning Fag Rags traveling drama group, perhaps I should give the readers a rundown of the people involved with Fag Rag. That's a good idea. Yes it is because by doing it everyone gets mentioned, no one can say they've been slighted, even the ones choosing not to accompany us. Wait a minute—that's not fair? It's not fair by implying people that chose not to make the trip have peculiar political qualities, whereas, in actuality individual peculiarities always has been our uniqueness.

John Weiners deserves mention if only for his uncalled for disruptive behavior during Fag Rag performances, his on the spot improvisations of characters not written into original scripts. Knock on wood my kidneys withstood JW's onslaught. Wasn't he also very critical of the rest of us in his snide aloof manner a week after the Balt/Phil show? Yes.

John Mitzel the author of the Kenneth Appleby trial. The author of many pieces in Fag Rag making good sound bad and vice versa choosing wisely to stay home.

Mike Riegle another workaholic for gay liberation and an active prisoners rights advocate, shy, shunning the public eye and grease paint for cleaner lubricants, cranberry juice and sex in his winterized garden on the fenway.

The fact is a troupe like ours needs people to remain at home in case those traveling get in difficulties. By law one is allowed a telephone call and if everybody we wanted to be with us were with us whom would we be able to contact? The civil liberties union? Handsome Jim Madru has taken over the role of Helen Haldols husband in the Folie A Deux farce from attractive Jim McNeil and because of baser instincts Peter Gonzales will play Helen in Toronto played up until now by SH, reason for switching being to be able to better grasp all of what it is we're actually doing.

To make a long story short, things went well in Toronto. The food in Canada wasn't quite up to the food we were fed in Nashua, wait a minute, I mean Philadelphia/Baltimore. In Nashua, New Hampshire we got hit with american chop suey, a history of gay pornography, in the same breath, complete with slide show and a panel of well known erudites on the subject. Wasn't Charley Shiveley's talk brilliant? It certainly was. Given in Toronto on a downtown college campus if I remember correctly.

What a shame, Selma/Maya Silverthorne, was saying on the way back to Boston, he was being groomed to take over the business, a family affair, a large manufacturing firm, when his father had a sudden heart attack and died, right. Right, all his life the father devoted to grooming him, the person I used to go with, the person whose house I stood at in Toronto, then dying suddenly with the rest of his family aware that he was gay a lot of skullduggery took



Photo by Mitzel

place. They offered him, my ex, a subordinate job in their factory. Now that the father was out of the way it was their factory not his factory if only for the reason that the rest of his family were made up of homophobes. Don't you think that's a shame? Yes. So, he refused their job offer. I mean, how obviously insulting could they get, walked out and went into business for himself. Unseasonably warm weather for Canada this time of the year, for that matter Boston also. We're available for expense paid tours. For more information contact—Fag Rag, Box 331, Kenmore Sta., Boston, MA 02215.

Freddie Greenfield

Lying beside me on that trip back, discussing marriage and monogamous affairs in general, was an MIT graduate civil engineer born in Malaysia and sired by a fishmonger whose authority as the ritual head of the household was juggled out of his grasp by domineering parents. "Grandfather smoked opium."

"Really?"

"Yes," answered 'yes' with a certain finality that left no doubt, no metallic aftertaste, sung almost, "And grandma's a coffee addict." He picks up shards of shattered glass.

"Is that the reason, give me that glass, you've vowed never to return?"

"No, not exactly, my political beliefs clash with western gay elitism but I do have my sexual preferences."

"I gather you mean young working class youth?"

"I mean honest young blondes with calused palms." Again, this last statement barked with such finality that it forced me to bury my nose in a biography propping my head on a borrowed sleeping bag. We drove on silently rock tapes playing on our peoples stereo.

The Garden State Parkway a lot of map reading by, ordinarily, intelligent people snapping on dashboard lights. Why, I knew this road perfectly years ago traveling incommunicado as a pet thief to an older man.

My part was acting the role of defence attorney defending a gay disciplinarian against an obvious closet case, a practicing catholic, who accuses my client of non-consensual sadistic sexual conduct upon the body of the party of the second part. Adorable flighty Maya Silverthorne, Mother Razzberry's Selma, the jetting student nurse whenever extra money is available, plays opposite me as the despicable Mister Cromer. "Do you mean to say you've lived in a master-slave relationship for two and one half years with Mister Appleby without considering yourself a homosexual?"

Ice cube bath treatments are now passe. As I read the court transcript that caused my client to receive an 8 to 10 year sentence in a penal institute I've failed to find a humorous passage yet the audience whoops with hilarity. After the performance I chose crab cakes in order to ease my conscience.

In Memorium for the Person You Might Have Been

for Beau Dean Hall, age 2 yr. 5 mo.
of City Hall Daycare

Yes, your Daddy told your Mommy to tell us at daycare: don't let Beau eat with his left hand cause he won't be able to hunt and fish right when he grows up to be a man

Yes, your Daddy did take you to see The Best Little Whore House in Texas, starring Dolly Parton and Burt Reynolds, just you and Daddy.

I guess he wanted to set you straight just in case you were having any problems with your gender identity, at 2yr.5mo. Its true too that your Daddy took your Mommy to see E.T. the next day, But they didn't take you, they left you at daycare.

My heart shivers when I think of what they have done to you already and what they will yet do to you.

But perhaps you will remember the kisses and hugs we gave each other as you came running into the bathroom to get your diaper changed at City Hall Daycare, the two of us, of the same gender.

Perhaps you will remember: there once was a man who kissed me tenderly and lovingly long ago when I was two; perhaps years from now your body will remember this.

Perhaps the tenderness I saw in you when I gave you dolls to play with when you woke up from nap at daycare. Perhaps this tenderness will survive. Perhaps it will.

But I mourn the person you might have been, Beau Dean

For at two you are irreversibly mutilated with the branding irons of butch and femme. Every cell of your body, every corner of your imagination contaminated with heterosexism

I mourn the person you might have been, Beau Dean

But perhaps you will remember years from now there once was a man, who kissed me tenderly and lovingly long, long ago when I was two

his father in the hospital
poisoned by a rebel son
so he takes out daddies piece
of meat property lying on
mother one time too many
over population took it in
his own hand & pulled the trigger
maybe they stopped him before
performing genocide on their normal
offspring unsatisfied like
reason oedipus gouged his eyes
out of the shower with it irritated
from fantasies of mother
pederasty sodomy stigmata
incest procreation religion
piety aristotle is patricide
repression of sex equals violence
equals love equals more violence
pederasty gentleness sexual identities
they're not yours you know of themselves
girls and boys needing a hot release
masturbation justice has been
masturbating violence since
greek love since amazon love
if you wont give up
moralistic stupid religious
idealisms for thousands of years
roman gladiators throwing fanatics 2 lions

MYSELF, LIKE I AM

Here I am without your cock up my ass
without your brown body against me

It won't be empty for long
I need it and when I need it I get it somehow

And if yours isn't the next or the next
or the next
I'll keep filling myself up
with strangers in toilets
in park shadows
in rooms with dirty sheets.

L.R. Short

they didn't face extinction lions of course
lion gates enticing victims to the labyrinth
fed to the minotaur like the black widow
eats her lover eats her lover
and do you think it's safe to be a lover
is it safe to live with your family
and you'd rather eat them
out of the stygia gov't industry on parade
greasy spoon dog bones
it's not sex anymore when sex is safe
and dangerous
sex like a prison door closing behind
echo sound corresponds to the walls
2.5 children i guessed the 5%
economy & religion and superficial parents
moral fed war with children & everybody
morality doesn't feed anybody but?
come out come all the way out against
any form other than your own
fight over in the arena and some will die
getting thrown into prison because caught
in bed and you had the consent
but the age of cumming with/someone is...
do not pass go do not collect \$20,000
death penalty back from full swing
sons & daughter genocide protect yourself

Peter Gonzales

The Good Lust Therapist

The psychodrama
of your smooth skin and fuck me's
a sticky glimmer of love juice
on that tall warm psychiatrist
of my erect penis
working his way into your deep problem

the psychiatric nurse of my wet tongue
examines you in the rite areas
the couch of my warm asshole
is in need of an occupant—
wouldn't you play psychiatrist with me?

Steven Anthony

The Curse of the Future Fairy

The unborn fairies are angry,
and the interplanetary anthill future is saying
step up the search for lifedust in new galaxies,
for the ground is no longer here, the air not here,
not here the sweethearts of the satellites.
And the 19th century is dead,
and the 20th century is dead,
and the 21st century is dead,
and the 22nd century is full of fairies!
For all the commands to alter and delete did not print out,
and they have survived to colonize the bowels of sissy pulsars,
flaky formations of frisky zygotie giant heartbeat fairies,
zipping about on errands of interstellar pervert mercy,
nursed in the secret victory gardens
of Provincetown and World War III.
And the baby fairy of the silly fifty states
giggles itself to pieces in its crib.

So if there be any 22nd-century-minded fairies here,
turn to your neighbor either side and say:
"A survivor fairy loves you."
Indeed, let us be reverential for a bit
and listen for a rustle in the room,
for the rustle of our unborn fairies.

But for those who glaze their fairies,
who tie and gag their fairies
in the bassinets and taxis of the guards,
in choirlofts and classrooms,
and MacDonald's bathrooms,
whose greatest creation is astroturf
and a doll with nothing between its legs
that shoots at fairies,
I say DEATHDUST.

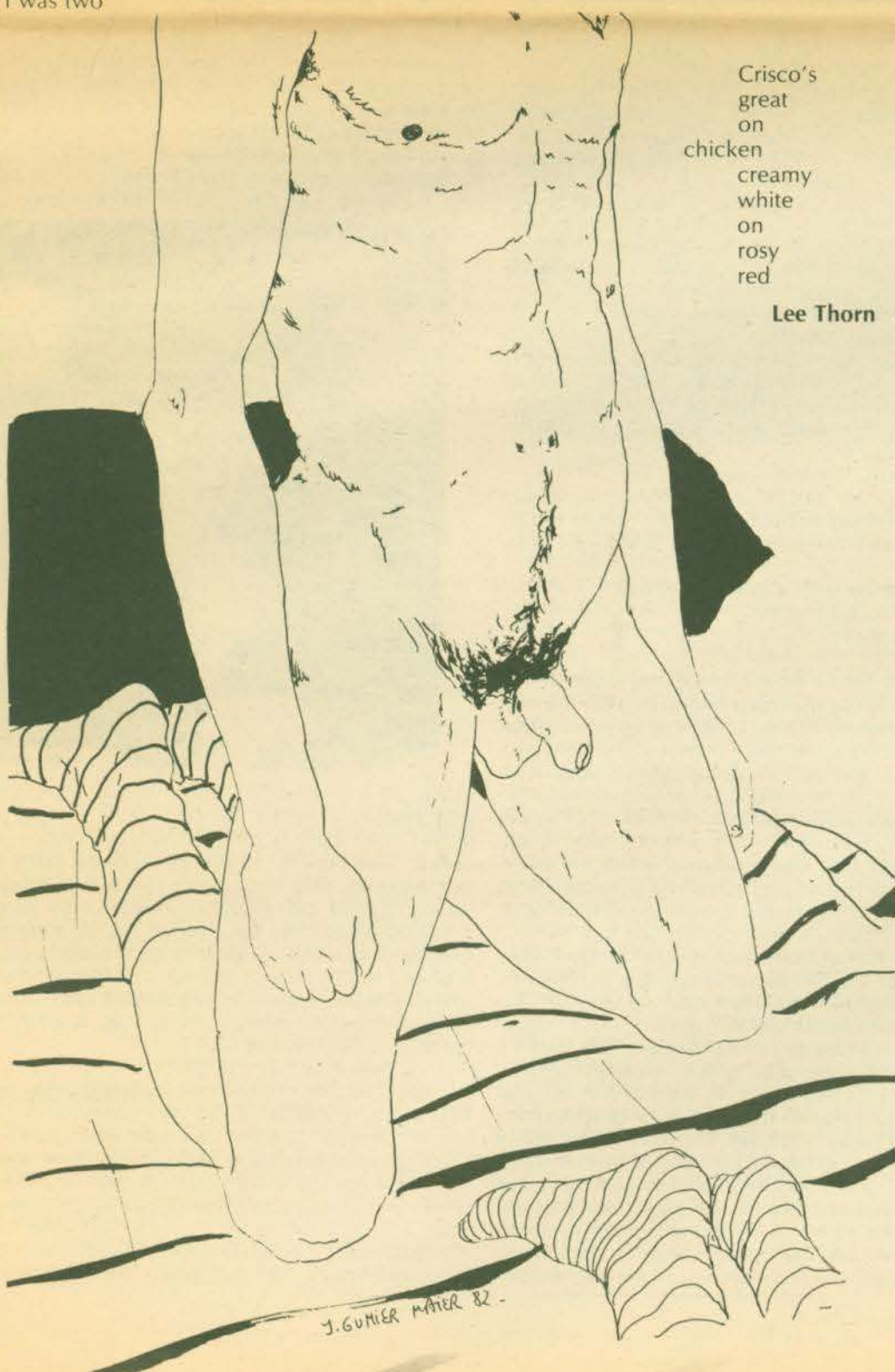
And for those who paint their fairies pink and blue,
who inject their fairies with Cheerios lie serum,
who cauterize the orifices of their singing fairies,
who stun and rape their kissing fairies
in bucketseats and Barcaloungers
while splashing together in the golden shower
of primetime powerpiss,
I say DEATHDUST.

For the unending supply of uniform-part-men
lined up for powerplug while sucking on nerve bombs
and invading the biospheres of future fairies
unto the last quasar,
I say DEATHDUST.

DEATHDUST as you attempt to leave.
DEATHDUST before you reach the door.

You others, however many, kiss new
and be glad and go lay wreaths
on the tomb of the Unknown Fairy.

© Carl Morse



Crisco's
great
on
chicken
creamy
white
on
rosy
red

Lee Thorn

I'm No Homophobe

You go into the crapper to pee &
there're four feet in one booth Shit

it's disgusting. You flick off the
light on your way out how you'd like to

bash them together like cymbals Who
do they think they are? You go

to the locker room strip for your work
out before you're in your jock

strap this skinny guy is moving
slowly up the row of lockers looking

at you. You know which part You'd
like to drown the bastard in the shower

Sure enough when you finish lifting
weights he's still soaping himself up

you'd think he'd shrivel like a prune
What a waste of water The shithead

looks like he has half a hard-on
You shower far from him as you can you

keep your back to him even though
you know that's dangerous. What really

irks you are the parades They're
altogether out in the open

& screaming. THEY ARE EVERYWHERE!
THEY ARE EVERYWHERE! You'd be the first

to admit it

Walta Borawski

#44

He left me feeling like a dildo
One he had forgotten to clean.
I gave him my phone number knowing he would never call
We talked of music and cock sucking and art
He talked of his lover
I talked of my life.
The hollow in my bed was still warm when he left,
my kiss on his lips.
I can't remember his name and I'm sure he doesn't remember mine
He said I was good sex and I hadn't known what that meant.

Aubrey H. Sparks

Invisible History

My shrink told me it was unnatural to be
obsessed with the Nazi extermination of
homosexuals Look at me I'm normal he

said I sleep nights I'm healthy enough
to listen to your stories & others worse than
yours & I have sex & I'm Jewish so

what's with these nightmare pogroms Find
yourself a hot guy to go to bed with or
do it on the floor of his car but

enough with these death camps. I
knew he was right, that his people had
lost millions more than my people but

piles of emaciated tortured worked-to-
death gassed-to-death clubbed-to-death
bodies resemble each other & they

resemble us Look at that man on top
of the others Look at his beard He
could be me. When I was six my

father told me about the liberation
of the camps Fond tales of his youth
in the Allied Front They entered at

last & those bodies, he said, those bodies.
By time I was 15 my eye doctor showed
mercy to me put me on sleeping pills

- the circles round my eyes - I told him I
couldn't sleep & when I did I
found myself behind wires - barbed, or

electric my head shaved My empty
expression aimed at everyone in
this odd century of horror so

systematic so organized. I'll give you
these pills, he said But don't abuse them
& cut out the fantasies, you're not even

Jewish

Walta Borawski

Eat the Banana

Green. First time.
Almost gagged. Cock.
Eat the banana.
Tried again. Nineteen.
Lighter green, in-
between twenty and twenty-
one. With Nick Smith
it seemed more fun at
twenty-two. Stopped
turning blue. Breathe
easier until twenty-
three, still green between
firm cheeks. Rosy hole
so tight and moist got
roundly reamed when I got
reamed against my will.
I called it rape. I
fought a git-it guy and
lost, me five foot eight
him six foot two crew-cut
accountant for the Boston
Symphony. No sympathy
for me from him. I bled
and doubly lost when he
pulled-out exhausted just
as I began to glow. So
green grows rotten. Yet.

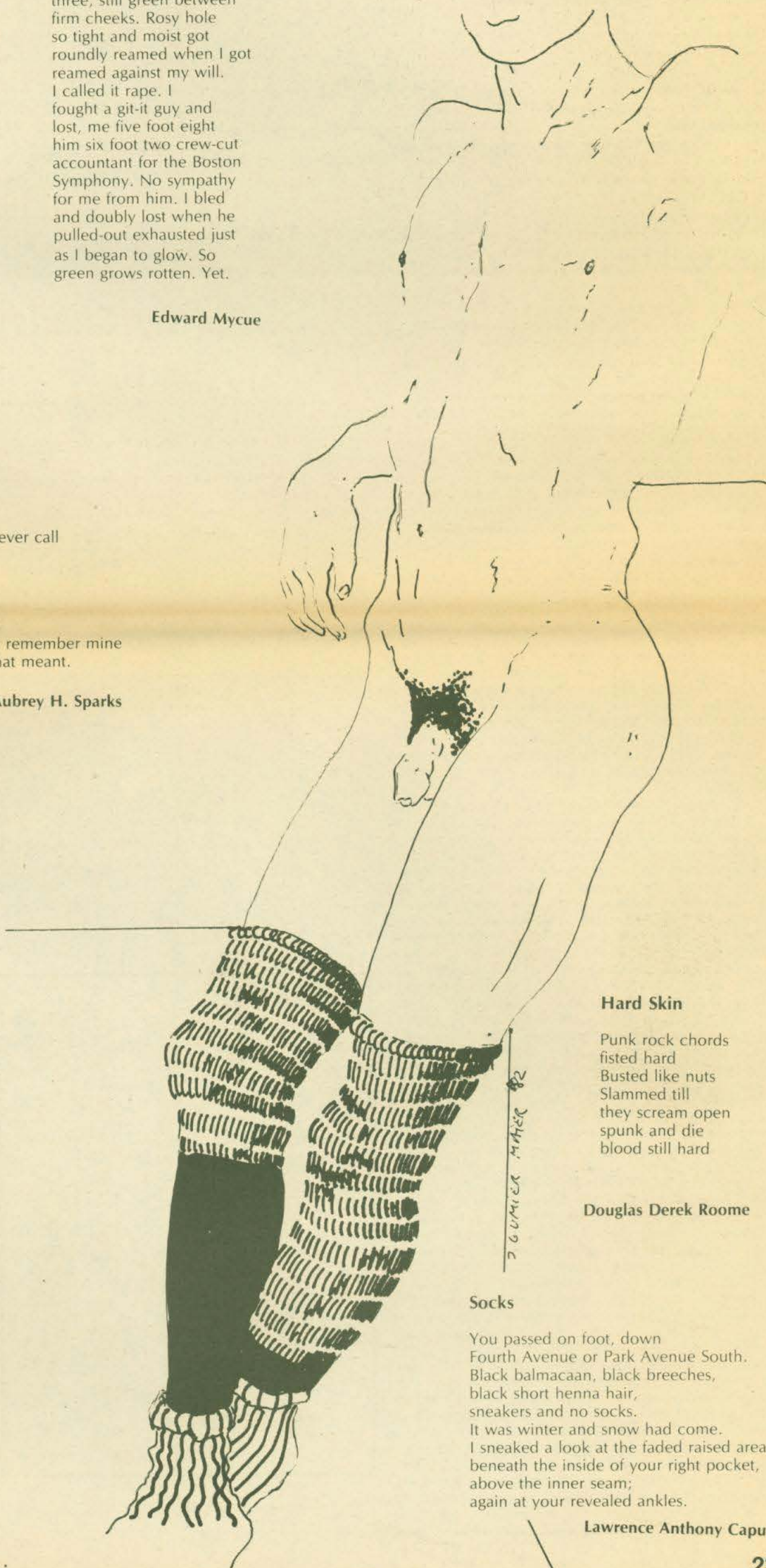
Edward Mycue

That's Why This Fella's Such a Tramp

I get so horny for cock about eight.
I like those fellows who always cum late.
I'd even snack on some short stuff I hate.
That's why this fella's such a tramp.

I like a good long fuck in the face—
beats dodging fists and damned mace.
Slowpoke?
That's oke.
And California's got great nudist camps...
that's where this fellow eats tramps.

Frederick A. Raborg, Jr.



Hard Skin

Punk rock chords
fisted hard
Busted like nuts
Slammed till
they scream open
spunk and die
blood still hard

Douglas Derek Roome

Socks

You passed on foot, down
Fourth Avenue or Park Avenue South.
Black balmacaan, black breeches,
black short henna hair,
sneakers and no socks.
It was winter and snow had come.
I sneaked a look at the faded raised area
beneath the inside of your right pocket,
above the inner seam;
again at your revealed ankles.

Lawrence Anthony Caputo



Photo by S.H.

A nuclear family lives in a colonial style house at the end of Ledge Road in North Chelmsford, Massachusetts. Several hundred feet from their house there is a "rest" area, where one of the parents claims that wild homosexuals terrify their children. According to the *Boston Globe*, the big daddy of the family was "confronted" by two gays engaging in sex and that to defend himself, he "held up the chain saw" he was using to cut down a tree. "It's gotten to the point where our kids are frightened to play in the woods at night," said mother pig. "They engage in sex acts right on our property and pretend that they don't see you. It's eerie." (*Boston Globe*, 2/26/83)

Such reports of the uninhibited goings on in this rest area are exaggerated: in my several stops there I've waited a lot more than I've made out. I do recall a wonderful oil-truck man in the middle of winter as I was returning from a poetry reading. My friend had fallen asleep in the car and as I went into the underbrush to piss, I found this man wearing a company uniform, which he obligingly unbuttoned to open up a throbbing cock which I sucked quickly enough in the winter waste; he went on his deliveries and I hurried on home. But most of the time the stop yields much less than the imaginations of the Chelmsford residents might desire. Nonetheless, their complaints provide an interesting entrance into concepts of public and private as well as the personal and political.

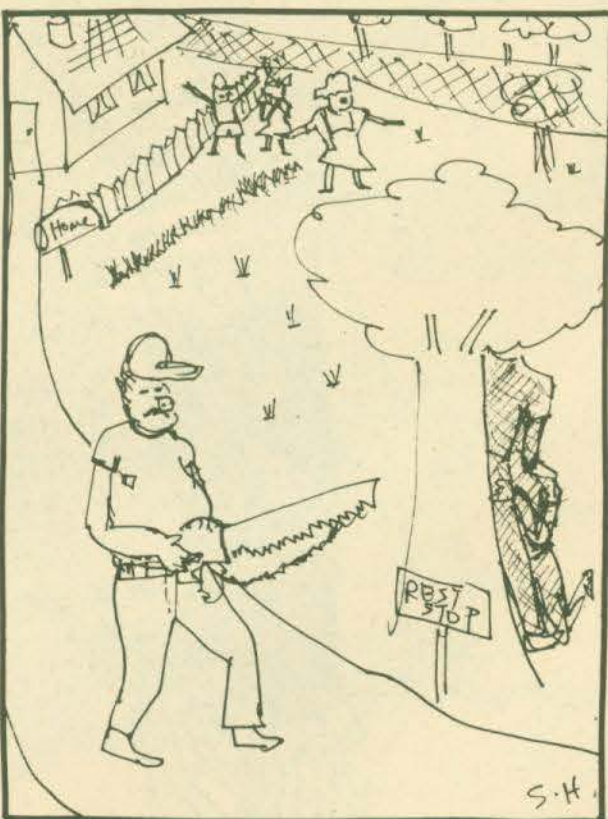
According to the Chelmsford complainers, "What people do is their own business." The use of the economic term "business" as well as the note of "the woods we own", "our house"/"our property" contrast with the faggots going down on each other. The relationship between private property and private sex as well as private parts needs to be explored further. According to one philosopher, "The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying 'This is mine' and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society." Now, if these people suddenly run into a wild group of cocksucking butt-fuckers who are not simple enough to notice heterosexual claims to ownership and dominion, the nuclear families have reason to be frightened. And those who have grievances with "civil society" have reason to celebrate. Because not only are these sexual acts political but they also dissolve the illusory distinction between personal and political. By exploding the private-private property, private parts-faggots take a revolutionary act, which once started cannot be stopped. "This is not a problem of consenting adults doing their thing in private," Chelmsford Policeman Fitts declared, "They're there all day and night in the summertime." I might add, in the wintertime too. And according to the state police, "We are arresting people from all over the state there and from California and Florida." And still, they come.

Gay liberation has been necessary for some of us who have seen our meeting grounds ploughed under and destroyed. Ruthless war has been fought against what they call "public" sex. Parks have been defoliated; back alleys have been illuminated brighter than Broadway stages. "Public Rest Rooms" have been virtually eliminated. On the Boston subway system, there is not now a single urinal remaining; most shopping malls do not have a single place where you can take your cock out. Some stores have even eliminated dressing rooms. Harvard Square has slowly closed all but one rest room open to the public. The *Boston Globe* describes rest stops "sealed, either by metal guard rails, removal of the hard-top or by blocking the entrance with sand bags." At another stop: "A chain link fence was put up between

by Charley Shively



Photo by Jim McNiel



Mr. Pig, chainsaw, and family: artist's impression.

the paved rest area and a wooded area behind it, and some trees and brush were cut to afford police easier surveillance." In general all this has been part of a general encroachment of "private" property upon the public domain. Thus city streets, plazas, parks, assembly and gathering places have completely disappeared in parts of the U.S., while the new shopping malls contain many signs claiming they are *not* public property. In some areas sex in subways and bus stations has been eliminated by doing away with any kind of transportation except the automobile.

Faggots may be one of the few groups who are really fighting this expansion of "private" over community property. "This problem has been around for years," according to the "landscape supervisor" of the Mass. Dept. of Public Works. "You close down one place and it goes somewhere else. The word just spreads." Certainly, the faggot ability to spread and flourish in the crevices of the collapsing society around us provides a wonderful demonstration of people's self help. In this respect, notice how much we can and do do for ourselves. And contrast how little any politician has or ever can do to encourage cruising. Boston's first openly homosexual legislator, Elaine Noble, promised to put lights on the Fenway in order to cut down on the cruising; she also participated in the use of defoliants on the reeds there. Fortunately the reeds withstood the herbicides; unfortunately, many of the poor gardeners had their crops killed or soaked with carcinogens.

We can do amazing things-particularly with toilet stalls. Holes are drilled through thick marble walls; and as fast as the holes are filled, they reappear. One rest area I examined in Indiana showed truly remarkable layers of the war between authority and free love. The stall wall had begun with a simple

As An Act Of Revolution



Photo by Jim McNiel

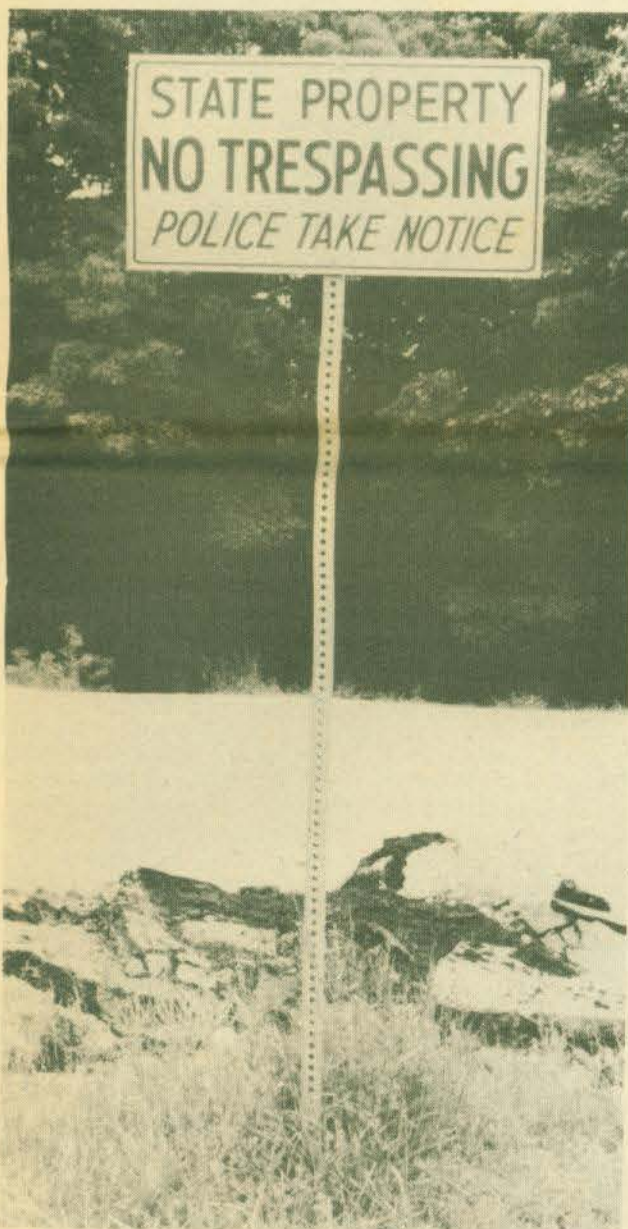


Photo by Jim McNiel

wood partition; then as the holes kept getting drilled and filled, the keepers installed a thick steel plate, but it too had been drilled through. Had some faggot brought in a blow torch? or had chemicals been used? had some treasonous state employee helped us out? or a sympathetic construction worker? In the train station at Madison, Wisconsin, I found some wonderful glory holes in 1959. There were three stalls; the person in the middle could choose between who and what to do. Then the stationmaster removed the doors to the stalls; presumably this was done to discourage use of the glory holes. Instead, people at the urinals now could cruise those on the crapper. And when they both had their signal, everyone could mate more readily. Several people could easily join in or masturbate to the excitement as they wished. The final act was to close the whole railroad station. And nothing like this has ever happened at any airport I've been to.

The way faggots utilize the unexpected or the discarded goes further than the current fad for anti-ques (which we invented and have sustained). On the Hudson River end of Christopher Street as long as I

can remember there has been some activity. My first introduction was to the Trucks; around 1963, these were in use for transport during the daytime, but when they were parked at night, we would all come out to play. In one large trailer, I remember there being at least a hundred faggots all fucking and sucking without any light whatsoever. We did it under, inside, on top of and beside the trucks; in the rain, snow and sweltering summer. In fact the area was so filled with faggots that bigger bars opened; the garages and empty areas were filled with high-rent and high-rise houses. And the trucks moved away as garages were converted to housing. But not the faggots, who poured out into the abandoned Lehigh and Pennsylvania R.R. dock, which still awaits demolition for the great Westway Swindle. Here among burnt out rooms, collapsing girders, fallen in roof, panoramic views of New Jersey, and plenty of room, faggots went at it day and night. At the end of the dock, someone painted two gigantic colossi, Paul Bunyans groping themselves and eyeing each other on either side of the door facing out on the Hudson. The colossi have lately been covered with pedantic graffiti. And the West Side Highway itself became a cruise spot. As the elevated highway was being torn down as part of urban renewal (a code word for getting rid of the public sector), faggots climbed up onto the old highway and used it as one long orgy room. The docks were burnt out and boarded up; the highway was blasted down. But the people have not gone away; we are as persistent as the rats. And as resistant to poison.

Nor is our cavorting confined to the big cities like NY, Los Angeles, San Francisco or Chicago. I grew up in a small town in Ohio, where the county court house had four sides. One was for winoes; one for faggots; one was a bus stop; and the fourth was for people who talked politics. The faggot side was just outside the men's room. In my teens, I remember cruising a hunky number who suddenly pulled a knife on me and demanded all my money. Pleased with the thirty-five cents, he then pulled out a rosy throbbing cock, but I refused to suck it because I hadn't learned to appreciate the ripeness of smegma. Unfortunately, he didn't make me do it; there are limits to how far straight trade will go to get their rocks off in Hamilton, Ohio. I had to walk two miles home since he didn't leave any bus fare.

AYOR-At Your Own Risk-warn the guidebooks, which seem perpetually out of date; we move faster than the printing press. But the money-robbery aspect of the AYOR has virtues not always recognized. This violation of property-rights involves thieves and faggots together in an assault on common decency. Respectability is not the way to protect our money or our lives. First of all, I could spare my thirty-five cents; money after all is not sacred; nor is honor worth very much (except perhaps to straight people). And we are continually urged: report these robberies to the police. But they only want to know where we are so they can shut us down. The funniest group are those who rob the faggots and pretend they are police asking for a bribe to hush everything up. At the Docks in New York there were two pick-pockets I came to especially like. I'd go into a completely dark room; one would feel me up until he found my fake money wallet while I blew the other one. They said they were Viet Nam veterans and in the five or six times I made it with them, they never once seemed to remember me from before. Another team in Boston seemed to get upset, when I went for the wrong one of the pair. I passed by the overly handsome white man for his heftier black lover. Alas, the poor white boy was none too good in going through pockets. Another money game to play is to carry a fake wallet.

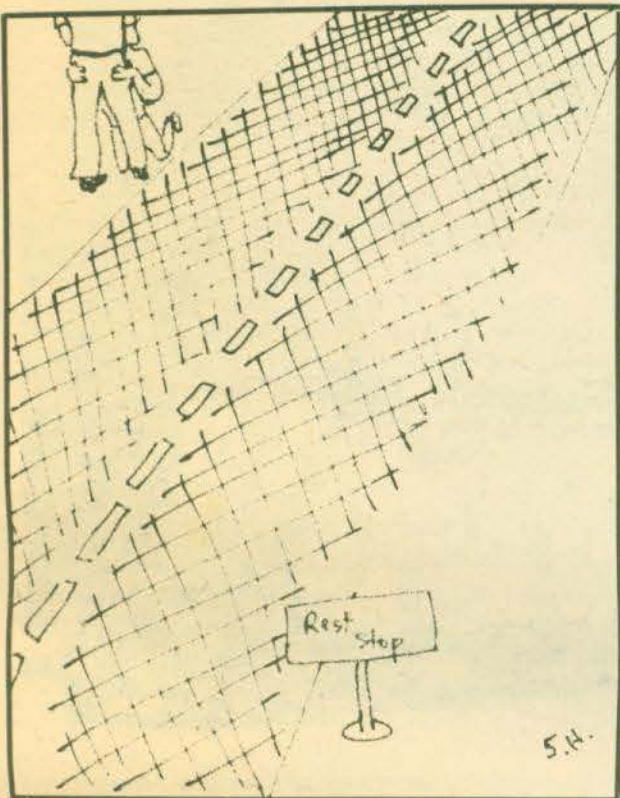
I once got fucked on the Longfellow Bridge (going from Boston to Cambridge); we were behind a column and this kid was humping up and down-none too effective I thought, but his purpose had been just to get my pants and face down, so he could go through my pockets and substitute his empty wallet, but he certainly needed some coaching on how to fuck; he never did get his cock into my asshole. Sexual norms and property norms come unravelled together.

The privacy of sex goes with the privacy of shit and piss. And the two go together with capital formation; capital itself becomes symbolized, in fact becomes shit in the unconscious. One rather prim (and appropriately theological) author recently titled his book about queers, *The Way Out of the Men's Room*. I think he's going the wrong way. Faggots in keeping our sex so close to the places where people shit and piss-and making it all public-are going down, getting down to their freedom. Admittedly, we should not be confined or contained in the men's room; but we must expand, not abandon, that space.

That shitting should be private is a peculiar habit of Western civilization, particularly the upwardly mobile part. One of the first Europeans to reach the Seneca was a missionary dressed in black; the native Americans were quite suspicious when he tried to slip away. His suspicious behavior only aroused them the more; they were astonished that what he was trying to hide was his shitting. And a group of French psychoanalysts on an expedition to Mali in 1960 were startled to find that the Dogons there had no toilet training or weaning; children were allowed to do these things for themselves when they felt like it. The doctors noted that "A covetous attachment to objects of value and resentment or affective retentiveness are considered psycho-pathological symptoms by the Dogons." "Affective retentiveness" is more commonly called "love."

Among faggots public sex does more than display our pleasure. In such circumstances, one's mouth, cock, asshole, armpit, hand or other attachment becomes in many ways disassociated from the ego and given over to the whole group of participants. Sometimes those participants are many as in an orgy or sometimes they are serially many-as one moves from person to person. That is not to deny that everyone has some reservations. One very handsome man will suck just about anyone but goes into shock if you even try to touch his cock. Another is very, very choosy with whom he'll make it-spends days looking before he goes along home without any satisfaction. Another won't let you touch his asshole; while another can take a Mack truck into his rectum but would never go down on anyone. These reservations resemble the white man's reservations set aside for that which they feared-English the Indians; Boers, Africans; Californians, Japanese. But the thing to consider is not the reservations, but the way so many people have been able to break out of their containerized society.

Boys supposedly worry a lot about castration; in order to intensify this concern, straight white middle class boys have been taught never to touch it (at least in public). Faggots go quite the contrary to such concern for privacy and attempt to publicize the cock. For instance, a sure way of distinguishing a faggot from a straight man is to check out how he wears his cock inside his pants. This display is itself a form of public sex. Straight boys-at least the white ones-can be so weird as to wear very tight pants and then put one ball on each side of the zipper and wrap the cock (even a good twelve inches) either up or under. For extra emphasis, faggots will wear cock rings to keep themselves semi-hard, wear special



corsets to make the cock stick out, and pad their crotches. Mitzel once shocked the somewhat staid Student Homophile League of Boston by doing a New Year's strip-tease from his sailor's suit down to his navy blue bikini. The last thing he gave up were several socks out of the crotch.

The most public display for a public purpose. Faggots seem to be born knowing how to cruise by opening pants, fondling one's cock and then eyeing (the archaic form is "eyening") some potential sexual partner or partners. In the Boston Public Library, one allegedly straight cop was trained for just this kind of "undercover" so-called "work". In a matter of hours he was able (with his throbbing, hot ten inch cock) to lure over a hundred faggots off to jail. They were just astonished that a cop could mimic our unique repertoire of public cruising. While this dance has its excitements and interests, this foreplay can have even more exciting sequels. The Boston Public Library before being "remodeled" once had a smaller, less antiseptic men's room in which there were sometimes so many people making it-in the stalls, at the urinals, under the sink, on the floor-that you couldn't even get in. The decline of cruising in the Boston Public Library is directly (and inversely) related to the Urban Renewal of the Library and adjacent neighborhood. First the old john was destroyed and replaced by a larger more antiseptic one (where actual cocksucking and butt-fucking were much more difficult), and finally after a concerted drive by the library personnel and Boston detectives, even cruising has been reduced.

Of late, the action has generally been moving from the old parts of cities-train/subway johns, library stalls, department store/court house/city hall men's rooms-into the thruway rest areas. This move in itself has brought some big changes. Only those with cars can get there so that a whole range of "downtown types" have been eliminated. The rest stops in turn have been continuously renewed in order to contain and eliminate any free sexuality. For instance, one of the hottest of stops was once in the Poconos Mountains near Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. The stop had no lights, the toilets were only holes in the ground, but there were plenty of trees and bushes. And the truck drivers were lined up in double rows just waiting to make out. Once I stopped there with John Wieners and we made our way from truck to truck. I got in one that was as absolutely immaculate as any high-toned queen's apartment: he made me take my shoes off before getting in the cab; the driver wore triple bleached underwear, but once we got all our clothes off, the sweat and other juices began to pour. The more "modern" tea rooms such as those on the Connecticut Turnpike are grossly over-lighted, carefully watched, and some even have every other hour cleaning crews entering to remove the graffiti, piss and other excrements. Nonetheless, I once surprised Freddie Greenfield by putting my head in the urinal and blowing someone cruising a Connecticut rest stop. Although Freddie now says he was more startled that I tarried to have coffee and exchange phone numbers with the trick in the cafeteria.

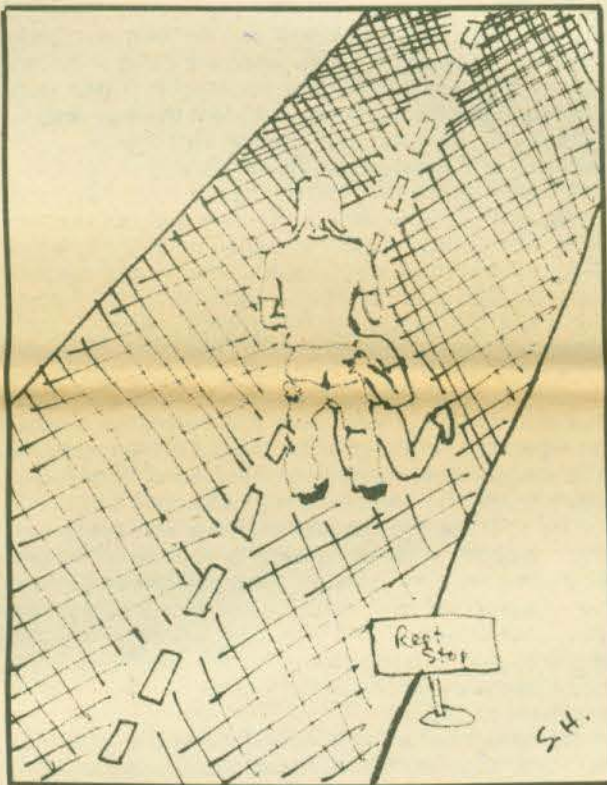
To open up one's self to someone else (or others) so casually takes some trust (or at least enterprise). Particularly for the cock. Faggots give it away in so many ways and places. Such epiphanies violate ancient tabus: Hamm and his descendants according to myth were made slaves because Hamm checked out his father's crotch when Noah was passed out drunk. And, of course, the story goes that Adam and Eve wore no clothing. The privacy of clothing comes unravelled in toilets, baths or bushes. Perhaps no group are so open and giving of their bodies as faggots-particularly those on the run in tearooms.

Taking the clothes off can be an act of giving, a violation of propriety as well as of property-a common sharing of one's body with others. Perhaps the most remarkable offering is made through the glory hole. While they come in different sizes and shapes-some you can crawl through-most are less than four inches in diameter. Imagine the trust someone must

have to put their hard cock through that hole for an unidentified mouth to suck.

The hiding of cocks is only one part of a more general social discrimination or control of what can and cannot be seen. The obvious censorship against all things homosexual hardly needs comment, but less obvious is the positive censorship which requires everyone-particularly children-to notice certain things. Very, very visible signs of attachments between married men and women appear: special rings; they sit together on trains and at theaters; they walk down the street with the man holding the woman; and in some circles, they are even expected to kiss or fondle each other. Vast displays and public notices (called "weddings") surround their undertaking of sexual intercourse. The act is officially recorded and licensed at city hall, often marked by feasts, processions, blessings, promises, exchanges of gifts, photographs, flowers, newspaper notices and other elaborate ceremonies. Children are encouraged to watch weddings and not too long ago little pageants of Tom Thumb weddings were enacted by pre-pubescent couples. Always they clamor, suppose the children stumbled into a homosexual act in the library, parks or bushes. Well, why not? In one case, two men were making out in a deserted tower when they were disturbed by a mother with a young boy; the one man was sucking the other's cock. The mother screamed, blocked the exit and started beating the men when they tried to leave. Not only were the lovers disturbed unnecessarily but to get away from the noise and harassment they had to push the mother out of the entranceway. The police are still looking for the men and are charging them with forcibly raping the boy.

The curious line between privacy and exposure has been drawn most stringently around masturbation. Every effort has been made both to denigrate and at the same time subtly encourage the autoerotic. Masturbation, of course, is the most truly homosexual of activities: having sex with nothing more similar than one's own body and fantasies. In tearooms,



bushes and baths masturbation becomes common property, becomes public. In some ways, the essence of heterosexuality-both male and female-is the extended tease, further extended by the male into threat. Among heterosexual men their cock is grandly estimated and carefully hoarded. Adult heterosexual men seldom (if ever) masturbate together; most of them have probably never seen any erect cock other than their own. But under the show-hard sign millions of faggots line up. For instance, in one porno palace men's room, I once joined a group who were just jerking off-the group expanded and contracted among participants from three to six as we went along-and watching one another. People came more or less together on the floor-a public and joyous occasion.

Pornography-let's just call it descriptions, films and pictures of sexual acts and organs-represents a very public sexuality. A description or image circulates between large numbers of individuals who develop a common excitement-basically a culture that binds them together. The essence of pornography is that it is public. The number of potential observers is multiplied to an n power through photography, film and television. And through this multiplication something very individual, personal and secret becomes, if not commonplace, at least commonly available. Vulgarity-that is lack of good breeding, taste, manners, actions, language, dress, display, etc.-usually becomes the standard which would separate the pornographic from the erotic. But such snobbery represents more the pretensions of a ruling class than an acceptable guideline.

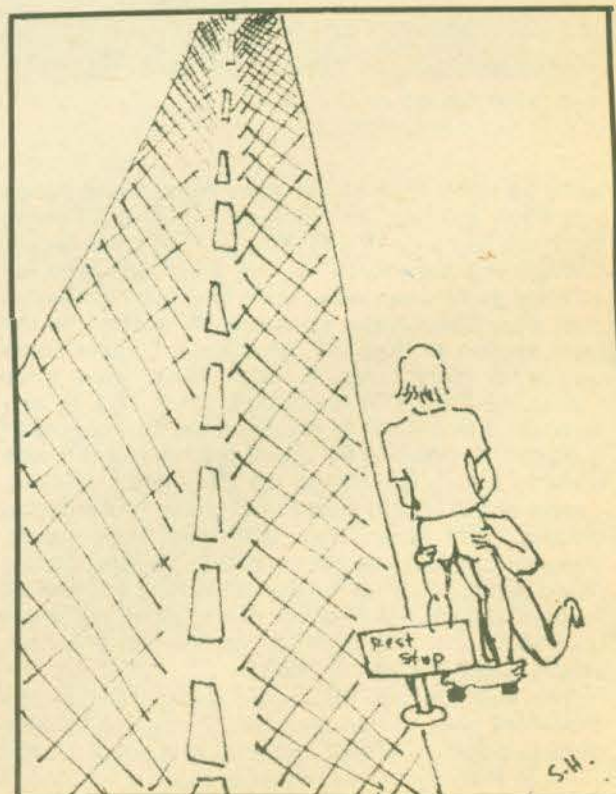
More significant than the difference between elite and vulgar pornography is that between male homosexual and heterosexual imagery. And the relative absence of pornography among women speaks more to their powerlessness than to their modesty. A straight man looking at straight male pornography sees himself generally as the aggressor

and women as the object of his attack; homosexual pornography features faggots as both object and subject. Moreover, in the traditional sexual economy, women have held out sex as their major power or pawn in negotiations with men. Pornography in devaluating their commodity represents a real economic threat to women who have been forbidden to develop other marketable values (such as offices, property, skills, etc.) Homosexuality with its loose and cheap availability-there's no charge to go into a park toilet or behind a bush-represents a perceived threat to the class structure of the heterosexual male-female sexual exchange system.

The ultimate middle class ideal is called coupledness-and some heterosexuals will condescendingly accept homosexuality as long as they come in coupled pairs, who will represent no threat to their own coupled dominion. Lawrence Mass, M.D., expresses the upwardly mobile hopes of many homosexuals when he exhorts: "Have as much sex as you like, but have it more for the quality of partnership than for the quantity of partners." Rather like an advertisement from Bloomingdale's? Possessions and possessiveness are the cornerstones of coupledness. They own each other as commodities and they in turn possess commodities; the quality of their lives resides in their property. Certainly there are arguments for long-term relationships, mimicking heterosexuals is not one of them. Some radical lesbians have made greater efforts to break some of the public indecencies of lovers displaying each other as charm bracelets. At some lesbian parties you can identify two who are lovers by their paying least public attention to each other.

A recent sustained attack has been undertaken by the police and right wing in Toronto-where *The Body Politic*, Glad Day Books, and bath houses have been prosecuted on pornography and public sex charges. One writer there lays out a strategy, which I think contains grave pitfalls: "Gay liberation began with the politics of coming out. Now that a lot of gay men and women are out, what is needed is privacy-a curtailment of government in and control of sexual life. Civil rights and privacy protection, consequently, are the next important steps in the politics of gay liberation." Why settle for so little? Faggots were doing much better before gay legislation! How inconsistent to call for "a curtailment of government interference" at the same time you ask for the government to grant "civil rights and privacy protection." We need to ignore both privacy and government.

The advances of so-called "gay" legislation need to be studied more critically. In Madison, Wisconsin, a bill was passed by the state legislature "granting" civil rights to homosexuals. So far as I know not ten people have benefited from this legislation; homosexual acts are not only still illegal in Wisconsin but the new bill particularly singled out boy lovers as a group who could be given no civil rights in Wisconsin. (The pending Massachusetts legislation specifically names NAMBLA members as a group who should be denied housing, employment and other rights.) The big legislation in Wisconsin has been accompanied by a diminishing of the freedom of homosexuals in some very specific ways. For instance, before 1969 and the gay liberation front in Madison, there were wonderful bushes around the state capitol building. They may not have been quite as active as New York City's Rambles, but they were filled with cocksucking and butt-fucking. To punish faggots for revolting, the state cut all the bushes down and replaced them with spot lights and a vastly increased patrol force. Likewise the basement toilet at the nearby University of Wisconsin Library was totally removed because faggots had carried on so wildly there. I'm not saying that we should abandon gay legislation, what I am saying is that we should not abandon our sexuality. To liberate ourselves effectively and to transform society we must expand our sexuality, create more baths, more tea rooms, more comfort stations. Doing it in the road, publically.



Doing it in the road: artist's impression.

As Love is having nothing left over

a spare mountain
crammed
into a peach
the peach
bulging
between
his legs
off a cliff
cannot
other than
a still life
populate
his loneliness

we rise into the air
a bonfire
the smokefilled self
light
with seeds
cadence and
command

wanting to float
to touch
to be as much
off the surface
as inside
free from it
& awe
which is gravity
holding nothing
back

a kiss is
according
to the moment
of it
which happened
to us
as much as we
walked
toward it on
water

why we
consider
ourselves
different
from all lovers
as all lovers
do

cannot easily
show that
in public
is modesty
the other
side of
effort be

collaboration
more than
yourself
rewards with

a sense of its
deep protection
from getting to
be just depiction
or performance

the edges turn up
on so much exorcism

careful things
fold
left
in the sun

we have
in our laps
whole surfaces
on which
to anyone else
we're standing
around

they
shall
not
see us
using
every
stitch
of sky
we are
taking
off

talking
with
our
eyes
like
leopards
full of
leopards

Edward Kaplan

On the Canvas

Tom asks Freddie are you really fifty
Freddie goes to back room scene
cream in their jeans
for freddie green
fields drinks sperm
volcanic assholes
Yes/I'm fifty years old,
and weigh the same
as when I was a middle weight
a queer pagan deity
savours daily semen
hot jissom juice
Ponce D'lon
fountain
youth
ful looking still
fruit in the morning after swimming
ripe fruit in the late morning sun
Yes/he's really a half-century soothsayer
semen/sea water and solar energy

David Emerson Smith

POEM

PINEAPPLE, ANTELOPE, CANTALOUPE
MAUVIS, MARVELOUS, MINESTRONE SOUP
BLOSSOM, OPOSSUM, MARIJUANA HIGH
VILEST, VIOLET, FIRST ROUND BYE
SEESAW, TIDDLYWINKS, ROLLERCOASTER DIVE
CHICORY, CHICANERY, CHICKEN POT PIE
MURKY, MACHIAVELLIAN, MINESHAFT ABUSE
HELIOTROPE, HERPES, HELICOPTOR TRUCE
POCATELLA, POCAHONTAS, POKE-A SIS/BOOM/BAH
PROVO HIGH SCHOOL, RAH RAH RAH

David Mitchell

stations of the cross

in a diner
late-night haunt of undergraduates
a stranger sits at the counter
with his friends
a brown penny-loafer
playing off his naked
heel

simple enough
in fact
but I am only just
not sick

James Queen

Unfinished Sculpture

(David-Apollo, by Michelangelo)

Discovered, ah, discovered
Naked, pausing
In the remote forest,
Time-transposed.

Still stuck to the ground,
The trunk
And rock, on the verge
Of childhood and adolescence.

It is the moment
Of the engrossing secret
Of virginity,
The body's pure dawn.

Rest and movement
Coincide, now in his arms,
His penis, an unopened flower,
Or his thighs, a lyre's arc.

At the suspended threshold
Of his very existence,
He seems wrapped up in himself
And doesn't know who he is.

Inside, in thought,
He listens to his destiny,
Head lowered,
Eyes half-shut.

Shhh. Don't let him wake.
Once he understands time,
His eternities
Will be lost today.

But look, admire
At length the beauty
That doesn't know passion;
Admire, voice and tears.

It was love—the only human power—
Love who brought him,
From unbeing into the dream
Where he comes out from hiding.

number eight

cock size
cock sighs
cock resplendent
cock surprise

cock shaft
cock sure
cock head
cock wallop

cock erectus
cock regent
cock expectant
cock hot
cock kiss
cock lick
cock suck
cock swallow

Lee Thorn

Luis Cernuda
Rick Lipinski

FAG RAG FORTY

AIDS Exorcisms by Jim McNiel and Charley Shively

**NAMBLA and Gay Liberation:
An Anarchist Perspective** by Jim Madru

Three Stories by Kevin Esser

Oscar Wilde Without Whitewash
by Thomas Bell
edited by Jim McNiel

Prisoner Space

Pilgrim Plenitude Poems by Charley Shively
Photos by Chris Walker

Two Stories by Freddie Greenfield

Incident at Nashua, NH by S.H.

Fag Rag Guilt Relief Tour

Available for Expense Paid Tours
by Freddie Greenfield

Doing It In The Road by Charley Shively

Poetry on pages 5, 11, 13-17, 22-23 & 27.

\$2.50