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The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

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5th Freedom

FREE

Publication of the Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

AUGUST 1977

Bryant's Contract Renewed

Anti-gay crusader Anita Bryant will be retained as the advertising symbol for Florida orange juice, the Florida Citrus Commission announced last week. The Commission released two market studies which showed that 89% of the people interviewed "were not negatively affected in either their feelings toward her (Bryant)... or in their intent to buy orange juice."

NBC news has reported that the Commission's decision was also based on what the network said were "assurances" by Bryant to the Commission that she was not on a nationwide crusade against homosexuals. Bryant has said in the past that she would take her campaign to various cities and an office of Save Our Children, Inc. has been opened in Washington, D.C..

Arthur Darling, director of publicity for the Commission, said that two-thirds of the 3000 people questioned "were aware of the controversy over gay rights and her involvement in that controversy." Quoting from the report, Darling added, "This awareness level was neither converted into a strong feeling for or against Anita Bryant as an effective spokesperson for orange juice, nor does it appear



to have significant bearing on projected purchasing patterns.

Darling said that the Commission accepted the recommendation of the research committee to retain the services of Bryant, pointing out that the membership noted an increase in orange sales over the past year. Sales of concentrated juice were up 1% while the sale of juice by the carton was up 19%.

Darling added that the naming of Bryant as a defendant in a \$5 million law suit in San Francisco after the murder of a gay man would have no effect on her current contract status. *(Gay Community News)*

Mattachine Attends NYSCGO Conference

Five members of the Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier attended the New York State Coalition of Gay Organizations Constitutional Convention in Albany on July 23 & 24. Representatives from all of the other major population centers in New York were present, but MSNF was the only group from the Buffalo area.

The meeting was called to develop a proposed set of By-laws that would strengthen NYSCGO. The proposed By-laws will be circulated to gay groups across the state and final approval of the new structure and governance will take place at the next NYSCGO conference in Albany on October 7.

The convention was chaired by John Cross, NYSCGO spokesperson. Saturday afternoon was spent discussing the philosophy, methodology and need for a strong state organization. Sunday was spent in defining

specific goals and determining exactly which points we could agree upon. Main goals were 1: To maintain a strong political presence, both legislative and administrative, in the state government. 2: To cooperate with the National Gay Task Force and the Gay Rights National Lobby to maintain pressure for national gay rights. 3: To work through local and community organizations to give help at the local level. NYSCGO will also ask for information and help concerning local lobbying efforts for state representatives.

Most of those attending the conference agreed that NYSCGO had to become a more independent, autonomous organization, and that it must have "grass roots" support for its work. However, it was also agreed that there should be more organizational structure with well defined lines of responsibility.

cont. on page 7

Gallup Poll Shows Gay Rights Support

In an extensive survey of the American attitudes toward homosexuals, a new Gallup Poll showed the great majority of people are convinced that homosexuality is more widespread today than it was a quarter-century ago.

In an extensive survey of the American attitudes toward homosexuals, a new Gallup Poll showed that 66% of the people are convinced that homosexuality is more widespread today than it was 25 years ago.

At the same time, 56% of those 1513 people questioned believed homosexuality to be a product of upbringing and social environment; 12% said that it is an innate predisposition.

Among those whose formal education ended in grade school, 76% noted a higher incidence of homosexuality while among high school graduates that figure was 69% and among college graduates, 54%.

The Gallup survey was conducted after the defeat of the gay rights ordinance in Florida. Despite the 2-1 defeat, the poll found that the majority of the people believed that gay men and women should

have equal job opportunities. By a 56% to 33% margin, those questioned approved of "equal rights in terms of job opportunities, in general."

In a recent Harris poll, most people did not approve of gays working with children. 65% opposed to gays being employed as teachers and 54% to those polled were opposed to gays being members of the clergy.

Those who favored equal job rights for homosexuals appeared to do so for three main reasons as determined by supplementary interviews by Gallup: homosexuals should stand equal before the law; one's private sex life is his or her personal business; and sexual preference has nothing to do with job competency.

43% of those questioned by Gallup stated that "homosexual relations between consenting adults should be legal," while an equal number of respondents opposed such legalization.

According to the Gallup organization, there was no significant difference in answers from men and women in any of the questions.

Gallup Poll Results

	YES	NO
Should homosexual relations between consenting adults be legal?	43%	43%
Do you believe that homosexuality is more widespread than it was a quarter-century ago?	68%	24%
In general, do you think homosexuals should have equal rights in terms of job opportunities?	56%	33%
Should homosexuals be allowed to work ...	YES	NO
as teachers	27%	63%
in clergy	35%	54%
as salespersons	68%	22%
in armed forces	51%	
as physicians	44%	

5th Freedom

AUGUST '77

VOL. 7, # 7

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The presence of the name or picture or other representation of a business, organization or person(s) in articles or advertising in this newspaper is not an indication of the sexual orientation of such person, organization or business.

We welcome any contribution of news items, written articles, letters, art work or photography by members of the gay community. We cannot guarantee the return of any materials submitted for publication, whether used by 5th FREEDOM or not, unless specifically requested and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. All materials submitted are subject to editorialization.

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All 5th FREEDOM staff are volunteers. Anyone interested in working on the staff should call the Center at (716) 881-5335, write to the address above or drop in at the Center.

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EDITORIAL

Ugly as straight oppression of gays is, gay oppression of other gays is uglier. While the experience of oppression may give a heightened sensitivity to the plight of other oppressed persons, it may also desensitize when it leads to exclusive preoccupation with one's own oppression. This insensitivity can foster not merely consent to others' oppression, but even participation in it.

Is this happening in Buffalo? The letter printed below claims that it is. The author feels that if discrimination against women and blacks is a reality at Buffalo's gay bars, then the gay white males of this city, in patronizing these bars, are not only consenting to this oppression of other gays, but actually participating in it.

What is your feeling?

FROM OUR MAILBAG

Some friends of mine who frequent Buffalo's gay bars told me recently that Mean Alice's has a blatantly discriminatory policy of carding women and blacks more strictly than it does white males. Similarly, my friends said that the Hibachi Room has a practice of similar intent: it selectively applies its cover charge to blacks. Are these allegations true? If they are, why are they being condoned by Buffalo's gay community? Is gay liberation limited to white males?

I believe that gay political groups in Buffalo, such as the Mattachine Society, the Sisters of Sappho, and the 5th Freedom should investigate this matter, and if this discrimination is a reality, they

should apply pressure to the bar owners for an end to these policies. Pressure could take the form of encouraging their memberships to boycott the bars involved or even to picket them; the 5th Freedom could threaten to withdraw advertising privileges.

As a gay white male, I feel our liberation is a travesty and a farce if, as an oppressed people, we condone the continued oppression of other oppressed groups (namely, women and blacks). Let's not be part of the silent majority which supports injustices by conveniently ignoring it.

Frank Brackow

Editors Note: Two representatives of the Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier recently confronted the owners of both Mean Alices and the Hibachi Room. David Chipman, owner of the Hibachi said that his policy was one of non-discrimination and that employees checking proof (4 pieces) at the door were instructed to proof anyone, not known to them as being over 18 years of age. Asked about the possible selective overcharging of blacks, Chipman said that he is considering dropping door charges altogether. The owners of Mean Alice's told MSNF that their first policy is of courtesy

to all of their customers and second, that they are an equal opportunity business. As policy they require that people checking proof, require 4 pieces from everyone that they do not know to be of legal age.

The owners welcomed MSNF representatives to come anytime, unannounced, to observe the operation at their doors. If anyone feels that he or she has been unfairly treated at the door, please ask for the owner. The Mattachine Society and the 5th Freedom would like to hear of any future incidents at any bar in Buffalo.

COMMENT

Most gay people are running around like mad these days defaming, defiling and bent on destroying Miss Anita Bryant, because she has the guts to pursue (if a trifle too fiercely) her convictions. In truth I believe she must be quite neurotic and surely misguided, but that's besides the point. Oh, I'm angry all right. But my anger is directed at gays, because I think you are the ones to blame for what happened in Florida, not Anita. You are the reason gay liberation has regressed to the sorry place it's at.

Forget the weeping and wailing about Anita Bryant. Cry for your own shame. All of you who have been sitting on your butts thinking you were liberated because you could kiss each other in gay bars (but not ALL gay bars) and hold hands in the park (but not TOO MANY parks). You who cared little if a Lesbian mother lost custody of her children. You who were unconcerned if a married gay male who was intimidated by gay bars and baths, or repulsed by them, got entrapped by a vice cop in a public john and thus lost his job or even his life. You never even heard of the National Gay Task Force until Miss Bryant put it on the front page of every newspaper on the country. Gay news to you was the opening of a new bar or the latest issue of "AH Men".

You are the guilty ones and your crime is apathy. It's what really caused the

closing of Buffalo's gay center. And it's almost surely the reason for the similar fates of numerous gay lib groups in the country. They folded for lack of interest and sufficient support. They died from neglect.

The Mattachine Society didn't die when the Center closed, but it was touch and go until Anita did her thing. They were lucky to have 25 in attendance at a Membership Meeting, while the newest bar in town had a crowd of hundreds every Saturday night. Nobody was really interested in the N.Y.S.C.G.O. lobbying in Albany, but everybody wanted to go dancing. Now they're all upset. They're wringing their hands and wondering how it could possibly have happened. Will it be back to Stonewall and start all over again? I think not. But it won't be "Who cares? Let's dance." either; otherwise the defeat in Dade County will metastasize like a cancer until oppression has usurped every right that's been fought for and won in the battle for gay liberation.

I believe we'll fight. I think the alarm that sounded in Miami was a call to arms and I'm indebted to Anita Bryant for pushing the button that made it go off. I'm not going to write her a vindictive letter. I'm sending her a thank you note instead.

DAN WINTER

SHORT SHOTS

Don't be shocked

Members of the Electrical Workers Union local in Washington, D.C. now have bumper stickers on their cars. They read, "Let Us Remove Your Shorts."

The Wall Street Journal

Runner/Dancer/?

Speaking at Dignity/Detroit's anniversary dinner-dance, Patricia Nell Warren confirmed suspicion that while writing the novel *The Front Runner*, "I was coming out." That book about a gay track star and his coach was followed by *The Fancy Dancer*, which also has a gay theme.

Ms. Warren is currently working on a third novel, this one telling a lesbian story. *The Exchange*

Go North

Over 1000 adults were the sample of Canadian citizens throughout that country who were asked, "In the proposed Canadian Human Rights Act there has been no provision made for protection of homosexuals from discrimination in employment and in access to public services. In your opinion, should such a provision be included or not?"

Fifty-two percent of those surveyed agreed upon inclusion. Considerably more of those under 30 years of age felt that gays should be protected under the act (61%) than did those over 50 (44%).

Gay Community News

Is Apple Pie next?

"The great clown controversy" occurred in late April when Bob Brandon told a gay rally in Daytona Beach that at one time he was Ronald McDonald, the nationally prominent clown who promotes McDonald's hamburgers.

McDonald's Corporation promptly went to court and a Florida Circuit judge ordered Brandon never to make himself up as anything resembling the well-known clown. The judge also enjoined Brandon from stating that "Ronald McDonald is a gay or a homosexual."

The Advocate

Close-to-home

Earl Colvin, Syracuse gay activist, has announced his entry into that city's mayoral race in the Democratic Primary next month. He will oppose the incumbent. Colvin is editor of *Gay Light*, a small Syracuse weekly publication, and one of the founders of the Onondaga County Human Rights Coalition. He has stated that a major focus of his campaign will be to open the governmental process to the people of that upstate city.

Alternative

Canadians 'anti-oral'

Canadian Customs authorities have decided that books dealing with gay sexuality are a no-no for importation to that country. *Loving Man* and *Men Loving Men* have both been declared obscene. Immigration officer John Merner said: "Canadian public opinion is definitely anti-oral sex."

The Advocate

Joan's answer

Joan Baez introduced "The Altar Boy and the Thief", a song about gays, bars and assorted types she met in a California gay bar (the Pink Elephant). She said: "This is my answer to Anita Bryant" whom Joan suggests should be gotten to 'hang loose' a little in a gay bar.

Advocate

Damages awarded

Richard Aumiller, a gay teacher at the University of Delaware, has been granted \$27,000 in back pay and damages as a result of his dismissal from the college following his public acknowledgment of his homosexuality. His gayness and role as a faculty advisor for a campus gay group had been mentioned in local newspapers. Aumiller charged that the dismissal was a violation of his right to free speech.

Gay Community News

Dear Anita,

I am 13 years old, I have four gay relatives and live with two of them by my own choosing. I love them very much.

You say, "Save The Children". I agree; but from YOU. Anyone who breaks any law should be punished; but wait for them to commit a crime before you stand in judgement of them.

We fought the Revolutionary War to free ourselves from King George. We fought the Civil War to free ourselves from slavery. Now we are going to have to fight a Human War to free the Gays. I will fight gladly to ensure ALL humans of their equality.

I cannot speak for other people; but for myself I will join in the fight against you. Nobody has the right to take a job or a home away from another person simply because of the way they decide to love.

"Judge not lest ye be judged." Don't forget you asked for it.

Sandi

REPRINTED FROM: "Focus", a newspaper from Orange County, Calif.

GARAGE SALE!

THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER IS HOLDING THE 1st ANNUAL GARAGE SALE!! THE EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 27th FROM 10am TIL 6 pm, AT 2228 MAIN STREET.

IF YOU ATTENDED OUR SUCCESSFUL RUMMAGE SALE AT THE CENTER LAST YEAR, WAIT TIL YOU SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT FOR YOU THIS YEAR! LOTS OF GOODIES FOR STUDENTS FURNISHING THEIR APARTMENTS, FOR ANTIQUE-ADDICTS AND PACK RATS.

WE'RE HOLDING OUR 1st ANNUAL GARAGE SALE EARLY THIS YEAR AS WE ARE FINANCIALLY GEARING UP FOR OUR POLITICAL LOBBYING BLITZ. AS WE ALL KNOW, THIS IS GOING TO BE A BIG ELECTION YEAR ON THE LOCAL AS WELL AS NATIONAL LEVEL. IN THIS YEAR OF ANITA BRYANT IT IS MORE EMPHATIC THAN EVER THAT WE EDUCATE OUR LEGISLATORS. THIS TAKES MONEY...MONEY FOR POSTAGE, REPRINTING, PHONE CALLS AND MEDIA ADS. WE NEED ANY AND ALL KINDS OF DONATIONS. NO DONATION IS TOO SMALL.

SO, GET OUT THERE PEOPLE, CLEAN OUT YOUR DRAWERS, ATTICS, BASEMENTS OR WHEREVER! FOR INFORMATION ON DONATING, CALL THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER AT 885-5335 BETWEEN 6pm AND 10pm.

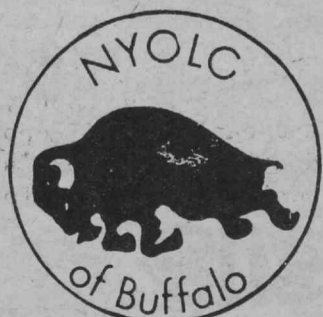
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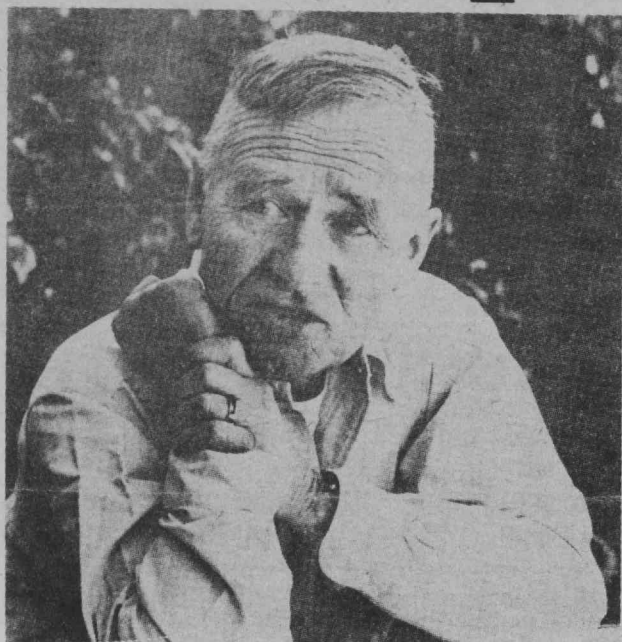
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Christopher Isherwood

AN INTERVIEW
BY W. I. SCOBIE



Christopher Isherwood, one of the most respected novelists of our generation, describes himself as having been a "naturally well-adjusted gay" since infancy. The author of many plays, film scripts, essays, stories, novels, biographies, and poems, his work often reflects his sexuality: the central figure in his autobiographical *Berlin Stories* (on which *Cabaret* was based) is gay; his novel, *A Single Man* (his best work, he feels) chronicles a day in the life of a gay university professor;

At the age of 71, Isherwood has some challenging and even radical ideas to present to the younger generations of gays and straights as well. Many of these he expressed, in his usual witty and engaging manner, at *Gaythink*, an open forum on issues of gay liberation presented as part of the Gay Pride Week activities at California State University at Long Beach.

What was it like to come out in the early part of this century?

"Well, for me it was really no sweat, you know. I live in a writer's world where everyone knew I was gay. I lived with --I always shrink from the word 'lover', because it sounds as if they loved you, but you didn't love them--but anyway, I lived with a lover, and everybody knew it.

"I told my mother quite early on.

I was determined to show her that you can have a relationship, of a kind that the hetero world doesn't really begin to appreciate, between two men.

"I mean a sort of whitmanesque homosexuality, the concept of two guys going off together, living a life that is not confined in the sense of a 'normal' recognized, heterosexual marriage.

Have you been exclusively homosexual in your sexual relationships?

"I tried it, of course, with a woman, and when you're young you can do it, you know, because the very thought of yourself having sex is so exciting. But there was no real heterosexual feeling in my case. I was one of the four percent, or however many they say we are who are exclusively homosexual."

What about your friends--are most of your nonsexual relationships with gays as well?

"Throughout my life, at least eighty percent of my friends have been gay, and I feel strangely ill at ease when I'm away from gay people for long periods, almost as if I was being deprived of oxygen."

Did coming out make your life significantly better?

"Yes, of course. I do wish more of our brothers and sisters, especially prominent people, could bring themselves to come out of their closets. Nearly always the world knows who they are already, however hard they try to fool it. Coming out would actually make their lives less isolated and troubled; it would give them faith and courage in themselves. And isn't that worth far more than the notoriety they already enjoy?"

Doesn't being one of the "exclusively gay" four percent narrow your viewpoint as a novelist? Doesn't that mean that you've been excluded from many experiences common to the majority?

"I wouldn't give a damn about that, to tell the truth. The more unusual the experience, the more interesting. Being gay has given me an oblique angle of vision on the world. Without it I never would have been a writer."

How do you feel about the word "gay"?

"To my old-fashioned ears it sounds coy. But 'homosexual' is so cumbersome. 'Gay' is fine as a slogan, a watchword, a term to describe our philosophy, our attitude toward life. But not, I think, as a title for the movement. I prefer the words used by our enemies. I used to call myself a bugger when I was young. Now I fell at home with 'queer' or 'fag', when I'm feeling hostile. It makes heterosexuals wince when you refer to yourself by those words if they've been using them behind your back, as they generally have."

Was pre-Nazi Berlin really as decadent as it was portrayed in Cabaret? And were gays much a part of that, as the film suggested?

"It really wasn't that way. People take this attitude that Germany went to pieces between the wars because of its 'decadence.' By which they always mean homosexuality--at least I've never been able to discover that they had anything else in mind. It's such rubbish, sheer Nazi propaganda. Germany went to pieces because of a war started by greedy old men who sent out all the best young people of a generation to die."

What do you feel represents the major source of gay oppression?

"One major form of our persecution is this attitude of, 'Oh, why bring all that up? Don't be such a bore; we're civilized people here; we all understand. Yes, they all understand, but by the strangest coincidence the injustice hasn't been taken away, the laws don't get changed, either here, in most states of the union, or in many other countries. And is you ask them why, 'Oh, it's a bore you have to write to someone, join a movement.' They don't care, they don't care a bit. I often feel that worse even than the most fiendish Nazi's were those who went along with the persecution of the Jews because it was the thing. So many Germans found it convenient to ignore the fact of the concentration camps."

Do you feel gays differ from other oppressed minorities in any significant ways?

"We are the only minority which isn't tied to any one race, so we can claim to be supremely natural, since we occur in all races. They may kill the Jews, wipe out the Blacks, but Homosexuals will go on reproducing themselves in every race and in every generation."

How do you feel about the way gay men and lesbians relate to each other?

"What appalled me when I was growing up, and still does, is the male arrogance towards lesbians. Oh, they say 'It's just their little games, it's charming, it's cute.' So many confirmed hetero men who are deeply alarmed by male homosexuality find lesbianism attractive. Because after all, they're so darling. We men have to admit it might be nice for them to have one of their own kind. And not being punished for it is also an insult to women. As long as there are laws against men, why are there none against women? Simply because they believe that what women do doesn't matter!"

What about casual sex and promiscuity? Do you believe in monogamy in a long term gay relationship?

"Oh, no that I'll say right off. I have the greatest respect for lust. I don't believe in simulating bourgeois marriage. In fact, I don't believe a long-term relationship exists, it hasn't been tested, until it's been exposed to what's a polite word--screwing around. "People who go in for one-night stands and casual encounters often feel guilty about it. We're told we should; I think that's a mistake. Brief encounters can be something marvelous, even more marvelous than other forms of sexual relationship. I mean, suppose St. Francis of Assisi took up that kind of thing. You wouldn't find him settling down cosily with someone. He'd obviously go with a different person every night. "I mean, he'd be overcome with feeling of brotherhood and love. And, of course, he'd enjoy it too. But most people treat promiscuity as if it was a bad habit you'd acquired, like dope. I think that's sad. In a mad way perhaps one-night stands are potentially more spiritual, more demanding, more extraordinary than anything else!" A pause. "But, of course it's all very well to talk!"

You sing the praises of casual sex, but your own relationship with Don Bachardy has lasted over twenty years, hasn't it?

"Sure. There's nothing greater in terms of our life on earth than an enduring relationship if it's truly loving. But we are brainwashed into accepting the standards of the hetero majority, and we need to keep reminding ourselves that we needn't, shouldn't conform to straight standards, which claim that long-lasting love isn't compatible with one-night stands. That love can enter into one-night stands too. Such love could be higher in its nature than domestic love, because it verges on that thing we all talk about so much, but rarely--love of humanity.

"As for long-term relationships, you can only regard them in the end as a blazing mystery. No one can explain why they happen. Most people look on and say, 'But how could they? I can understand about him, he's a doll. But him!' It's seldom you meet a pair that just charms the whole earth. All you can say is, it's marvelous each time it happens."



The material in this interview was excerpted by Tim Denesha from W. I. Scobie's interview with Christopher Isherwood, published in the December 17, 1975 issue of *The Advocate*.

GAY PRIDE....HERE

June 11 - 18 was a week filled with positive reinforcement for Buffalo gays. The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier kicked-off the week with the 8th Annual Gay Pride Week Dance, followed by eleven additional day-to-day events designed to enlighten as well as entertain. Activities included: a bike-hike around town, culminating at the Allentown Art Fair; The "Twilight Revue" a drag troupe from St. Catherine's gave an impressive show containing 33 numbers complete with costume change and flashy choreography; Eight conscience-raising workshops covered many areas, including religion, education, alcohol, health, couples, chicken queens, S & M and of course gay identity. The Gay Pride Week Picnic was rained-out, however, the following days roast beef dinner was a raving success and everything was deeeelicious! All in All, it was a week you shouldn't have missed.

Total attendance numbered almost 400,

....& THERE

Police estimates reported almost two-hundred thousand of us marching down 5th Avenue on that sunny day in June. This phenomenal turnout makes quite a statement to the American public: yes, we are gay and we are proud, and our numbers are very strong! The energy was peaking everywhere...you could feel it like electricity...an army of lovers making history in the Big Apple. It was the first time a gay organization marched the distance from Christopher street to Central Park. (it seems 5th Ave. merchants deny parade permits to groups who lack a 10 year standing) When 200,000 people start marching, no one is going to tell them where to march. This was the largest gathering of gays ever in New York. The procession ended in Central Parks' "sheeps meadow" where we eagerly listened to many emotion-filled lectures from Karla Jay, and other movement leaders. There was dancing and singing to the bluegrass of "Deadly Nightshade"; we rocked & rolled to Patti Smith; Lou Reed made a short appearance

with 200 of those participating in the workshops. Over \$50 in liberation pins, patches, books and paraphernalia was sold, and at least half of the proceeds from the drag show were sent to the Dade County Coalition in Florida to fight Anita Bryant's hate campaign.

Our theme, as in past years, centered around Gay Visibility. Although a gay march down main street failed to materialize, I personally witnessed a few brave souls wearing movement buttons. I shall not belabor the point dealing with the ineffectiveness of the one-week-a-year liberationists...but I shall remind you again that gay pride is a 24 hour-a-day, 365 day-a-year commitment, and that many of us have a long way to go before we are truly "liberated". For those of you who attended the Gay Pride Week '77 events, we say, right on brothers and sisters...for now your pride in yourselves is hopefully another notch higher.

mumbling a few words about 'getting out and taking a walk on the wild side'...or something like that. After the speeches there were the Christopher street festivities! You might call it a celebration party...drag shows, t-shirts emblazoned with kinky slogans, beer, buttons and bottoms filling the night air. And of course the pier was getting its share of the action. In the midst of all this, Bella Abzug surprised us all with a supportive speech we missed earlier in Central Park (Bella made a brief showing there, but could not speak due to the request of the Gay Walk committee. Local politicians were excluded from the agenda) Bella said she would encourage legislation for gays in New York; we hope she will keep her promise. The march was probably the most exciting event of the weekend...here is a sample of just a few of the placards carried down 5th Avenue: "Attacks on gay people are attacks on all people", "Anita sleeps with big business", "Hetero is not bettero", "God is gay", "Anita need only judge herself", and, "From Dade to Dachau". Yes, the orange juice queen brought many people out marching; maybe it was something we needed. The sickness she espouses pervades our society. We can change attitudes with gay visibility; support the movement!



by: Joe Dietrich

ad lib tavern

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SELECTIONS

by SAM

There must be almost as many ways of coming out as a gay person as there are gays. Writing this personal column and joining the staff of the 5th Freedom is but one step in my journey out of and a way from a dark and stinking closet experience. It is my hope to shed light on some issues that gay people face, and to elicit response and activity from others in the community. From month to month the thoughts will probably ramble, but they will be my thoughts and I alone should be held accountable.

Autobiography

Over the years I made those momentous decisions that lead to opening the door to the bath, and the gay bars. The need for a "quickie" one afternoon lead to my being victim to an example of entrapment, subsequent arrest, and overnight detainment at the city's expense. Occasional telephone contact and two or three visits to Mattachine's now-defunct Counselling Center as well as reading the 5th Freedom on an irregular basis were little chinks of light which filtered into my closet. None of these activities were emotionally gratifying and in fact, they each held their own special kinds of terror for me--a married man with three kids, home-

owner, and holder of a good job. Terror does not jibe with liberation, and liberation was part of what I was reading about particularly since the 1969 Stonewall riots.

I have long realized that I have been blessed, falling heir to freedoms others have fought for. Personally I have done nothing! It is only within this past year (my 40th) that in a relationship of love with another man I have heard myself say aloud, "I am gay", and now I am ready to do something. Simply joining Mattachine was not sufficient. Perhaps putting newspapering talent and experience in writing and layout to good use will be both personally satisfying and useful to the local gay community. But enough of my autobiography already.

Statistical Solace

While many persons acknowledge that "figures don't lie but liars can figure", we rely quite heavily upon statistics particularly when those presented go along with our own way of thinking or behaving. And we often fall back on folksy statistics that refer to "many persons" or substantial proportions" or even the nothing phrase" and statistics show that.."
A real statistic can give

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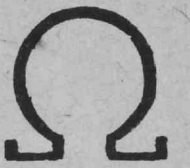
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a ripple of pleasure or self-satisfaction that must be akin to food offered a starving person. And now I am speaking directly to some points of interest to gays. Remember the reaction you had when you first read Kinsey's work that reported that "37 per cent of adult American males have had at least one homosexual experience to the point of orgasm"? Does knowing "there are others out there like me" mean liberation? Each issue of this publication includes a gay directory listing five local organizations for gays, between six and a dozen bars and restaurants, the baths, and clubs. Is that what liberation is about? Between two and three thousand copies of the 5th Freedom are printed each month and distributed free in places where gays congregate. Those stacks always seem to disappear between issues. Does the fact

that these places, organizations and services exist mean that we as gay persons are liberated?

I think not! Liberation means doing something besides merely being entertained or having a place to go. I have only recently discovered this myself, and I encourage you to do the same. It is an exhilarating experience!

NYSCGO cont.

NYSCGO is hoping for a full time paid lobbyist for the New York State legislature,

Each gay organization known to NYSCGO should receive information on the new constitution. If your group has not received any info write; John Cross, 34 Chestnut Rd., Delmar, NY 12054 for inclusion on the mailing list.

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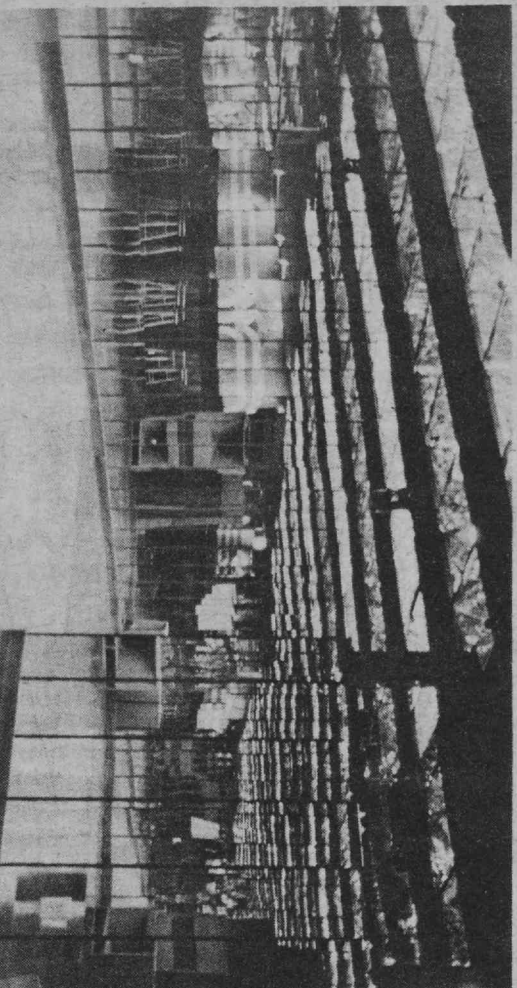
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AUGUST 1977



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