7-1-1975

Fifth Freedom, 1975-07-01

The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

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WITHIN THESE WALLS

STATE CAPITOL
ALBANY, N.Y.

DEBATE! NOT LAUGHTER

There's a law in N.Y. State that does not limit the right of a person to be religious, but it does prohibit one from expressing religious feelings with others of the same persuasion, even in the privacy of their own homes! It was almost removed from the law book a decade ago, but the considerable anti-religious forces in N.Y. State brought all the pressure they could bear to put the law back on the books. Since then, our legislators in Albany have done all in their power to avoid the issue, citing lack of constituency support, fear of anti-religious editorials in their hometown papers and loss of votes at election time if they dare be publicly supportive of such a 'controversial' issue. Clearly there are a number of religio-phobic legislators who are violently opposed to repeal of "consensual religiosity" (Sec. 69.69 of the "N.Y. State Guide to Healthy Living" laws) citing the threat to family structure and our children's well-being, if religiphiles are permitted to 'impose' their feelings on one another in private.

The above farce is certainly unimaginable in today's so-
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EDITIORIAL

We had a lot of response, some good and some not so good to our last issue. People seem to be quite pleased, and enthused as we are, with our photo offset process. The consensus of reader opinions is that the Fifth Freedom is indeed a magazine of greater interest and stature. We are deeply grateful for its reception and will continue our efforts to grow as a community oriented all-encompassing gay publication.

Many people were disturbed, angrily at first and then sadly, by the letter in "From our Mailbag" from an older gay who charged Matchtachine with being

1. Ignoring of older gays
2. Appealing to younger gays
3. Playing the wrong music
4. Proclaiming sexual preferences loudly in public, and
5. Politically nihilistic, cliquish a "cadre" with aristocratic disdain for conservatives.

I want to respond here to the author of that letter. I wish I could speak to you in person, and I hope you will approach me so I can, but for the time being and for other people who may share your feelings, here is my personal statement:

I can be chronologically categorized as an older gay. Though my age in spirit ranges from 6 to 60 on a rapidly sliding scale, the count in calendar years is 41 and in many gay groups this makes me the grand old man. Notice I did NOT say dirty old man. Dirt, like age, is a relative thing. And most people say to my face at least, that I'm somewhat sullied but not altogether soiled.

During Gay Pride Week I conducted a workshop on the age problem people perceive at the Gay Center. It was a lively and stimulating forum that would have been really effective for you (author of that letter last issue) and your peers. Unfortunately, it was well attended by people under 20 and I was the only one there over 40. Somewhat like taking coals to Newcastle, as it were, but it wasn't a waste of time! I found out where a lot of the younger (ours) thinking is at with regards to "you" (happily I found "me" excludable) and people tended to agree that age-imposed barriers are largely societal setups which can be breached by honesty and open-mindedness. The barriers are real enough, but their foundations are mutual ignorance, misunderstanding, antipathy, intimidation, hostility and finally polarity.

I believe the young people at the workshop left with an awareness of their personal contribution to the age (consciousness) gap, and a willingness to deal with their attitudes about it. I was both grateful and pleased about

CONT. P. 5

FROM OUR MAILBAG

Dear Friends,
I just saw your latest copy of the 5th Freedom. From the brief glimpse of your paper, I believe your set-up is the most comprehensive and well-rounded set of events I have seen to date. You should all be very proud and exhausted! Much thanks,

In the struggle,
David Glassberg
Washington, D.C.

Dear Friends,
Thank you very much for sending me a copy of your publication with my picture. I'm enclosing a few brochures put out by our group Parents of Gays.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Manford

Ed. Note: Ms. Manford is the parent of Morty Manford, long time gay activist from N.Y.C. Her photo appeared on P. 9 of the last issue.

Dear Brother,
I am happy the brochure, "Parents of Gays Speak Out" was so well received in Buffalo. Enclosed is a modest supply for your use.

Initially, we printed 5,000 brochures at an out-of-the-pocket cost to the parents in the group of $125. That was three weeks ago. They are all just about gone already. So, until we are able to finance another printing I hope the few herewith enclosed will hold you; permission is of course granted to anyone who wishes to duplicate this statement in newsletters...

Very best wishes to you and all the sisters and brothers at Matchtachine/ Niagara for a thoroughly delightful Gay Pride Week,

In Gay Struggle & With Gay Love,
Morty Manford, Pres.
Natl. Coalition of Gay Activists

Dear Sisters & Brothers,
I am glad to renew my subscription to the improved 5th Freedom, and send warm regards to everybody.

Richard Jay Silverthorn
Los Angeles, Ca.

Dear Don,
Congratulations to you and the staff of the new 5th Freedom. I just got my copy late last week after an early vacation caused by an illness which hospitalized me last month. I found the new format both attractive and intensely interesting.

This letter is something of a reaction to several other things within the new issue, things that are personal with me, yet understandable, I hope, to people such as yourself, with whom I have previously had conversation/discussion in regard thereto. First, I should like to comment on the letter from the Mail Bag signed by a (40er). I have not visited the Center but I'm sure that I would probably agree with most of his five reactions. The reason I have not visited the Center is because I feel that such exposure would endanger the positive contributions I can make otherwise - and I think you might agree that I have been able to make a few. My heartiest agreement with this 40er.

CONT. P. 5
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mailbag, cont.

is with his fourth point that
"older gays generally speaking,
do not feel it necessary to
loudly proclaim their sexual
preferences in public and wear
it like a fraternity pin. They
are content to live and love in
the world in their own quiet
way, productively and unobtrus-
ively contributing to society."

This most probably then is
taking issue with your article
on Gay Visibility, in which you
state, "If you're not visible to
yourself, you'll wear the
shame, the guilt and the stigma
like a suit of armor." With
other gays, who know me, I have
no shame, guilt, nor stigma.
For myself, I have no shame,
guilt, nor stigma. But my voca-
tion as a clergyman demands
that I be invisible as such,
for the simple reason that I
could be removed from my posi-
tion tomorrow were it to make a
Gay Visibility declaration. It
would mean a loss of livelihood,
position, friends, and the ca-
capability for assistance to many
unfortunates, mostly gay, whom
I befriend like no one else can.
I therefore choose to remain an
anonymous gay, not a visible
one. And I ask, in all sincer-
ity, "Do you blame me?" Enclo-
sed is my contribution of $50.

An Anonymous Clergyman

Ed. Note: The author of this
letter is an example, rather
than a contradiction, of Gay
Visibility as we define it. We
apologize for the lack of
clarity in our articulation
that may have led this man, or
others like him, to believe we
might regard them as anything
but visible.

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DANE WINTERS

LAMBDATA PATCHES

SOLD CLOTH - COLD LAMBDA
ON NAVY BLUE.....AVAILABLE
AT THE CENTER

editorial, cont.

their expressed accountabili-
ties and concerns.

Now there is "you" left.
You can no longer go to the
workshop but you can still go
to the Center. And it's safe
to say what you find there will
meet your expectations, be they
youth orientation and empty
headedness, politics orienta-
tion and cliquishness, public
defiance orientation and radi-
calism ad infinitum. What you
want is what you get if you so
program yourself. Enter a gar-
den to find weeds and you can
find them without ever even
noticing there are flowers.
The workshop surfaced some
feelings about the ease, or
rather lack of it, with which
people achieve a sense of per-
sonal belonging at the Gay
Center. You might call it our
"comfortability factor" and it
exists in our group (groups)
much the same as any other or-
organization. It is not, repeat
NOT, exclusive to any age. It
is a matter of any individual
of any age wanting to achieve
it and being willing to make
the needed effort. The onus
for people's acceptance at the
Center is not WHOLLY on the
Center and rightly so! We do
have staff people trained to
welcome and support "you" but
they need help from "you" in
order to do it. Like the old
adage goes, "you don't get
anything for nothing", not
even the Gay Community Services
Center.

So if you want us we want
you. Just come right on down
where the good things are hap-
pening. If you can't come en-
tirely free of prejudice and
fear (and no one can) at least
let us see then so that to-
gether we can get rid of them.

If you want to call us an
elite cadre go ahead. We can't
deny that we are the chosen
because, after all, we did
make the choice. But we made
it individually for ourselves
just as you must. The Center's
there if it's what you want.
So is the closet. If your
choice is the former we wel-
come you. If it's the latter
we have to see you hung up in
there, but the door is locked
from the inside and you have
the only key.

DANE WINTERS

Monday-Saturday 10:30-6:00
43 Allen St. Buffalo 886-0620
DEBATE, cont. from cover
society, so with tongue-out-of-check, let's examine a law that really does infringe on our constitutional guarantees, would technically apply to nearly all State's population,* but in reality is twisted to criminalize 2 million gay citizens.

Sec. 130.38 of N.Y. State's Penal Code is titled, "Consensual Sodomy," and reads: "A person is guilty of consensual sodomy when he [sic] engages in deviate sexual intercourse with another person." Of course, the law defines 'deviate sexual intercourse': "sex-ual conduct between persons not married to each other consisting of contact between the penis and the anus, the mouth and anus, or the mouth and the vulva."

The law applies to anyone, unless legally married to each other, and many non-gays do incorporate 'sodomy' into their sexual practices. But, a history of law enforcement practices, as well as the common interpretation of the law in legislative and religious circles, lends considerable substance to our contention that consensual sodomy proscriptions serve little purpose other than to discriminate against homosexuals.

In 1965, New York State revised its penal code and the section on consensual sodomy was removed. However, the Catholic Church, nearly single-handedly, maneuvered the consensual sodomy section back into the penal code by wielding its enormous influence over the legislature. The statute is blatantly unconstitutional, violating rights to privacy and equal protection under the law, as well as violating the First Amendment, which forbids the "establishment of religion."

For several years, gay groups around the state, joining together as the N.Y. State Coalition of Gay Organizations (NYSCGO), have been submitting legislation in Albany that would repeal the Consensual Sodomy statute, as well as several other pieces of legislation that concern gay rights. Consensual sodomy repeal, however, is of paramount importance for homosexuals as we are 'criminalized' by law, it will be difficult to obtain other positive legislation that would serve to protect the rights of gays as a minority group. This year, NYSCGO has been making a strong effort to ensure consideration and passage of consensual sodomy repeal. There has been a full-time NYSCGO presence in Albany this year, through its lobbying efforts and bill development. And for the first time, it appears that the consensual sodomy repeal bill will make it to the state Assembly floor for a vote.

***************

On Wednesday, June 18th, several of us from around the state gathered in Albany, fully anticipating our repeal bill A-1220 to come to the Assembly floor for a full debate and vote. Armed with cameras and tape recorders, we gathered in the spectator gallery, poised our pens and notepads. Ah! We waited. And waited. Debate on other bills dragged on and on, and the Assembly adjourned around 6:30 without getting around to A-1220. Definitely the bill would be considered on Thursday. So, Thursday AM we were back in our gallery seats, waiting again with breathless anticipation for the A-1220 debate which, we were promised, would be rancorous and lengthy. Surprise! The clerk called our bill on the Calendar before noon — but alas and alack, the sponsor of A-1220, Assemblyman Passanante (Greenwich Village) was not in the Assembly Chambers. So, the bill was set aside and 'stared,' which meant it would not come up for consideration again until Passanante asked to have the star removed from the bill, which he promised to do in time for Friday's session. There we were, resigned to waiting out the political processes for another day. A few hours later it was decided not to let the bill come up for consideration on Friday.

On April 13, the American Civil Liberties Union adopted a statement on gay rights which considerably strengthened its traditional support. The statement opposes: legal restraints on public licitation, proscribed private consensual sex acts, involuntary institutionalization and/or treatment, and limitations on custody and visitations rights of gay parents.

It was a tactical decision based on the fact that many assemblypeople had already left Albany for the weekend and would not be at Friday's session. A-1220 would surely involve a slow roll call vote meaning each assemblyperson's vote would be recorded individually — and in a poorly attended session that would mean sure death for consensual sodomy repeal.

Back we came to our respective hometowns disillusioned, disheartened, disappointed, and still waiting. We had a taste of the Albany political process — if you can call it that. We're still fuming about the universal outburst of laughter in the Assembly Chambers on Thursday when our bill was announced and then put aside. It was a laughter that combined derisiveness and relief. Relief that they could potty anyone into dealing with our issue. An issue that, in the upright Capitol atmosphere many of our 'eminent' solons don't have the presence of mind to grasp.

It's fully expected that A-1220 will come up for full Assembly debate, which in itself would be a first. Whether or not the bill passes will depend on a multitude of factors. We don't count enough sure 'yes' votes for A-1220 (76 or more votes are needed), but it could happen. The debate is necessary, at any rate, and if A-1220 doesn't pass we'll still have gotten our foot-in-the-door. If it does pass, then our fate is in the hands of the Republican controlled Senate. That is a real roadblock!

A lot could happen yet this year, since the legislature is in two long recesses in history — but, prognosis is that it won't go any further than the Assembly. We can't hold up this issue of the Fifth Freedom any longer to find out — the legislature just hasn't been at all cooperative! So, we go to press with this plea that you'll be patient enough to wait for our August issue to find out what happens. In the meantime, there's always next year.

*based on a comprehensive study of conversational tidbits gleaned from cocktail parties, street corners, locker rooms, drive-in movies, etc.
CALIFORNIA FIRST!!!

On May 1, 1975, California became the first state to pass a law specifically decriminalizing consensual sex acts. The precedent-setting action came near the end of a long day of debate, bitterness and a rare tie-vote in California's state Senate.

Lieutenant Governor Mervyn Dymally cast the tie-breaking vote at 7:30 pm to the cheers of a packed spectator gallery. His vote culminated a nerve-racking day which resulted in the Senate Chambers being sealed so that none of the opposition Senators could leave before the Lt. Governor could be flown in from Denver to cast the deciding vote. At one point, opposition Senators were threatened with 'arrest' by Senate Deputies if they attempted to leave, which would have had the effect of breaking the quorum thereby preventing the tie-breaking vote.

In a statement issued by Lieutenant Governor Dymally, he offered these words of support: "[the consensual sex decriminalization] bill is, I believe, more than just an idea whose time has come; it is a fact of our lives which we must recognize. The state just has no business poking into the private sex lives of consenting adults. We have a chance here to move back one phase of 1984. I think we must take it."

In the meantime, a group of reactionary Christian fundamentalists are preparing a drive to repeal the law. The coalition of Christian Citizens (CCC) is seeking over 500,000 petition signatures to force a statewide referendum in June of 1976. Prognosis by gay leaders in California is that the CCC will be successful in its drive to force a referendum and that gays will need to put their energy into defeating the referendum in 1976. The CCC drive will delay implementation of the newly passed California law protecting gays until after the referendum. The law was slated to take effect on January 1, 1976.

ELSEWHERE

PENNSYLVANIA: Governor Milton J. Shapp issued an executive order committing his administration to working towards ending discrimination against gay people. The Governor stated that, "In furtherance of my commitment to provide leader-

ship in the effort to obtain equal rights for all persons in Pennsylvania, I am committing this administration to work towards ending discrimination against persons solely because of their affectional or sexual preference."

CONNECTICUT: Governor Ella Grasso contributed to defeat of a gay rights bill in the Connecticut House by publicly expressing 'serious reservations' about such legislation. Her statements caused several legislators to shy away from support of the bill.

OREGON: Gay rights legislation missed passage in the Oregon State House of Representatives by one vote. The actual vote was 30 in favor to 29 opposed, but a constitutional majority of 31 votes was needed for passage.

MINNESOTA: An attempt to repeal the state sodomy law was rejected by the Minnesota Senate on May 20. Sodomy repeal had been presented as part of a bill to strengthen rape laws, but the section was removed by a 79-36 vote in the Senate.

MASSACHUSETTS: The state Senate defeated a gay rights bill by a margin of 2 votes, despite favorable positions by the Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Speaker of the House and much of the Boston media. The bill was a weakened version of an original gay rights bill and was expected to pass.

"We are having trouble enough convincing our men that they should accept women as equals...can you imagine what it would do to morale if we gave them a queer as their partner?"

[L.A. Police Dept.]

The City Council in the farming town of Stanfield, Oregon has decreed that if animals are going to copulate, they must do so in private. Owners of animals that fool around in public are now subject to fines not less than $15 or 2 to 25 days in jail.

"We are having trouble..."
During Gay Pride Week 1974 Mattachine's dedicated an evening to Gays and the Media. A similar effort was conspicuously absent from this year's calendar of events. It's interesting, albeit disgusting, to examine the reasons for the omission.

The '74 media night was typical of so many gay liberation attempts: the people who were there really didn't need to be and the people who did need to be there weren't. We were of course disappointed. But we were not ungrateful to those who came and were concerned. They listened earnestly to our problems; we listened earnestly to their suggestions. It was an altogether earnest and almost altogether useless evening.

We learned some practical things about the press; but we also learned, sadly, that they most applied to the press we were at the mercy of. The typical dailies, the Buffalo Evening News and the Courier Express (which we sardonically refer to as the Nausea and Excuse), but we even ran into a turnoff from a neighborhood weekly, The Elmwood Echo.

That was really ironic, considering that the Elmwood Echo is published for the section of the city most densely populated by gays.

These things are often baffling beyond absurdity and compounded by the occasions of disparate editorial policies among departments of the same paper. The Nausea, for instance, for them in their entertainment section but Victorian (and ridiculous) in their classified ad department. As if that weren't bad enough, to make matters really impossible they accept paid-for ads, then later they decide against printing them and refund the money. The Excuse, for example, took our ad for the movie "A Very Natural Thing" but afterward cancelled it because the entertainment editor figured if it was gay it had to be pornographic. He had completely overlooked its clearly labeled R rating. The ad was eventually run, but only after a great deal of haggling and harassment.

One of the main concerns we had about doing the recent production of Al Carmines' "The Faggot" was the critical point of publicizing it. Here we had a critically acclaimed and audience applauded musical hit from New York and we were afraid that in Buffalo the papers might refuse to print its TITLE! Our fears were not without precedents to establish them. The Nausea and the Excuse had refused a classified ad for our counseling service because we wouldn't call our center "homosexual" instead of "gay". The Nausea refuses to print these gay at all, in any of its departments.

Whenever we do get into the Buffalo papers the intent of whatever it may be is invariably negative. Several months ago the Excuse did a feature on homosexuals and religion. Rita Smith, editor for the Women's Section, did interviews with some area clergymen. Stating that her purpose was to determine prevailing religious attitudes toward the widely accepted homosexual lifestyle Ms. Smith carefully chose and quoted the 3 most bigoted non-accepting clerics to be found in all of Buffalo's Catholic, Protestant and Jewish churches.

At our '74 Gay Pride meeting with media people they were unanimous about one point with regard to the overall press situation. They all insisted that if we made news it would be reported. Presumably in the case of the Nausea that might mean that if I killed my dad the headlines would scream "Happy Boy Murder了他的 Father," but it WOULD get reported! They cited a somewhat famous case in New York City when a man robbed a bank to pay for his lover's sex change. That's the kind of gay news that can always get coverage! Naturally the man's sexuality was a primary element of the crime and therefore had to be included in the news reports. Just like it always is when a hooker gets busted for offering to fuck. We've all seen the headlines that say "Heterosexual Whore Nabbed Offering To Commit Immoral Acts To Support Her Pimp's Drug Habit" haven't we?

We haven't used it yet and it's under wraps until we need it.

Mattachines has always sought good relations with the press, as with the whole community. We will continue to seek that. What we won't continue to do is be repeatedly denied or disparaged without fighting back by the means at our disposal.

The theme of Gay Pride '75 was Gay Visibility. We intend to continue this into the coming year. A part of our plan for visibility mandates our acceptance by the press. We intend to see that our services to the community are recognized and publicized to the same extent as those sponsored by straight public service agencies. Our programs are as much needed as those of any organization in Buffalo and we cannot go on having them thwarted or mitigated by narrow mindedness or stupidity among the media policy makers.

This is not meant to be a threat. It's a promise.

We're sincerely thankful to those media people who don't want to hate it. We are sincerely sorry for those who do.
I've just come back from a mind trip because of the relationship between many negative experiences I've had in the past month and two articles on Gay Visibility in the last 5th Freedom ("Introsection" & "A Purview") I read.

Gay Visibility sounds great and has its merits but to be truly feasible and profitable to your culture, you must be able to believe and accept the acceptance that straight people may offer you. Many visibly gay people have not yet learned to handle the acceptance. This is where I start breathing fire. An example: I activities that have helped in the perpetuation of stereotypic attitudes on both sides.

Another experience that really hurt was that someone admitted their gay tendencies to me but upon finding out I was totally straight, felt regret instead of feeling a positive step had been taken in coming out. There was remorse. Again, can straights really understand the problems of gays and be empathetic? Of course, the answer is no but there may be some straights who need a second chance - so give it to them.

As of late, my motives and intentions with gay involvement have been questioned. It was bad enough when this came from my straight friends, but deplorable when it came from gays. This is where I lose sight of what it is that you really want from us.

It seems that my presence at The Center or mention of my association with it automatically predisposes people to relate to me as gay (completely understandable) but a denial of this misgiving is met with undertones or vibes that perhaps someday I'll be able to admit something to myself and come out (to a really "better" way of living) if this is said in jest, it is an oppression I am continually up against. Also, it is unfair that I should suffer your bored thoughts of my being a tag bag or closet lesbian.

RAMBLE #2

Those of you who know me, know I have more than done my share of trying. I have supported and promoted many of your functions in the past. Of course I have not been able to involve any of my straight friends in this but by the same token, I find it confusing that the gay population does not support functions to any great extent. It's not strictly of a social nature. I don't want any medals for my involvement, just valid, intelligent reasons (and not excuses) as to why there is only interest in purely social events instead of the gut necessities (educational classes, clinics, etc.) that most people need to make their awareness and life a whole concept. I am truly disappointed in the lack of support in general given to The Center (except by the few regulars) because if there is no evidence that you support your own cause (and Center) for reasons other than sexual contacts, you certainly can't expect the straight population to ever understand you as human beings first.

RAMBLE #3

My idealistic attitude was maddeningly crushed when I read "Do Gay Men Rape Lesbian Women?" in the F.F. It is nearly unbelievable that in a gathering of people of the same mind (a Center dance) some animalistic men would dare to hassle the gay women. It seems stupid that a man would waste the $1 admission when a simple trip to Mr. Goodbar or Cole's would result in a positive reaction (hopefully - for the sake of his male ego!) to his advances (if that's really the kind of "action" he's after). It's too bad some men can't see past their own three piece set.

RAMBLE #4

I've been told I am a victim of my own sensitivity because I have been fed in a more than annoyed manner to the above happenings (a minor sampling). To me, it is because of my unique sensitivity that I can accept with an open mind the gay community. Because of my intense and rapid exposure to gays and their lifestyle, the oppression I am suffering on your behalf has been magnified.

It freaks me out to know that the base of the oppression is the same for you and me - the lack of understanding from small minded individuals unaccepting of someone with attitudes that don't jell with their own.

As an outcome of the above I would like you to examine your own feelings/interactions with straights and realize perhaps they can't be pushed as far, hard or fast as you'd like - because they feel they have nothing to lose (except the friendship of some really great people), only YOU do.

had the "extreme pleasure" of sitting in the Center one fine hot day, folding gay visibility flyers, only to listen to derogatory remarks made about straight people. As a straight person (who does accept gays) I don't like having to be on the defense about MY sexual preferences either. So please sweep your own house clean before you come into mine seeking more acceptance.

One of my problems is that I expect the best from people. Just because you have suffered tremendous oppression from straights, I don't feel you are justified in returning the treatment in an eye for an eye type fashion. It is just such
THE BAD GUYS AND THE GOOD GAYS

I am usually skeptical of gay people reviewing gay books or films. After years of little or poor media attention even the most inept attempt which offers a gay hero or heroine is elevated to a status that may be undeserved.

And that's the difficulty. Do we review a book exclusively on its own merits, ignoring its implications for the world outside? Or do we ignore individual merits in favor of a book's effectiveness in a broader sphere - in this case, gay liberation?

I suggest that we can do both, and that through both objective and subjective discussion come up with an appraisal that recognizes both the book and its relation to the movement.

THE FRONT RUNNER demands that these questions be asked, as it probably is the first popular novel to feature healthy gay characters that has warranted a mass distribution both in hard and soft cover. The Ballantine paperback's first printing is the largest ever for a gay novel, and it is being pushed with the reasonable expectation that it will find its way into the homes of a lot of straight people. Paul Newman has purchased the film rights and intends to play the coach, Harlan Brown, in the film version. So, just by nature of its availability, it becomes an important book.

THE FRONT RUNNER is above all, immensely readable. I shot through it in two days, and found it difficult to put down. It's light and easy to read - not heavy or preachy, and can be enjoyed without being studied. Major characters are believable and lifelike, and dialogue is crisp and realistic. As a novel of gay life, it is for the most part accurate, and provides those unfamiliar with a fair introduction of what it means to be a gay male in the American Seventies. As a book about long distance runners, it is excellent. The author is a runner herself, and her facts and opinions are on target. The main thread revolving around Billy Sive's attempts to qualify for the 1976 Olympics contain the major element of suspense in the book, and it is in this realm that the book works best.

The controversy coast-to-coast bestseller - an unusual love story, as moving as any ever written.

The Front Runner
by Patricia Nell Warren

It's about gay life, and one gay's attempts to break through the bigotry and double standards of American values in order to lead a fulfilling natural life. It doesn't patronize gays and for the most part doesn't canonize them either. Its views of older gays are honest and sensitive, and its sexual encounters in bars, movie houses, and on the street are familiar. It presents a spectrum of gay life styles - tranvestites, the baths, street hustling, Fire Island, gay politics and couples - with an insider's awareness.

Its sexual encounters are mild and tastefully done. Those who are looking for hot stuff are advised to go elsewhere. It may be a bit too discreet in this area; anal intercourse is never mentioned except by allusion, and the lack of such material may suggest to some that the bedroom activities we engage in are not appropriate for a non-pornographic novel - a mistake I think. We can do so many neat things in bed that the celebration of gay sex seems crucial for a real appreciation of the characters, and it is not forthcoming.

The real problems inherent in THE FRONT RUNNER, however, are not so incidental.

Its treatment of women is unhealthy and, I trust, unrealistic. There are no strong women characters in the book, and those that do appear are always considered the enemy. Harlan's wife and Billy's mother are supreme bitches, and Betsy, a lesbian, is shown as little more than the stereotyped straight housewife. Mention of women in dialogue is usually negative, and creates the illusion that gay men and women - both lesbian and straight - are born enemies. Another set of criticism involves the dichotomy placed between gays and straights.

Yeah, it's all around us, and a book pretending that it isn't, that we are all brothers, would be dishonest. But THE FRONT RUNNER widens the gap at times to dangerous proportions. The Olympic trials become a race between the good guys and the bad guys - and all the bad guys in the book are straight: there isn't ONE gay bad guy in the whole book. Although some minor characters are straight and honest, all the major good guys are gay.

Now, on a subjective level, I got off on this. I was cheering for Billy Sive to beat all the straights. I smiled and laughed at the gay antics and hissed appropriately at the straights' attempts to thwart...
COMING OUT IN THE MILITARY

BY BENJI

Having served my time as a semi-gay male in our country's service and putting up with all of its macho bullshit, I was pleased to read in the New York Times and Time Magazine of gays who have decided to challenge the military's archaic ban on homosexuals.

Leonard Matlovich joined the air force in May 1963 with the intention of making the service a career. During his 12 years of service, he completed three tours in Vietnam, winning a medal for each. He also worked in drug abuse prevention and race relations. Then Tech Sgt. Leonard Philip Matlovich received a letter from his commanding officer notifying him that "I am initiating action against you with a view to effecting your discharge from the United States Air Force." His recommended discharge would be general; in other words, less than honorable. The reason for his discharge was his decision to challenge the military to he was a homosexual.

Lenny Matlovich now has some company. The army has started proceedings to give more than honorable discharges to two lesbian WACs, Pfc. Barbara Randolph, 22, of Indiana and Pvt. Debbie Watson, 20, of Texas voluntarily admitted their sexual preference to an interrogator as the result of a whispering campaign about their activities. Both women and Tech. Sgt. Matlovich decided to challenge the military regarding their discharges.

In the case of Lenny Matlovich, as opposed to cases in the past, it is a clear cut challenge by a PERFECT challenger with no side problems that could derail the case from the main question. At stake are major, competing issues and rights - the military's interest in having rules that think are necessary to maintain discipline; the homosexual's right to privacy and equal protection under the law. All branches of the military have long had a policy of excluding homosexuals from service and discharging those who are either homosexual or have homosexual tendencies. For years persons discharged were most often given "undesirable" discharges. Only recently the military has given more "generous" sometimes "honorable" discharges, probably because of the legal challenges.

I have heard all the tired excuses why homosexuals should be excluded from the service. Most cited was security. It was thought that the homosexual could be blackmailed into giving secret information by threatening to reveal his homosexuality. What the military fails to see is that their policy regarding one's sexual orientation gives foundation for blackmail. If one did not have to hide one's sexual preference for fear of disclosure one would not be subject to blackmail.

Also cited is the age-old story that homosexuals are out to corrupt the "young" and persuade them to homosexuality. Many parents fear for their children and it is comforting to them that they know that there are no homosexuals around who could have an "unnatural" influence on them. That is one myth which is constantly reinforced in the military. It is better that their children learn of the acceptable norms which are beneficial to a growing society (killing, genocide, racism, caste system etc.).

As the service was forced to do with racism so must it do with the question of homosexuality. After all, there are more gay people in the service than is realized. The military is an oppressive institution in itself and must clean house. The threat homosexuals pose is not one of security, contagion, or ineffectiveness, but of shattering the illusion of what it takes to be a man (whatever that means). The question of manhood is a sacred dream to many (known as lifers) in the service and one does not threaten that at all. A sort of bedroom mentality exists and most lifers pride themselves on how many women they can ball, and the amount of booze they can consume. The military institution is a play where, when one joins, role playing is of paramount importance. It is a great place to live out fantasies of manhood. The homosexual threatens that and the male ego development cannot cope with that.

I am glad that there are people like Lenny Matlovich, Debbie Watson, and Barbara Randolph, who have the courage to fight for their identity as people, as gay people in our country's armed forces. Love to the three of you.

Dr. Gerald Goldhaber, author of the book GAY TALK, will be guest speaker at the Mattachine General Meeting on Sunday July 20 at 8:00PM. We urge readers to attend & participate in the program.
Yes, on Sunday July 13th, the annual Erie penns. picnic will be held in a secluded private park near Buffalo. This perfect setting is complete with 150 acres of trees, pond, bushes, dancing, drinking, eating and of course cruising. As we told the owners of the park: "We'll watch the people, you just mind your park." It's only 20 min. from Buffalo (two miles past the airport). Call the Buffalo Gay Center for information at 881-5335.

CRUISE

Friday August 8th at 7pm

Join us on an interesting and fun cruise aboard the privately chartered SS Miss Buffalo. Eat from our delicious buffet and enjoy music, dancing and a bar which will be serving your favorite liquors. This unique four hour event will be a pleasant change from the heat of Buffalo summer evenings. The tide will take you on an anything can happen adventure. Call the Buffalo Gay Center to reserve your tickets.
ROCHESTER
PICNIC, BY THE BARS, FOR RAISING MONEY FOR THE GAY ALLIANCE. SUN. JULY 20TH AT 11AM TO 11PM. $2.00 IN ADVANCE AND $2.50 AT THE PARK. HELD AT THE GENESSEE VALLEY PARK ACROSS FROM THE UNIV. OF ROCHESTER, SHELTER 4A & 4B. THIS IS A BIG EVENT WITH BEER, FOOD, FUN AND FROLIC.

GAY BEACHES
TORONTO ISLAND AT HANLANS POINT-GET TO THE FERRY TERMINAL AT THE FOOT OF BAY STREET AND TAKE HANLANS POINT FERRY TO THE ISLAND.

BUFFALOS WOODLAWN BEACH PAST BETHLEHAM STEELS OFFICE BUILDING ON FAMOUS LAKESHORE RD.

FIRE ISLAND ON LONG ISLAND, PROBABLY THE WILDEST RESORT IN AMERICA.

CRYSTAL BEACH, BEAVER ISLAND PARK AND SHERKSTON QUARRY ARE OFTEN VERY CRUASY.
O sweet mother! I promised that by yesterday I'd submit an article to the F.F. about the Gay Pride Workshops. Well..... what do I say? Buffalo's Gay Visibility celebration is over, and with it went the workshops. They were impressively varied, and the results ranged from enthusiasm and excitement to uneasiness and boredom. (I still wonder if some of the women's meetings weren't better than those that I attended. Hm..... Maybe I'd best get on with this.)

The Singles/Couples Workshops were the first. Some of the issues raised dealt with mimicry (were gay couples mimicking the heter world?), the pressures on people to get into relationships and maintain them, and does such bonding demand a loss of individuality. One interesting observation was that singles need relationships/friends/family (or whatever you want to call it) but are usually NOT out to split up couples. I myself have seen it happen only once in 20 years.

The Singles Workshop broke down with many people saying coupling was really best, most desirable, the ideal situation, etc.

The Couples Workshop dealt with many problems, such as: how to keep 'IT' going, what to do when you give but don't receive, monogamous vs. polyamorous, the ability or need to have choices (to break, recouple etc.) as inviolable individual rights.

An important issue was the reality/fantasy conflict. A telling point was that perfection (as fantasized) would be boring as hell, that people's humanity is their reality. You can't change people who don't want change, and couples must be able to work together.

Financial and legal matters such as adoptions, wills, 'marriage' etc. were discussed but due to existing legal structuring no definitive possibilities were finalized.

One last question was raised: can people gravitate 'automatically' to a one-to-one relationship?

Continuing on to the gay male sex 'workshop' - it was informative (swapping fantasies etc.) boring (poor porno flicks - must talk to Don about that!) and open.

For the first time in too long I heard men actually deal with (not just talk about) The subject of frigidity, i.e. the inability to respond or produce when the moment came. (And, um, pardon the pun - you didn't. All of the problems that were brought up were handled intelligently, with ease and good humor. No one was laughed at; rather we all had to gently laugh at ourselves because of remembered embarrassments we had overcome.

The second half of the workshop dealt with health care. Many of the misconceptions and problems that are often encountered were handled by those who had the correct information and/or previous experience.

Generally this was the best run workshop of the two weeks.

Sexism (the domination of one person or group by another - usually men trying to dictate to women) was displayed to the nth degree in the Sexism Workshop! More problems were created among the men than were solved; the contest for 'right', as opposed to agreement, created more hostility than could be controlled by the participants. Attempts were made to deal with role playing, the emotional side of men, the competition syndrome that we carry over from the market place into our private lives and much more. Unfortunately the topics became lost in the fiasco.

The workshop on Separatism brought men and women together to discuss the problems women face in a male dominated society - even gay women when in the company (society?) of gays!' Several books could be written about that all-too-short session. There IS-I a need for SEPARATISM!

Women's issues are different from men's but this does not make them any less real or important. The differences in no way invalidate the issues. Men must understand the very core of this oppression before they can understand women. Hopefully gay men, some at least, have a glimmer of what sexism really is and how it can make one bitter, a hater of all around him. If this awareness is put to use oppression will eventually be defeated. Until then the gay and men, must maintain some form of separate identities and groupings which will let them begin to understand each other, and the men are still a long way behind.

Sunday we were in an ad hoc workshop - visibility at Allentown. Too bad so many tried to be invisible. But with the general populace going on their artsy-craftsy binge who could really say what was 'normal'?

Gays and Religion had several people in attendance. Why didn't we get around to Leviticus? We all agreed, sort of, that the tale of Saul of Tarsus (later St. Paul after he got knocked off his ass onto his ass) had little to do with the teachings of J.C. of Nazareth. That was the last thing agreed on - the workshop lasted three more hours.

The workshops on Homoeroticism in Art and Androgyny in Art were somewhat academic, generally (?) lecture style out of necessity and interesting to those who were interested and had done their homework. I'd like to see more done in both fields next year.

There will always be a generation gap - witness the preponderance of "middle gays" at that workshop. One younger person acted as if I was going to rape him when I asked how he was getting home. We live in the same neighborhood, sort of, and I was looking for transportation. So much for success in THAT workshop.

A. EARL HERSHBERGER
GAY PRIDE

SCENES FROM

THE "FAGGOT"

...AND THE SOFTBALL GAME

WHEREIN THE "FAGS" TOUNCED THE "DYKES"
BY A SCORE OF 19 - 14

BELOW, ARE FANS MIRRORING THE EXCITEMENT OF THE EVENT
this is Elaine Noble, ...
by Mickie Williams

Elaine Noble, the first open lesbian to be elected to public office in the United States, spoke to a crowd of over 200 people at the Center during Gay Pride Week.

Contrary to my expectations, she did not come off as a "politician". Instead she radiated strength and honesty, two qualities she has put to work in her campaign and in her work in the Massachusetts State Legislature.

Elaine spoke on the topic of Gay Visibility, and certainly no one is more qualified than she to speak to the risks and responsibilities of the openly gay person. She reminded us that all forms of oppression are tied in together so that working for gay liberation means supporting women, blacks, and other oppressed peoples. In this way they become aware that gays are their allies. Once this happens our hands are free to fight our common enemy—the group of racist sexist white males who control our lives.

Elaine said that she is working closely with the Women's and Black caucuses in the legislature, to form a powerful coalition that will accomplish change within the system.

Of course, I was starry-eyed by this time. Look, I said to myself, at all the wonderful things this woman is accomplishing. But, said my skeptical self, this is Elaine Noble—confident, alive, and aware. You'll never be able to do any of this stuff! Yes, said Elaine, you can. You can start by realizing your own potential. Develop your inner resources. Simply get your rear end out there and do what you do best in the best way you know how.

Very nice, said Ms. Skep-tical. But haven't I heard all of this before? Can you show me some results, some action? What have you done?

That's when I learned...
When a man is 31 years old, has a PhD., is a university full professor, has had a book published, recently had an important article in Psychology Today, and he's talking to YOU it's safe to say you're going to listen to him. It's not so certain you're going to hear what he's saying, however. Academia sometimes leads to rarefied places at which people tend to communicate well with each other rather exclusively. Such is not the case with Mark Freedman who was our featured male Gay Pride speaker.

Mark addressed himself to us as a gay brother who is our equal in the rank and file of gay liberation. Speaking on the subject of Gay Visibility he declared that the time has come to direct more of our effort to ourselves and less to the straight society. Enough time and labor have been channeled into working for social "acceptance" of our lifestyle. Now we need to put ourselves to work achieving goals we are perceiving for ourselves. Mark was sincerely pleased and impressed by what he saw is already being done in these respects at the Buffalo Center. He said that in his opinion we lead the country with the kind of services that a gay center should be providing at this time. While we are far from the largest or richest he said we are the most effectively structured and directed to meet gay needs.

As a psychologist Mark expressed his belief that the profession has progressed beyond the purposes of comparative studies about gays. The scientific data from such studies already exceeds their usefulness and it makes no sense to work in that direction anymore. What people won't accept statistically now they are just not going to accept. Psychology must make a concerted change, actually an about face gearing it to GAY NEEDS with its focuses on such things as studying homophobia to determine its causes and how it can be overcome, researching aspects of gay culture such as aging and conflict (i.e. parent-child) situations, etc. This kind of orientation is what Mark sees as realistic and timely for his profession and we were in strong agreement with it as lay people in the field of gay betterment.
Within the Shadow of the Earth

The circle has broken.
Night of fullness, eclipsed.
Your shadow, earth/woman/lover
swallowed her whole
and spat her out, dimmed, waning.
Time of fullness, passed.
Her spell has weakened,
her chains of moonrays
no longer scar my wrists.
I am free
and she is draining.

0 earthwoman, new woman,
curve of your breast
in the palm of my hand,
three times we have seen our sun rise,
three times we have fallen into dreaming
to the sparrow's morning song.
And each time it was you
who loved me into daylight,
your tongue tracing the shadow of my spine,
your fingers making whirlpools in the sweat
of my thighs.

Earthwoman, your cycle is endless.
There will be no waxing or waning,
your fullness is now.
You paint me blue and green
with long strokes of your sepia hair.

My sighs rise
with the new moon.

Confession

I am afraid
this time you won't forgive
the changes
that have hardened the marrow in my bones
and deepened the color of my blood.
This time the spark in my eyes
is unextinguishable.
This time I will not
retreat into a knot behind my ribcage.

I stand in moonlight
by night
washing the moss from my breasts
combing out the weeds that have
tangled my hair
a woman at my side.
My womb swells with the moon's
and drains.

I am weathered
by the waves of each month
battered by the rhythms of the tide.
There is salt in my pores,
there is power in my veins
and behind the syncopated beating
of my heart
there is life.

I will do no penance.

Kt. Vermeulen
The presentation of Al Carmines' musical revue "The Faggot" at the Gay Community Services Center May 27 to June 1 was something of a phenomenon in the histories of both gay liberation and theatrical production. We know of no similar undertaking and are justifiably proud to have been the vanguard of yet another successful endeavor to totally integrate artistic achievement and the gay lifestyle.

We didn't make money on "The Faggot" but we did make a heap of GAY PRIDE and we got the kind of vibes that come only from absolute ecstasy. This is not to say the production was flawless or the show is either. It's a good show, and it was well done, and that's enough to make us stamp our feet and roar "We did it folks!" and "Whatcha got to say about that?"

Al Carmines' music is beautiful to hear and treacherous to perform. During the rehearsals there were some pretty dreadful sounds emanating from the Center. The intricate harmonies were sometimes so strident and sour it seemed they would never even resemble the sought after evanescent sweetness and jubilant lyricism. But on May 27 at 8 PM out it flowed in tides of tenderness and floods of joy.

The biggest hits with the audience were the full cast renditions of "Women With Women-Men With Men", "I'll Take My Fantasy", "Desperation" and the SHOW STOPPING "Nookie Time." The "New Boy In Town" number with Richard Lavin as the Gwen Verdon of gays was uproarious and Jeanne Koren's Fag Hag monologue caused convulsions of laughter. I particularly like the delicately wrought rendition of the fragile "Ordinary Things" by Madeline Davis and Stephanie Barrett, with its evocation of the timelessness and truthfulness of what we recognize as the reality of love. Also, Pamela Kilburn's torchy "Disposable Woman" and Louise Lambert's striking "Art Song" as Catherine the Great were outstanding highlights.

Of course there isn't space to give credit to each individual's particular high moments because there were just too many, and does it really matter anyway when I can say that they were 13 very talented people doing a tremendous amount of entertaining and the total effect was gleeful and glorious.

It's important to say a word about the audiences because "The Faggot" needs a really good one to play well. At the performances I saw the audiences were as much a part of the show in their spirit as the cast was in their performance. It's not sufficient to say they were receptive & appreciative & responsive & all those usual things because that's so damned inept for what was happening. Closer to it would be to say it was a festival of feelings being flung back and forth like sensual bouquets. An extraordi-nary thing, that, and actual-ly a personification of what our Gay Pride commemoration meant.

Gay Pride is the annual opportunity we have to tune in to ourselves and each other. To celebrate our individuality and our unity. That's exactly what we did with "The Faggot", so that it became an embodiment of gay spirit which raised us from down at the level of a show up to the realm of a glow.

I doubt there was anything in any gay center in the country that came anywhere near to what we in Buffalo achieved with "The Faggot." If that sounds like conceit I'm sorry; it's hard to be humble when you have so much reason to be proud.

URGENT! PLEASE? HELP! NOW? The Center has been burglarized twice within the last month. We are DESPERATELY in need of cash donations to keep operating here staffed. Send or bring ANY money you can to SAVE THE CENTER. We are at 1350 Main. 881-5355.
DUKE, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSING!

by JOHN YOUNG

There are times when I really envy John Wayne. I mean, he has it so easy. When he gets into a love/sex relationship it's all laid out for him.

He knows exactly what his role is going to be, how he should act, what his woman will expect of him and how he should respond. He knows that he will be the bread-winner, the strong one, the shoulder-to-cry-on (he, of course, should never cry), the initiator of sex - he even has his position during love-making charted for him.

It must be so comfortable, so safe, so simple - and, Oh God! So dull. What on earth does he ever discover about himself by slotting into a role that society has neatly defined for him? How does he ever discover what his real needs are, what his real potentials are for giving to his partner? How does he ever get in touch with all the varied facets of himself when he is constantly presenting just a small, carefully prescribed portion of them?

Like I said, there are times when I envy John Wayne, get into a love/sex relationship. The other man and I will both have been brought up (probably) in the same society that mass-produces the John Waynes, and there will be a lot of him in us. That means we will immediately be confronted with the roles issue. Little voices (and sometimes not so little) in our heads will be giving us instructions: "You're the man, you've gotta be strong, call the shots, be the protector, be in control." So, we'll hassle that one out, with each other and for ourselves.

Other little voices will whisper: "He's the man, you can expect him to be strong and take care of you, so just give in to your weakness, your desires to be dependent." At some point in there, the inconsistency will become apparent, and I realize that I can't rely on my gender to tell me how to be. That's when it really starts to get interesting. Then I am really thrown back on me just me to define my behavior by. Me, meaning what my needs are, what my abilities to give are, what my experience has been, where I want my life to go. And I am forced to look into myself, and into my relationship with this other person, for those guidelines that John Wayne gets spelled out for him when he buys a marriage license.

I don't get those guidelines. I don't get those pressures to run the relationship a certain way, as straight couples do. The only pressure I get is: "Don't," and that's much simpler to cope with.

So, I am forced back on myself, and to my partner, to begin the relationship negotiations. How much control will we each have, and how much will we permit each other? How vulnerable will we each allow ourselves to be? How dependent will we become on each other for getting emotional needs met? For companionship? For sex? For money? And, yes, who will do the laundry and who will take out the garbage?

None of those things are defined for the gay person and the gay relationship, so the possibilities are limitless. The possibilities are there for me to act and do however I want, as long as I can let myself. In a sense, by telling me I am doing something bad, society is giving me permission to do what I want.

If the relationship itself is wrong, then it really doesn't matter what its internal structure is, That's the freedom.

I really get uncomfortable when people start talking about legalizing gay marriages. For a start I find it hard to understand why anyone would want to get married, gay or straight. But more than that, I get this nagging worry that somewhere along the line society will sanction gay relationships, and then start moving in with a rule book.

I remember a straight male friend telling me how he was afraid to cry in a movie theater during a sad movie because people might think he was homosexual. I don't have that problem. I'm outside the fold already, so it doesn't really matter what I do.

But I don't want to sound like the freedom I'm talking about is a sort of "The cat's away, the mice will play" deal. It is not the fact that we're outside of society's rules that makes us free. It's the fact that, being outside of them, we have to make up our own. And to do that we have to examine ourselves, deeply and wide-rangingly, see who we real-

CONT. P.22
INCHES–MORE or LESS
"A RAUNCHY REPORT"
by dane winters

In response to the thousands of requests from our readers Fifth Freedom dispatched its roving reporter, whose name, by the way, is Dickie Hunter, to find the answer to the highly controversial heatedly argued question: "Does size really matter?" Dickie insisted he could answer the question himself, having had every size from a thimble filler to a python plugger on which to base his qualified and expert opinion. However, we prevailed upon his sense of modesty when we finally found it, and he begrudgingly admitted that other people are entitled to opinions even though they are wrong. He thereupon equipped himself with a recorder set to tape, an eye set to gape and a rear set for rapé; and ventured forth into the gay night in search of the TRUTH.

Dickie's first stop was Buffalo's glittering, glamorous, glorious gay apex "The Bar-B-Quickie Room" which was filled to overflowing with the Beautiful People who are always there to be adored and groped. He narrowly escaped spending the night in less appealing surroundings when the first person he decided to interview turned out to be a vice cop.

It's not easy to explain that "Do you like 8 hard inches?" isn't an offer to commit a naughty, but our Dickie is a resourceful lad. Somehow he managed to make the fuzz believe that he was only reaching between his legs to find an outlet for his recorder.

Somewhat shaken, but not daunted, Dickie decided to move on to another locale for his bar interviewing. He picked the new hot spot in town known as "Grandma Goodies." Again he found a bevy of beauties rapturously engrossed in getting themselves off on self-adoration. Dickie approached a tall patrician looking gentleman impeccably attired in ecru crushed velvet who was sipping a dry sherry and glancing disdainfully about. Dickie introduced himself and explained that he would like to ask a question about sexual preference. The gentleman replied haughtily that he preferred none at all and turned his back. If he heard Dickie's "Fuck you auntie" retort the only indication was a slight pucker of velvet between his shoulders.

Dickie's next interviewee was much more cooperative. The moment Dickie finished explaining he wanted his opinion about size the man unzipped his fly and said, "Feel for yourself pal. This is what I like best."

Dickie realized the bar scene was simply not conducive to empirical research when the third person he queried said "All cocks are the same size when the lights are off," so he left and went to the baths. He rationalized that there he would get some honest responses and he was right. He left the door to his room open and everybody who looked in laughed. Fools, all of them he thought. Just because he was lying there with a hardon they assumed he was there for sex and not science.

In the steam room he fared somewhat better. There they couldn't see very well and they weren't aware the protrusion under his towel was a microphone. Some of them said they wanted to do it, not talk about it, but others were glad to state their preferences. Unfortunately they weren't specific enough for statistical requirements. Words like huge and enormous are fairly descriptive but how do you class-

ify them by the inch? And for goodness sake, "family size" could be ANYTHING!

After the baths Dickie went to Buffalo's most IN coffee shop, the cozy, comfy "Open Hearth Restaurant." He sat at the counter next to a rather rough looking stud in mauve leather and as he sipped a lemonade he casually turned to the guy and politely said, "I'd like to know the number of inches most people like in a cock." "So would I" said the man. "Then I'd know how much I should cut off." Dickie was exasperated. "I'm not joking," he said. "I'm making a study." "I'm not joking either," the man replied. "I'm making dildoes."

Finally Dickie hit the streets where, after all, the truth all hangs out. He stood at the corner of Washington and Genesee Streets waiting for all the cars to drive up and stop. He was still there when the sun came up and the only car that had stopped was some tourists looking for directions to the Peace Bridge.

Dickie reported back to us the following day with his data neatly compiled and ready for publication. The result of his findings is herewith quoted: "The size of genitalia is of relatively little importance in the gay community. Most people don't think about it at all, and those few who do agree that stories about endowment being a criteria for sexual desirability are pure myth. Trite as it may sound, the truth is that people seek quality rather than quantity. Kindness, tenderness, gentleness: these are the things that are sought after and cherished. A truly sensitive person can live happily ever after by simply forgetting his teenie weenie and letting his poetic inner self shine forth."
FRONT RUNNER, CONT.

him. I felt good relating to a gay hero who was healthy - and it was a great experience not having to translate straight experiences into gay ones as I do so often with books and films.

But on an objective level, I'm concerned. The gay characters are depicted compassionately, and I think most straight readers will sympathize with the individuals and the plight of gays in our heterosexual society. But I'm afraid that the book allows, even encourages an unnecessary amount of animosity between gay and straight readers by suggesting that gay is always good and straight is always bad - a claim that will hardly help the movement.

I'm not sure how major this flaw is. It is certainly an understandable one, but one which must be nevertheless pointed out, even though it does not destroy the basic credibility of the book.

In dissecting THE FRONT RUNNER in this fashion, I fear I have failed to share the exhilaration I felt reading it. A major publishing firm has mass distributed a good book about gay athletes that is a joy to read. It is good to have characters in popular novels we can relate to, that make us feel healthy and proud. THE FRONT RUNNER does that, and does it well.


WORKSHOPS, CONT.

Visibility is always a problem. To whom should we be visible? When? Are there people crossing over from one of the groups where you hide to one where you are out? Is invisibility a denial of self? Can you play games within games and still maintain self respect?

We all have the right to decide (a point glossed over at this workshop) our own level of visibility and the comfort we feel. This subject needed much more work.

At the least the workshops got a lot of questions out into the open. More often than not there were answers of a sort given. Workshops serve a secondary function that is often overlooked - they raise questions that cannot be answered immediately (a clever device to guarantee self-perpetuation?).

Next year the topics may compliment some of this year's efforts. Something like:

'75 '76
Sexism Oppression
Separatism Communication
Generation Gap Talk to one person older/younger

and so on.

One last thought: What kind of workshops, etc., are we going to have for our participation (?) in the bicentennial?

DUKE, CONT.

a behind the scenes maneuvering and manipulation because neither partner wants to admit that they don't want to play by the standard rules. Gays know from the outset that the rules aren't valid.

Of course, this unfortunately is not true for all gays.

Sadly there are still those who try to apply straight rules to their gay love, try to set up husband-wife roles. That's too bad, and it's their loss. Those rules and roles are crazy enough for a man and a woman to live by what on earth is in them for two women or two men?

And of course, by fitting themselves to those rules, they are missing all the self-discovery and self-appreciation that's involved in making the relationship fit them.

That, ultimately, is what I am talking about. When I talk about freedom I am talking about freedom to appreciate myself as fully, as unrestrictedly as possible. To discover all those different sides of myself and experience them in my relationships with others.

It may mean challenging a lot of assumptions and re-ordering a lot of my expectations. I may discover for example, that I am in touch with a wide enough range of myself that I can no longer reasonably expect one intimate relationship to meet all my intimate needs.

Then I have to deal with the whole monogamy issue. But every issue that comes up to be dealt with means more growth, more self-discovery and, probably, more self-acceptance.

I am getting to really like being gay, because I am beginning to appreciate how much scope there is for me to be however I want to be, and to experience myself in my many facets. And, thence, to really like myself.

It feels like a step beyond self-acceptance - the first "biggie", I suspect, for all or most gays, certainly for me.

I feel like I am moving beyond just accepting being gay to really digging it. I'm not proud to be gay - I'm fucking delighted!
WANTED: Singer, Songwriter, designer, performer, astrologer, etc. - wants to clean your house, too. Call Grant King, 886-3164

GAY BOOKS, PAPERS, ALBUMS, POSTERS, ETC. - The Green and Yellow Bookworm - 31-B Main St. - Jamestown, N.Y. Hours: Tue.-Sat. 10-5; Fri. Eve. 'til 9. Send for free mail order list: P.O. Box 981

USED HAIR DRYER - for sale-call Mary or Ken 897-2392, 892-8645, or 693-2870 and leave message.

ROOMMATE WANTED - $50 + Utils per month - own room. See Greg Bodekor at the Center for more details.

WANTED: Gay male wishes to begin meaningful relationships with house plants. If you have any to sell, call Dan at 832-5656.

FILE CABINETS, and many other useful items are needed at the Gay Community Services Center. If you can help, call Greg Bodekor or Don Michaels, 881-5335.

CCM TEN SPEED BIKE - fully lugged frame, in very good condition. All it needs is a new tire and brake shoe, which would run approx. $6 - bought it for $140 - will give it up for best offer over $60 - contact Steve through the Center, 881-5335.


GAY MEN WANTED - to participate in a study of gay identity. Our objectives are: 1) to learn more about how people come out; 2) to use this information for counseling purposes. Contact Prof. Tom Weinberg at Buffalo State College 862-6213 or 862-5411 and leave message.

PHOTOGRAPHY CLASS - by James Martin. 6 classes for $30 - sign up now at the Center.

GOD'S EYES - beautifully hand-crafted, in various sizes & designs. Now on sale at the Gay Community Services Center 1350 Main St. (Nr. Utica) 881-5335

SET OF WEIGHTS - 140 lbs., with dumbbells - all steel - $5 - call 886-7946.

THE ADVOCATE: touching your lifestyle! Subscriptions on sale now at the Gay Community Services Center - 1350 Main St. (Nr. Utica) - 881-5335.

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BUFFALO
MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER
Box 975 Ellicott Sta., Buffalo, N.Y. 14205
Center located at 1550 Main (at Utica) 716-881-5335/2 to 10 pm
Meets the first and third Sunday of the month at 8 pm

SISTERS OF SAPPHO-same information as above.
Meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 8 pm.

MONTREAL
ASSOCIATION HOMOPHILE DE MONTREAL-GAY MONTREAL ASSOCIATION
3664 rue Ste-Famille, Box 694 Station N, Montreal PQ H2X3N4
514-288-1101

SERVICE D'ORIENTATION HOMOPHILE-MONTREAL HOMOPHILE COUNSELING
3664 rue Ste-Famille, 514-843-4902

NEW YORK CITY
MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF NEW YORK
59 Christopher Street, N.Y. 10014

GAY ACTIVIST ALLIANCE
Box 2, Village Sta., N.Y., N.Y. 10014

LESBIAN FEMINIST LIBERATION
P.O. Box 243 Village Sta., N.Y., N.Y. 10014

ROCHESTER
GAY BROTHERHOOD
Meets 7:30 pm Sundays, 714 Monroe Ave., Rochester 14607. Office
staffed evenings and some days. 716-244-8640

LESBIAN RESOURCE CENTER
Has open house every Friday evenings at 7:30 pm. Discussion,
beverages, informal rap sessions, orientation at office. 2nd
floor, Genesee CO-OP 713 Monroe Ave. Open other weeknights
7-9 pm. Phone 716-244-9030. Mail Box 8594, Rochester N.Y. 14627

SYRACUSE
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY GAY STUDENT SERVICES
Mens Rap Group, Wed. 8 pm at 103 College Place - 423-2081

GAY CITIZENS ALLIANCE
P.O. Box 57, Elmwood Sta. - 1530 South Ave. - Syracuse 13207

LESBIAN FEMINISTS OF SYRACUSE
113 Concord Place. Meets Wednesdays at 7:30 pm 472-3753

TORONTO
TORONTO GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY (GATE)
193 Carlton St. Toronto M5A 2K7. 416-961-9389

COMMUNITY HOMOPHILE ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO (CHAT)
223 Church St. (3rd floor) 862-1544 (24 hr. emergency services)
Social Centre: 201 Church St. 862-1169

THE WOMENS PLACE & LESBIAN COLLECTIVE
137 George St. 416-363-8021

JAMESTOWN
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For other listings for cities throughout the world call the
Gay Center 881-5335/2 to 10 pm daily.